

Sons To Glory



"Bringing many sons to glory"

Hebrews 2:10

Paul Jablonowski

An emphasis on Sonship is certainly a Biblical mandate. True spiritual father & son relationships are so desperately needed in our performance-oriented society where talent and gifting wrongly outweigh godly character. This book offers a solution to developing real discipleship and covenant relationships with those whom God has you connected.

Bringing many sons to glory is the goal of this book. The Cross of Christ is the way and the means by which this goal can occur in your life. Therefore, the picture on the cover of this book has a crown representing the glory that God desires to give to all of His children, and the cross is undergirding the crown.

The coming move of God in our generation will be fueled by a people whose passion is to live the crucified life (death to selfishness). Only then, can Jesus truly live His life of sacrificial love through us - His mature sons.

A modern day Pentecost awaits our generation, but the Cross is the only way to obtain a crown in the Kingdom of God. All previous moves of God have moved and then stopped moving because of not understanding the wisdom of the Cross. But we have a promise (Eph. 5:27) that there WILL be a spotless Bride Body people who will continually run after the Lord and move with Him for eternity!

Paul Jablonowski is madly in love with his bride Linda and their three sons Joshua, Stephen and Seth. Paul, Joshua and Seth all have birthdays on the Feast

of Pentecost. Stephen was born on the Feast of Trumpets, and Linda's birthday falls during the Feast of Tabernacles.

The Feasts of the Lord are key times to worship the Lord and to hear from Him. He who has an ear, let him hear the message contained in this book.



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*“For in bringing many **Sons To Glory**, it was only fitting that God, the Creator and Preserver of everything, should bring the Author of their salvation to this goal through sufferings.” Hebrews 2:10*

Paul Jablonowski

This book

NOT FOR SALE

As supplies last, this book will be given freely without charge to individuals who would like to read it. However, to actually live the Cross of Christ as discussed in this book will cost you everything.

This book can be obtained in three different formats:

- 1) **Website** - www.sonstoglory.com
- 2) **E-book** - (.pdf Adobe Acrobat) - can be downloaded at:
www.sonstoglory.com/SonsToGloryBook.pdf
- 3) **Paperback books** – are available as time and funds permit.
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Finally, and most importantly, thank you Jesus for entrusting me with the revelation contained in the pages of this book. You really do reveal Your secrets to the lowly and scatter the proud in the imagination of their hearts (Luke 1:46-55). It has been a true joy to walk and talk with You along the path of life. I hope and pray that this knowledge will be stewarded in Your perfect timing and wisdom. Let Your Kingdom come and Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven!

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Foreword

Thanks Paul - I read your book and enjoyed it so much. The thoughtful teachings were wonderful, and this book is a living testament to your boys. It will always be a memorial for them. You're not as old as I am (this is where you thank God!!), but those things become very precious when we can touch our future generations in such a beautiful way.

Not only is this a personal memorial between you and your sons, but it is a wonderful reminder of how we each are “planted” in the earth by the LORD - at a specific time, and place, and with specific purposes. We didn't just come, but we were “sent.”

Sonship is indeed our relationship with the LORD. Sometimes we forget that, and it must sadden the LORD's heart. We don't find it difficult to consider ourselves “servants” of the LORD, but we struggle with being “sons.” Thanks again.

Deborah Kublin
New York

Introduction

A New Day!



We live in a **new day** as far as Christianity is concerned. The rapid communications and connectivity available through the internet is just one example of Daniel's prophecy that "*knowledge shall increase*" at the time of the end. But the end of one thing is also just the beginning of something new. Rather than criticizing the old or trying to rejuvenate what is passing away, this book attempts to give a clear blueprint of the new order that is coming so that we can position ourselves to be a part of this new move of God in our generation.

"Sons to Glory" is a documentation of my writings through the years. Most of the chapters in this book were written between the years of 1998 and 2005, and published on the internet through a variety of Christian e-mail lists and web-pages. These chapters were written piece by piece as the Lord dealt with me on these subjects during this time. Each chapter was written as a stand-alone article. Therefore, there has been some content overlap of the more important points. I did not start out with the intention of writing a book, but this is where it has ended up. I have only tried to be obedient to the leading of the Holy Spirit and to write down those things that He has been teaching me and showing me as I follow Him day by day.

All of the writings published in this book are available for free in web-page, e-book and paperback book form. These can all be found at www.sonstoglory.com. This book is written for the purpose of giving thanks to the Lord and making known His awesome deeds! As Psalm 105:5 says: "*Remember His marvelous works which He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth.*"

The three main Parts of this book include: Part 1- **Doctrine**, Part 2- **Apostles** and Part 3- **Intercession**. They are arranged in a series of progression from first **Thinking Like Mature Sons** (Doctrine), to then **Acting Like Mature Sons** (Apostles), and finally towards **Being Mature Sons** (Intercession).

Doctrine is much more than just having a correct interpretation of Scriptures. It involves a correct pattern of thought that is manifested practically in everyday life by how we interact with others, as well as with God and ourselves. This Doctrine section will cover some of the foundational principles that are needed for the Body of Christ to truly become the Bride of Christ. The second Part on:

Apostles will go a little deeper to explain some of the ways God is raising up a different breed of leadership mentality to serve in His Kingdom government. All mature sons are not necessarily apostles, but they will be able to recognize the true apostles. The final Part on:

Intercession goes even deeper to the real power behind this government – namely, PRAYER. But rather than trying to teach or explain prayer, this section takes you through several examples from the author’s life in which on-site prayer and intercession was done for the purpose of bringing heaven to earth in certain real life situations.

It is a great privilege to be alive today in the generation that is witnessing the fulfillment of what the biblical prophets saw thousands of years ago. Even the Apocalypse (the book of Revelation) is beginning to unfold before our eyes. It is not hype to say that another Pentecost on the same level that the first century saints experienced is at our doorstep, because the first century Pentecost did not completely fulfill the prophecy in Joel 2:28-32 (and Acts 2:17-21) which says:

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy. Your young men shall see visions. Your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy. I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath; blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord.

And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

These awesome signs and wonders are still happening, and many more are still coming. But let's take a look in the book of Acts at the **fruit** of the first century Pentecost, which is the most important aspect of Pentecost that most people overlook:

*“And with many other words he (Peter) testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.” Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they were continually devoted to the apostles’ doctrine and to fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. **Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.** So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.” (Acts 2:40-47)*

So we can see that the greatest miracle of the first Pentecost was not the many signs and wonders that were happening, but rather **a lifestyle of great love for one another!** Look how they practically loved one another:

*“Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all. **Nor was there anyone among them who lacked;** for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles’ feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need. And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles*

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(which is translated Son of Encouragement) a Levite of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles feet.” (Acts 4:32-37)

Wow, what unity and love they had! This love and unity will be the natural fruit that occurs from any true outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It was a practical love working itself out among brothers and sisters in Christ through every day circumstances. It produced a testimony which “turned the world upside down,” and “fear came upon every soul” that came into contact with these believers. Now THIS is the type of Pentecost that is worth eagerly anticipating! The two words that best describe this modern day Pentecost are COMMUNITY and GENEROSITY. Anything short of this description will not do.

This book will attempt to describe the order in which we can steward this modern day Pentecost so that it will not die out again. Every other major move of God in Christian church history started with a fire, hit a peak and then died out by becoming an institution instead of being the living organism that God created the “Body of Christ” to be. Why? Because they all started out with the seed of God and then mankind put his “good ideas” into God’s purposes, which made it stagnant. The Cross of Christ is the only answer to overcoming our immaturity and becoming mature sons of the King. The message of the Cross is the common thread intertwined in all of the writings in this book, and the true fruit of the Cross will produce many of God’s mature sons.

The reason Jesus suffered and died was to bring many “*sons to glory.*” These **sons** whom Jesus decides to honor will have taken the same road of the Cross that He did. We all have different crosses to carry that have been hand crafted for us by the Master Carpenter. This book is the story of one man’s cross-walk to maturity as a son. My prayer is that the words in this book will encourage you to also take up your cross and follow the Lamb wherever He may lead you.

Paul Jablonowski
Harvest, Alabama

PART 1

Thinking Like Mature Sons

DOCTRINE

Chapter 1

My Story

I wrote this short pamphlet in 1991 shortly after the Lord changed my life when I was attending Auburn University. I used these brochures to hand out to people that I would meet because I was so excited about what God had done for me. Here is what was written in the pamphlet:



I was in Daytona Beach for spring break vacation with nine of my friends. I was there to have a good time, get drunk, get high, and do whatever I pleased. I was free for a week.

Religious people were preaching on the beach just like they do every year. I hated people pushing their views on me and telling me how to live my life. One time, my friends and I gathered around one of the preaching guys and cursed at him as we sprinkled beer on him and made fun of him.

At college I met some religious people who talked with me a lot about their faith. They never pushed their view on me, but were always sincere to be my friend even though they knew the

reckless lifestyle I led. They never condemned me or looked down on me, and their unconditional love for me and for one another drew my curiosity. Although it was a long process to put my trust in them as friends, the more I got to know them the more I realized that they had something really special that gave them joy and peace and meaning to their lives.

Today I am a new person. I have asked Jesus Christ for His spirit to live in me and to control and guide my life. I have found joy and peace and purpose in my heart regardless of what life's circumstances are. It may sound contradictory but I have found TRUE freedom in being a servant to my Lord. I have found true the words of Jesus: *"Whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it."* (Matthew 16:25) For more information on how to obtain peace of the heart, soul and mind contact Jesus Christ by prayer. He's listening 24 hours a day! *(End of pamphlet)*



Today in the year 2007, I live in Harvest (near Huntsville) Alabama, USA with my wife Linda and our three sons Joshua, Stephen and Seth. I am an intercessor with a calling as a marketplace apostle working in government and industry in the fields of science, engineering and multimedia. Part of my vision is to see these particular fields of service bringing honor and glory to the name of Jesus Christ. Scriptural examples like Daniel, Esther and Joseph are excellent witnesses of those who knew their destiny to intercede and work among government and industry as "full time" ministers to help fulfill God's purposes in their generation. The Kingdom of God is much bigger than the church and we must be Kingdom minded.

Next to simply being with King Jesus, my greatest passion in the Kingdom is for "Sonship." Sonship in the Kingdom of God is about spiritual maturity. When we, the Bride Body of Christ, begin to fully walk in our Blood bought inheritance of Sonship, the enemy of mankind will be bound for 1,000 years. This is the very reason why Satan has worked overtime for the past 2,000 years trying to blind God's children to this truth of Sonship. Because when mature sons of God finally do rise up in faith, Satan completely loses his rule over mankind including his corruption over creation (Romans 8:19-23).

However, before we can begin discussing Sonship in greater detail, a foundation for correct thinking must first be in place. One such foundation is learning how God created mankind to worship Him both in Spirit and in Truth. The next chapter will discuss this subject.

Chapter 2

To Worship God in Spirit and Truth

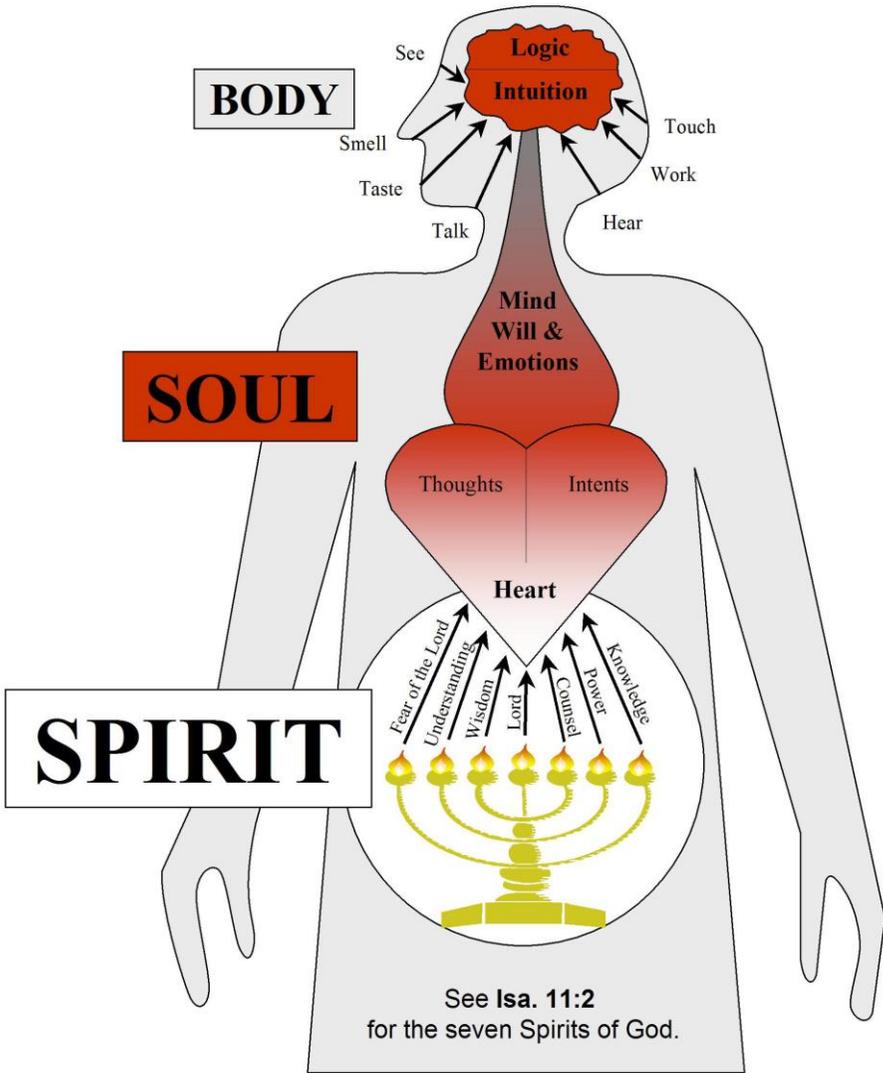
Is there a proper way to render worship unto God? If we read the story of Cain and Abel in Genesis chapter 4, we find that Abel's worship offering was accepted by God, but Cain's offering was rejected by God. So there is a proper way to come before the Lord and worship Him; but how do we do this today? Jesus gives us the basic answer of how to worship God when He said: *"But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."* (John 4:23,24)

The unique aspect about mankind is that God has created us with a spirit. The animals were created with a soul and a body, but we have been given a spirit as well as a soul and a body. Before we can properly answer the question of how to worship God, we must first understand who we are: You are a spirit, who has a soul, and you live in a body. The Scriptural proof for this statement is in the chart and picture on the following two pages:

Who am I?

<p>You are a spirit, You have a soul, And you live in a body</p>	<p>1 Thess. 5:23 – Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">BODY</p>	<p>Romans 12:1,2 – Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may be able to test and prove what God’s will is - his good pleasing and perfect will.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">SOUL</p> <p>Includes the mind, will and emotions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(heart)</p>	<p>James 1:21 – lay aside all filthiness, and receive with meekness the implanted word which is able to save your souls... Eph. 4:23 – Be renewed by the spirit in your mind. Put on the new man created in righteousness. Gen. 2:7 – And man became a living soul. Proverbs 4:23 – Above all else, guard your heart with all diligence, for out of it flows the issues of life. John 7:38 – He who believes in Me, as the scriptures has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">(heart)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SPIRIT</p>	<p>Proverbs 20:27 – The spirit of a man is the lamp of the Lord, searching all the inner depths of his heart... Hebrews 12:22,23 – You have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, to the spirits of just men made perfect.</p>

The New Man in Christ Jesus



This drawing depicts the spirit of the person who has been born again from heaven. The man who has not been reborn has a wandering spirit and cannot understand or obey the things of God. However, thanks to our Lord Jesus Christ we CAN have a born again spirit that will lead us into all truth and teach us the things of God's Spirit. God's Word

teaches us that in order for a person's spirit to be reborn he or she must make a confession with their mouth to another person of their belief in the Lord Jesus. Romans 10:9-10 tells us, *"If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."* Also, Jesus tells us that if we confess Him **before men**, then He will confess you to the Father and be your advocate legally before the throne of God (Matt 10:32, Luke 12:8). Your profession of faith in Christ before another person is a legal matter in heaven, and it is only through Jesus that we can legally be reconciled back to God.

Eternal salvation is obtained by a simple heartfelt confession... nothing more and nothing less. It is not about our good deeds or bad deeds, which is why this gospel is rightly called the "good news." You may not even feel anything different after your confession. God has chosen this simple method of confession unto salvation so that no one can boast in another person's eternal life. Since God knows the heart, there is no point in arguing who has been born again and who has not. Romans 10:6-8 tells us that it is not wise to say *"who will ascend into heaven... or who will descend into the abyss,"* because the word is in your mouth and in your heart. This word of faith in your mouth and heart is the doorway into all of God's eternal life. *"For God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."* (John 3:16-18)

Jesus told Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, *"most assuredly I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."* Jesus then showed Nicodemus that he was born of the flesh, but in order to enter the kingdom of God he had to be born of the spirit. There is no other name by which man can be saved except confessing the name of Christ Jesus (Acts 4:12), which in itself is a sign of repentance. But our profession of faith in Christ is only the beginning point of our walk with the Spirit of God who created the universe. The next steps involve

allowing your newly created spirit to influence your soul and body, and this is the harder part where we learn to take up our cross and follow Jesus. This is where we learn to worship Him in spirit and in truth: *“God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”* (John 4:24)

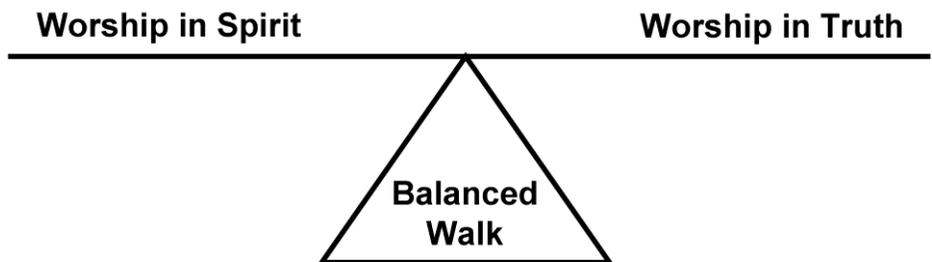
God created your spirit, soul and body to relate as one, but when we sinned in Adam, that oneness was broken and now our body (flesh) fights against the Spirit as Paul talked about in Romans chapters 6-7. Our flesh is in a constant warfare against our spirit. God is a Father, a Son and a Holy Spirit, but all three exist as one in unity. Since we were created in God’s image, our spirit, soul and body is a similar trinity. However, SIN has killed us and this unity. Now, only our recreated spirit in Christ can renew our souls. While our spirits are born again and therefore “perfect” (Heb 12:22,23) at the point of our confession of faith, our souls must be renewed daily by the Spirit. Please see the previous figure again and notice how the seven spirits of God are constantly influencing our heart, while the body is constantly being influenced by other outside forces that are often contrary to the Spirit of God. **Hence the warfare is in our souls**, which is why James tells us that our souls must be “saved” or renewed day by day (James 1:21).

Our soul consists of the mind, will and emotions, and your heart is the area where the spirit connects with your soul. Proverbs 4:23 says that we need to “guard” our hearts and keep them pure because the thoughts and intents of the heart will help guide the rest of our lives. God has given us a free will to make our own decisions, and our will and minds can be ordered either by the Spirit or by the things around us. For this reason the book of Proverbs consistently admonishes us to pay attention to the seven spirits of God and how they “cry aloud” to us. Just a few examples include: *“wisdom calls aloud,”* and *“perceive the words of understanding,”* and *“the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.”* Also, Paul prays for us in Ephesians 1:17-18 that the eyes of our heart would be enlightened from *“the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.”* He prays again in Ephesians 3:16-19 that we would be *“strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.”* So you can see that Christ does not necessarily dwell in our hearts just

because we have been born again, it is something that must be cultivated through a heart that seeks after the things of the Spirit.

These seven spirits of God are vitally important to understand. They are listed completely in Isaiah 11:2, but are expanded upon throughout the Scriptures. They are: **1)** the Spirit of the Lord (love); **2)** the Spirit of Wisdom (truth); **3)** the Spirit of Understanding (revelation); **4)** the Spirit of Counsel (remembrance/restoration); **5)** The Spirit of Might (power); **6)** the Spirit of Knowledge (scribes/publishing); and **7)** the Spirit of the Fear of the Lord (grace).

To worship “in spirit” is to walk in obedience to the promptings of these seven spirits who dwell within the born again believer. To worship “in truth” is the other side of our balanced walk with the Lord. Walking “in truth” involves walking according to God’s order and instruction, which is shown to us in His **WORD**. So you have a constant balance of walking in the Spirit and walking according to His truth found in His word. You cannot have one without the other. If you have all spirit and no word then you will “puff up” in pride. If you have all word and no spirit then you will “dry up” with dead religion. We must have a proper balance of worship in spirit and in truth as this figure below shows:



The best definition of worship is “free will obedience.” The first use of the word “worship” in the Scriptures is in Genesis 22:5 where Abraham went to “worship” on Mt. Moriah by offering Isaac on the altar. There was no music or dancing or shouting, it was Abraham’s free will offering of obedience. Part of worshipping “in truth” involves ordering our times of communion with God and with one another according to God’s ways. Below is a chart that helps to describe the order that God is calling His people to worship Him in truth. You can see that the Old

Testament order for offerings of worship is a pattern or matrix to help contain the New Covenant life that we have together in Christ Jesus. Again, it is a free will offering of obedience to His word (worship in truth).

Order for Offerings of Worship

Numbers chapter 28 & Leviticus chapter 25

<i>Individual</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Tribe</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Nation</i>
				
Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly	Jubilee
<p>“This is the offering made by fire which you shall offer to the Lord day by day as a regular burnt offering... morning and evening.” (Numbers 28:3-8)</p>	<p>“six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation.” (Leviticus 23:3)</p>	<p>“At the beginnings of your months you shall present a burnt offering to the Lord...” (Numbers 28:11)</p>	<p>“Three times you shall keep a feast to Me in the year.” (Exodus 23:14)</p>	<p>“In the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath of solemn rest for the land... and you shall count seven Sabbaths of years (49 years) and cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound.” (Lev. 25:4,8)</p>
<p>Personal one on one intimacy with God in our individual prayer closet or “quiet times”</p>	<p>Small Group meetings with extended family and covenant friends</p>	<p>Larger meetings with several Small Groups where 50 + people would be gathering</p>	<p>Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles: 1000 + people gathered 3 times per year</p>	<p>Special times of celebration every 7 years and every 50 years</p>

Worshiping in truth is a matter of discipline according to God's word. We can discipline ourselves for times of worship according to our own good ideas, or we can do it according to the word of God which would be worshiping in truth.

DAILY - The Scriptures indicate that at least twice a day we are to set aside a special time of prayer and communion with the Lord. In the times of Jesus they had three specific hours of prayer where people from the entire community gathered together at the temple for individual prayer during the 3rd hour (8:00-9:00 a.m); the 6th hour (11:00-12:00 noon); and the 9th hour (2:00 - 3:00 p.m).¹ These three daily times of memorial proved to be prophetic during the crucifixion of Jesus (Mark 15:25, 33-34) as well as during other important biblical events (Acts 2:15, 3:1, 10:3,9). Daniel also prayed three times per day (Dan. 6:10). Whether we set aside two times per day or three times per day, the main point is that we should be fellowshiping one-on-one with the Lord on a regular basis daily.

WEEKLY - Scripture says that God rested on the Sabbath and one of the ten commandments is that we should remember the Sabbath. So part of God's order to worship in truth is that we should set aside a special time of communion weekly with family and close friends to seek the Lord. These should be small groups so that discipleship can occur and everyone can share what God has been doing in their lives during the week. These open times of fellowship can be very organic in structure and may include a meal together. These meetings do not necessarily have to be in homes, but a home is the best place to foster the openness and transparency that is needed for true discipleship and covenant relationships. It should be hard to join these groups because you want to know those who labor among you, and easy to leave these groups because it is not about control, but love from a pure heart.

MONTHLY - Israel observed the New Moon celebrations monthly on a larger scale than the weekly Sabbaths (Num. 29:6, Ps. 81:3, Isa. 66:23). So in keeping with the biblical matrix, our monthly meetings should be larger meetings where some structure and pre-planning would most likely be necessary. These "tribal" type meetings would incorporate and network several small groups to share some of the more corporate things that the Lord has been doing in the smaller group

meetings. The structure can vary from tribe to tribe according to the calling of your particular group or region of the country. The local elders and equipping ministries of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher would be the ones to seek direction from the Lord for these meetings. Relationships between the small groups who meet together monthly should be strong and constantly developing.

YEARLY - The city-wide or region-wide meetings that take place three times per year would also be organized and conducted by the equipping ministers of that city or area. These meetings would occur at the set times prescribed in the Scriptures to honor God's memorial days. Each of these holidays has its focus on the Lord Jesus Christ who is the fulfillment of all these Feast days. These three annual large-scale celebrations will help to promote unity and purpose for the entire Body of Christ in each city or region.

The three main Feasts of the Lord include: 1) Passover/Unleavened Bread, 2) Pentecost, and 3) Tabernacles. Passover has a theme on deliverance and unity. Moses' Passover was enhanced at Jesus' first coming to become the Lord's supper. It is currently being enhanced again in our day to become the Marriage Supper of the Lamb at Jesus' Second Coming. The Feast of Passover is "the door" to Christian unity as far as celebrating the Feasts of the Lord on a city-wide scale. The Feast of Pentecost has a theme of the Holy Spirit anointing people for service and includes public displays of worship. The Feast of Tabernacles is the year-end celebration of the general harvest where we look forward to the appearing of Christ to rule and reign the earth. Large outdoor festivals with "booths" (similar to our modern day tradeshows or arts festivals) would be a good way to honor the Feast of Tabernacles in each individual region.

The seven major Feasts of the Lord that are celebrated annually are shown in the chart on the following page:

	<i>The Lord's Holidays</i>	<i>They are all about JESUS!</i>	<i>Date on the Hebrew Calendar</i>
SPRING FEASTS	Passover (primary)	His Death	1st month (Nisan/Abib), 14th day
	Unleavened Bread	His Burial	1st month (Nisan), 15th – 21st days
	Firstfruits	His Resurrection	1st month (Nisan), first Sunday after the 14th day
	Pentecost (primary)	His Holy Spirit	3rd month (Sivan), 50th day after the Sunday Feast of Firstfruits
FALL FEASTS	Trumpets	His Coming Announced	7th month (Tishri), 1st day
	Atonement	His Perfection in Cleansing His Bride	7th month (Tishri), 10th day
	Tabernacles (primary)	His Appearing	7th month (Tishri), 15th – 21st days

This is only a brief look at the ways we can worship the Lord “in truth.” Further information on the Lord’s Feast days, and examples of how they are being celebrated on a city-wide scale can be found at my friend Robert Somerville’s website at www.awarenessministry.org. This example is certainly not intended to be an exact replica of what needs to be done in other cities, but it is a good example from the Scriptures of how we can be doing “church” and assembling for worship both in spirit and in truth.

There is a proper way to render worship to God. We do not approach Him with our own good ideas and ask Him to bless them. We must find HOW He asks us to worship Him and then obey what He says from both His Word and His Spirit. When we realize who we are and why we have been created, then we will have taken the first step to worshipping the Lord in spirit and in truth. Then we will be able to declare with the psalmist: *“I will praise Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.”* (Psalm 139:14)

Chapter 3

Father Leadership

One of the main ways that God provides leadership in His kingdom is through fathers. This is why the spirit of Elijah must come and restore “*the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers.*” Otherwise the “*great and dreadful Day of the Lord*” which is coming would consume us and “*strike the earth with a curse*” (Mal. 4:4-6). These final words in the Old Testament point to God’s Father Leadership in His kingdom. Fathering involves the loving heart attitude displayed in raising children. A father exhorts and comforts and implores and sometimes chastens when necessary (1 Thess. 2:11, Heb. 12:7-11), but only after establishing you through much encouragement. A father is always around through thick and thin. A father does not forsake you when you fail or leave you when disagreements arise. A father not only goes with you into battle, he leads the way (Joshua 1:5-9). Spiritual fathering is the major leadership method for building the body of Christ.

One of my favorite authors Rick Joyner writes:

“Though the image of the Lord is both male and female, and there is the nature of Him that would gather us as a hen gathers her chicks, God is presented throughout the Scriptures as “Father,” and is never called “Mother.” To dilute this, is to distort His image with a very thick veil. “Father” means “life giver.” The father gives the seed, and the mother nurtures the seed. In Scripture, we see the creation as “a” mother. Both Israel and the church are also referred to in Scripture as “mothers.” Just as the woman was taken from Adam so that they would have to come together to be the complete image of God, the Lord will be joined perfectly to His Bride to give the creation a true reflection of His glory.”²

Since God calls his corporate body (males and females) both a **bride** (Rev. 21:9), and a **son** (Rom 4:5-7) we can see that gender is not the issue here. Being a spiritual father is not related to gender, and a woman can function as a spiritual father just as well as a man (see Deborah in Judges 4-5; Gal. 3:28).

The most important thing you could ever impart to someone is how to love God, and this does not come by teaching or someone praying for you or any other “quick fix” method. It comes from being loved by a father. It comes by hanging around someone on a consistent basis who has an intimate relationship with THE Abba Father. This is why until Jesus came, we never truly knew how to be intimate with God. Jesus started the Fathering mentorship by being a father to a small group of disciples and this little group became fathers who had sons who became fathers, and so on and so on. The fathering family of God began.

Although I have had many people to influence me in my walk with the Lord, Robert Somerville has been a spiritual father to me for the past ten years. There is great comfort and encouragement in knowing someone as a spiritual father in the Lord. Likewise, my natural father Donald Jablonowski has been a man who has shown me great love and encouragement as a child growing up. Both my natural and spiritual fathers still give me advice and encouragement and rebuke when necessary. It is wonderful to have someone who has walked a similar path to help show me the way on a personal basis so I don’t have to bump my head all the time; someone I can call on anytime and get real hands-on advice for situations in life.

It is easy to get a “corporation mentality” and try to pump out as many sons and daughters as you can, but the reality is that if you try to father too many children you cease to be a father and start becoming more of a corporation where the intimacy is lost. A father does not even choose his own children, but **they are given to him by God**, and a child does not get to choose their father either. Much of the disarray in the Body of Christ is a result of fathers hand picking their children according to those who “fit their mold” instead of fathering the sons and daughters that God has chosen for them. We need to be “*joined and knit together*” correctly according to God’s will so that “*every part does its*

share, causing growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”
(Eph. 4:16)

Abraham did not have a spiritual father, so do not force spiritual fathering and sonship. The true father/son relationships will become evident as these relationships develop with those around you, but it may take years. I did not call Bob Somerville my spiritual father publicly until I knew him over seven years and that relationship was already obvious. This does not mean we agree on everything, and fathers can learn a lot from their children too, because it is a two way relationship. The hierarchy of God's kingdom does not look like the typical corporate organizational chart with the president on top and other people branching off of them and other people branching off of them, etc. Rather it is like a huge fishing net or a network. All members of the body are physically connected to only a FEW parts of the body, but they receive the benefit of the entire body by way of the blood. In the same manner, the Blood of Jesus runs through the entire Body of Christ to give life for the benefit of all. *“The life of the flesh is in the blood.”* (Leviticus 17:11)

1 Corinthians 11:25-30 says, *“In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes. Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, **not discerning the Lord’s body**. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.”*

If we are not properly joined together to the part of the body of Christ that God has called us, then the life (blood) cannot flow properly. The reason for much of the weakness, sickness and premature death among believers is that we do not “discern the Lord’s body” correctly. In other words, we are not discerning where in the body of Christ we should be joined or who are our spiritual fathers and children. This is partly due to the set-up of the current “church institutions” which do

not promote family intimacy, but rather a spectator mentality. But thanks be to God, this is now changing!

God is bringing His people into His order, and fathering (as opposed to the current institutional corporation mentality) is according to His order. God only asked for His people to gather together in large groups three times a year. Deuteronomy 16:16 says, *“Three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the Lord empty handed.”* Leviticus 23 tells us that these Feasts were given by God to be celebrated “forever” as a memorial and a holy convocation. All of these Feasts are Christ centered and point to Jesus as the Messiah. The rest of the year we should be meeting in smaller “tribes” monthly and “families” weekly as the Lord leads, being fathered and fathering according to our maturity.

I believe that the Lord will use the next 1,000 year reign of Christ (Rev. 20:1-7) to implement this “fathering leadership.” The Feasts of the Lord will once again be celebrated annually (Lev. 23) and the family will begin to be restored as God’s main training ground for His people. Although it will take 1,000 years to perfect, this will cure much of the confusion in the body of Christ, because just the structure of the current church system draws leaders into envy and self-seeking. James 3:16 says, *“For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing will be there.”* But if you have more of a family structure with fathering and mothering continually going on in a smaller group, then real intimacy and “love in action” can take place on a day to day basis, instead of just on Sunday morning.

Wolfgang Simson in his excellent book *“Houses that Change the World - the return of the house churches”* actually contrasts leaders and fathers by saying:

It is part of a father’s brief to lead, but it is not necessarily part of a leader’s brief to father... Man assumes there must be leadership in anything he touches. It is part of his creational brief. However, the church is an exception, because it is not man’s invention or property. It is truly God’s... To call one

member a leader over the others - and in spite of the presence of the head - would be grossly misleading. Jesus is the head of the church, and that is all the leadership it truly needs. The church is led when its members obey its head. The church experiences leadership as they collectively obey their head and function together in unity... The whole world wants leaders, not servants, and so does the traditional church. Maybe we want what God is not willing to give, and instead of seeing the futility of our attempts, we carry on with what we think is persistence. The stewards of the church are servants, and the more they serve, the more they will ultimately lead (Lk. 22:26) in a way which is upside down to the way the world expects leadership. An obedient and humble servant can lead because he is led. Leadership, if at all, is therefore a function of obedience.³

The words “father” and “fathers” appear in the KJV Bible 1,484 times. Needless to say, the Scriptures have much to say about fathers. This article is not for the purpose of studying the entire role of the father, but for showing that fathering is more than just raising children; it is the very plan and order for God’s leadership. Of course God is our ultimate Father as 2 Corinthians 6:18 tells us, *“I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”* But don’t forget that the apostle Paul also considered himself a spiritual father, and this fathering leadership has been God’s way of maturing His people from the beginning. *“For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore, I urge you, imitate me.”* (1 Corinthians 4:15,16)

Father’s who lead like Paul carry spiritual authority. There are two types of God ordained authority: 1) spiritual authority and 2) dominion authority. The next chapter will discuss these two types of authority and describe how the enemy tries to pervert God-given authority which results in either rebellion or dictatorship. Understanding **true** authority, which comes from heaven and not earth, is one of the most important aspects to being a spiritual father and **thinking like mature sons**.

Chapter 4

Spiritual Authority vs. Civil Authority

The doctrine of the Nicolaitans is something Jesus says that He hates (Revelation 2:6,15). In the Greek, Nicolaitan means “conquer” (Nikao) “the people” (laos). This false doctrine attempts to divide the body of Christ into some form of a clergy/laity system. It is a false spiritual authority that usurps the headship of Christ. It will effectively cut off God’s giftings by cutting off and dividing God’s people. It dismembers parts of God’s Body by not allowing the giftings that God gives to each body member to function. But a correct understanding of how spiritual authority works apart from civil authority will help to expose this false authority, which has been masquerading as truth since the third century.

Jesus said, “*ALL authority has been given to Me in heaven (spiritual authority) and on earth (dominion authority)*” (Matt. 28:18). So there are two types of authority currently at work: spiritual and dominion. Spiritual authority comes from God, while dominion authority is delegated authority given by God to Adam (mankind): “*Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our likeness; let them have **dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth... fill the earth and subdue it; have **dominion**...”* (Genesis 3:26-28). Notice that it was never God’s original intent for mankind to rule over other men and women. This corrupted type of dominion authority became “civil authority” after the fall when sin entered the picture. It is important to differentiate between dominion authority which is from God, and civil authority which is the corruption of dominion authority where men started self-government apart from God to dominate and control others.

Civil authority is what is currently operating in the kingdoms of man and this authority allows footholds for the demons and principalities of darkness. Civil authority and occult religion are the corruption of

fallen man to replace the God ordained offices of kings and priests. The following chart contrasts these two opposing kingdoms:

God's Original Intent for Authority to Bless others:	Man's Corrupted Authority to Meet their Greed:
1) Kings (Dominion Authority)	1) Civil Authority
2) Priests (Spiritual Authority)	2) Occult Religion
<i>"And have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth."</i> (Rev. 5:10)	<i>"Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons."</i> (Rev. 18:2)

Nevertheless, Paul told us in Romans 13:1-7 that we are to be subject to the civil authority without question unless it violates direct commandments from God. Herein, lies the tension between the Kingdom of God and the kingdoms of this present world. God's kings will bring prosperity and His priests will bring freedom, but they will do this through discipleship like Jesus did and not through the structures of man. The structures of man are religion and politics (civil authority), which is the art of trying to control other people's lives. In the final analysis, these corrupted types of authority will foster elitism and a love of money. This type of man-made authority is "official" and related to hierarchical position and status. It runs like a business or a military with rank and titles and classes which are given to a select few.

On the other hand, spiritual authority is given to ALL who are filled with the Spirit, and it operates through TRUST by LOVE like a family household for the building up of relationships and not for tearing them down. Spiritual authority is organic and free flowing and comes from Jesus only as the head of the Body (Eph 1:22). True spiritual authority flows from the head through the Body, which is the *"priesthood of all believers"* (1 Peter 2:5,9), and is about mutual submission to one another. It operates like a living organism or body, unlike civil authority which operates like an organization or worldly government.

The husband/wife relationship is a good example of spiritual authority. The Scriptures say that I am the head of my wife and that my wife is to be submissive to me as her husband (Eph 5:22,23). This is spiritual authority. Yet, if I demand and assert that she "submit" to me because I have this position of authority, then I have just used civil authority

methods to dominate and control my wife’s life beyond true spiritual authority. The honor and respect and submission that I receive from my wife is always merited and earned, and it is never demanded or asserted. Likewise, those who correctly demonstrate spiritual authority have proven themselves to be trustworthy servants not because of a title or position, but in reality. Earned recognition and trust from the Body of Christ is one of the characteristics of true spiritual authority.

Below is a chart that contrasts spiritual authority and civil authority. One thing we must remember about civil authority is that even though it is not God’s perfect will for mankind, He is still able to use it for good and asks us to submit to the governing authorities and pray for them so that the gospel can be spread where we live.

Spiritual Authority	Civil Authority
1. Comes from God’s Spirit ONLY (Eph. 1:22)	1. Are servants of God to you for good (Rom. 13:1-7)
2. Is Organic and Free Flowing	2. Is Hierarchical and Positional
3. Is Functional / Related to Actions	3. Is Official / Related to Static Office
4. Builds up Everyone in Life and Relationship	4. Separates into Classes, Titles and Ranks
5. Is like a Father/Child Relationship - Family	5. Is like Sergeant/Private Relationship – Military
6. Is based on Character	6. Is based on Status/Position
7. Cooperative/Persuasive	7. Authoritarian/Dominating
8. Flows from Christ within	8. Rules from an Iron Fist
9. Given to ALL who possess the Spirit	9. Given to a few to rule over others
10. Operates through love like a household	10. Operates through delegation like a business

Many sincere Christian fellowships cut off the moving of God’s Spirit because there is an attempt to mix elements of civil authority with spiritual authority. In other words, any mixture of civil and spiritual authority causes the Church to be out of God’s divine order so things cannot flow properly. God is indeed restoring apostles to their full function in His Body, but this does not make them “President” type

leaders on the top of a hierarchical chain of command in a pyramid-like structure of descending authority. A true apostolic call has nothing to do with controlling people. Those who are called to be apostles are your brothers and sisters with problems and areas in their lives that may need loving correction. Nevertheless, apostles are very often used by God to express the authority of Christ. When it is true spiritual authority then it will be recognized by those who are mature. But, when it is carried out in a demeaning and dictatorial manner, then it is just a person trying to assert their own authority.

Jesus clearly tells his apostles, *“You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them, YET IT SHALL NOT BE SO AMONG YOU, but whoever desires to be great among you, let him be your servant.”* (Matt. 20:25-26, and Luke 24:30) Jesus condemns the whole idea of using civil authority hierarchy methods for exercising spiritual authority in the Kingdom of God. As God’s real purpose for authority becomes known, we will begin to see a restoration of true spiritual authority as well as dominion authority (instead of the civil authority). Jesus will bring a proper union of both of these pure types of authorities as described in Zechariah 6:13: *“He shall build the temple of the Lord... He shall be a priest (spiritual authority) on His throne (king with dominion authority), and the counsel of peace shall be between both offices.”* Only in Christ can there be a proper balance of both dominion and spiritual authority.

Moses set up a hierarchy government not by the direction of God, but by the direction of his father-in-law Jethro. And since Moses was operating under the Old Covenant, the Lord blessed this civil type authority, but it is not His perfect will for His people who are now under the Newer Covenant. Moses and David were foreshadows of JESUS alone and not any particular man. When leaders compare themselves to Moses for the purpose of persuading others to “submit” then it is often a subtle game of manipulation and control. Hebrews 13:17 says, *“Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive for they watch out for your souls.”* But another translation of the Greek could easily read: *“Allow yourself to be persuaded by those who have guardianship among the flock.”* There is a big difference in our perspective and the Greek words used to describe these functions!

When people tried to tell Moses to stop others who were prophesying, Moses said, *“Oh, that ALL the Lord’s people were prophets and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!”* (Num. 11:29) Moses was called the *“meekest man who ever lived,”* and meekness involves being childlike in approachableness and willing to listen to others. God’s true leaders will have the integrity and character (meek and lowly) that is paramount in those who carry spiritual authority. Bringing correction is a key component of leadership, but the attitude and manner in which correction is implemented is just as important as what is right and what is wrong. Acts 20:28 shows us that the leaders and elders were not “over” the church but “among” the flock. They were guardians, caretakers and servants of God’s people. Unfortunately, many Bible translations do not reflect this original truth.

In the 17th century, the Anglican church translated the Scriptures according to their own bias toward a hierarchical institution of church. This positional mindset debases spiritual authority to titles, ranks, and job descriptions like some kind of corporation. All of the Greek words used for official rulers or dignitaries or religious officers are missing from the Scriptures. Instead, the Greek words like “servant” and “waiter” and “bus-boy” are used for positions of leadership in God’s assemblies. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor/teachers are descriptions of FUNCTIONS that people DO and not titles of rank to put in front of their name. In order for the Body of Christ to come into proper order, there must be a dismantling of the current clergy/laity system that infiltrates so much of the church.

Spiritual Authority	Spiritual Authority Mixed with Civil Authority
1. Fosters the Priesthood of ALL Believers	1. Fosters a Clergy/Laity Mentality
2. Fosters Mutual Subjection to one another	2. Fosters People controlling other people
3. Fosters Mentor/Accountability Relationships	3. Fosters Professional/Client Relationships
4. Is no respecter of persons (all are equal)	4. Places certain people with higher value
5. Everyone has different gifts by the Spirit	5. A Few have titles representing their gifts

6. Jesus is head of the assembly	6. Jesus' authority is usurped/lessened by man
7. Encourages congregational participation	7. Encourages spectator-performer meetings
8. Operates like a body or living organism	8. Operates like a robot or corporation
9. Facilitates unity and welcomes diversity	9. Facilitates denominations and fosters sects
10. Is manifested through servants, fathers and humble teachable kingdom seekers	10. Often creates tyrants, Ceasars, and slave-drivers with goals of building an empire
11. Fosters "Dinner Table" fellowship	11. Fosters "Pulpit to Pew" organization
12. Is the corporate expression of Jesus Christ	12. Is a religious corporation expressing its own specific giftings

The whole modern idea of a spiritual "covering" being widely used in the church has no Scriptural basis either. This word *covering* is only used once in the New Testament and it deals with a woman's head covering. Rather, a believer's "protection" comes from their mutual subjection to one another. Spiritual authority has been given to the entire body and not to a select few. When church leaders try to function as a "covering" for others, like a CEO of a corporation would, then they become usurpers of the headship of Christ. This impersonal "professional" atmosphere opens the door for the "Jezebel" type of rebellion and the "Absalom" type of disloyalty that also usurps the headship of Christ. When you truly "*know those who labor among you*" you can nip in the bud these types of wrong attitudes.

Those through whom God wields spiritual authority never demand obedience to themselves. Rather they persuade and appeal with pleas like the apostle Paul did (1 Cor. 7:6,25; 2 Cor. 8:8). Paul almost always addresses the churches with the Greek words *parakalein* (appeal) and *erotao* (request) and not with *epitage* (commandment). In the end, it is only LOVE that has "covering" power (1 Peter 4:8, Prov. 10:12, 17:9). And the way of love is always the way of the Cross, which is what mutual subjection to one another works out in each of us. "*As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.*" (Prov. 27:17)

Jesus was very clear about spiritual authority in Luke 22:25-26 when He says that: *“The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called benefactors. BUT NOT SO AMONG YOU, on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves.”* So the one who serves is the one who really leads with spiritual authority.

The real question is: Who is in charge? Is Jesus really head of His Church? Or are the “leaders” usurping His authority by trying to carry out spiritual authority with civil authority methods? Demanding that people submit to “leaders” because of the function God has given them, such as apostles or prophets, is not right. The pope in the Catholic church is a prime example of how man has taken the seat of authority from Christ into his own hands. But, even small “non-denominational” churches do the same thing when they set up a clergy/laity system of relationship. The only clergy is Jesus, and all authority comes through Him. We must learn to recognize Him whether He decides to speak through a seasoned pastor or an eight year old child. The problem is that we have not been taught this way.

Spiritual authority can only be understood properly when we learn how the Holy Spirit teaches. So how does the Holy Spirit teach? *“Not in words which man’s wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual”* (1 Cor. 2:13). So the key is to compare the things the Lord is saying among the many members of His body with whom He has you connected. Patience is a must here. Way too often we will get a prophetic word or a dream from the Lord and then seek the interpretation from people that we respect instead of seeking God and letting Him bring the interpretation from wherever He chooses. We must seek God and not man. One way to do this is to keep a daily journal or flow chart and write down questions to the Lord and things from His word and Spirit that He shows you. This will help you to wait on God’s direction for His will in your life.

“Majority rule” and democracy are NOT the methods in God’s Kingdom to make decisions. In the New Testament, decisions were often made simply by the consensus of the entire assembly as Acts

15:22,25,28 shows: *“for it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things...”* If Jesus is head of the assembly then Jesus is well able to give us His mind on issues which is why Scriptures so often admonish us to be of *“one mind”* (Rom 15:5-7; 1Cor.1:10; 2Cor.13:11; Eph 4:3, and Phil 2:2, 4:2). The problem is often a matter of patience and trust. If Jesus was able to entrust the entire future of God’s Kingdom on earth to His disciples who had just betrayed Him, how much more should we be able to trust Christ who lives in our brothers and sisters regardless of all their imperfections. It is not about us, it is about Jesus IN us (Col. 1:27) and we must be patient until we see Him.

This trust will build a unity that is unbreakable. The scheme of the enemy is to divide and then conquer, which is why we have so many denominations and sects. We need to be able to communicate about our differences without “cutting off” each other. We need to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, even if we cannot come to agreement on every single issue. We already HAVE a unity in the Spirit, because Eph. 4:3 tells us to KEEP it, and this unity does not have to be broken because of minor doctrinal disagreements. Satan is the one who brings division and is behind “cutting off” people from fellowship who see things differently than we do.

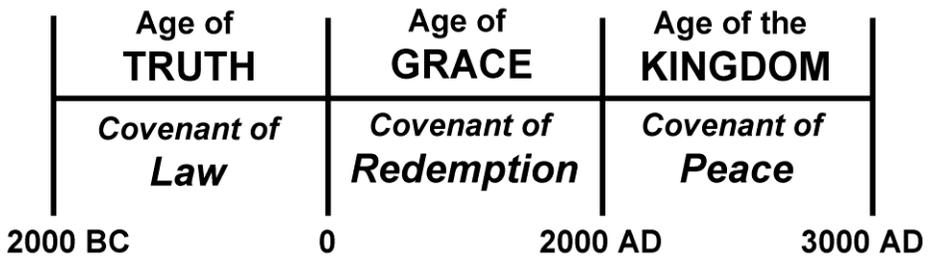
God is changing how we understand “church” and part of this paradigm shift is understanding how spiritual authority works apart from the controlling and dominating hierarchical methods of civil authority. This will liberate and set free God’s leaders from false obligations to unrighteously “rule over” others. It will also set God’s people free to hear from God themselves and function in their high calling as priests and kings. I pray that this false doctrine of the Nicolaitans will be exposed and repented of so that Jesus can once again be head of His church and so that we can see His glory in His Bride Body.

This proper understanding of **authority** will help prepare us for the coming new age of the Kingdom. The Kingdom Age is expanded upon in the Scriptures as the “Covenant of Peace.” The next chapter will discuss this Covenant of Peace which God has made with mankind describing the Millennial (1,000 year) Age in which we find ourselves transitioning into. It will be a time when mature sons come to glory!

Chapter 5

Covenant of Peace: The Millennial Age

Could this covenant define the coming Millennial Age? The coming “Age of the Kingdom” is literally upon us in our generation. The chart below shows the three main Covenants that God has established with mankind, and the resulting age of understanding that followed:



As we are entering this new age of the Kingdom, it is vitally important that we understand this Covenant of Peace. Jesus came “full of GRACE and TRUTH” and left us with His PEACE, but not the peace that this present world calls peace. This chapter is written to explore the peace of God which passes understanding and in particular to look at the “Covenant of Peace” which will define the coming new age where Jesus reigns the earth in righteousness.

A **covenant** is a binding agreement that serves as a title deed or legal document of guarantee. Therefore, the Covenant of Peace is like a contract which describes the terms and conditions of God’s “peace plan” for mankind. Just like the Covenant of Redemption details the terms and conditions of God’s redemption for mankind, the Covenant of Peace will define what is needed to partake in the coming Age of Peace.

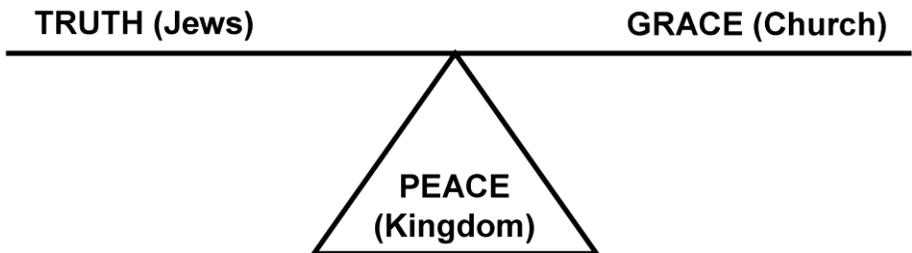
There are actually seven major Covenants that God has initiated with mankind.⁴ The three already mentioned in the previous time-line are the main Covenants, similar to the three main Feasts of the Lord out of the total of seven. Below is a chart showing the seven Covenants and the person through whom God initiated each one:

The Seven Major Covenants of God with Mankind (Main Three in Bold)	
1. Covenant of Dominion	Adam
2. Covenant of Preservation	Noah
3. Covenant of Land	Abraham
4. Covenant of Law	Moses
5. Covenant of Government	David
6. Covenant of Redemption	Jesus
7. Covenant of Peace	Phinehas

When Moses initiated the Covenant of the Law, God created the physical nation of Israel. When Jesus gave the New Covenant of Redemption, God created the spiritual nation we call “the Church.” Now it is time for God to bring these two together. Both the spiritual and the natural must be in perfect balance, so God can create for Himself “*one new man*” from the two that will bring true peace in an Age of Peace. “*For He Himself is our peace, who has made both (Jew and Gentile) one, and has broken down the middle wall of division between us, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off (Gentiles) and to those who were near (Jews).*” (Eph. 2:14-17)

In other words, for about 2,000 years natural Israel had a piece of the “Peace” puzzle, and for the past 2,000 years spiritual Israel had the other piece of the “Peace” puzzle. The second coming of Jesus will combine these two puzzle pieces in what Scripture calls “a mystery” and will bring true lasting peace. “*Having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensations of the fullness of the times He*

might gather together **in one** all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth - in Him... that we who first trusted in Christ (Jews), should be to the praise of His glory. In Him you also trusted (Gentiles), after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.” (Eph. 1:9,10,12,13) The natural Jewish patriarchs from the Scriptures have the correct order, form, structure, and organization for God’s government, while spiritual Israel (the Church) has the correct substance, life, and attitude of heart for those who are to be a part of God’s government. For example, the Feasts of the Lord (see Exodus 23, Leviticus 23) celebrated by the Jews are the basic structure of God’s worship system. While the Fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), which are evident in the true Christians are the correct heart attitudes for the people of God’s Kingdom.



As this balance graphic shows, the correct combination of Truth and Grace (natural order and spiritual reality) will characterize the peace of the Kingdom Age. The truth of the natural order was given through Moses in the law, and truth as a spiritual reality came with grace through Jesus. The Kingdom of God being manifested during the next 1,000 years will be the perfect balance between Truth and Grace as the above figure shows. This is the Life of Messiah being duplicated in His children or mature sons. God is in the process of making us into His image. Jesus is our perfect example, and His life was the perfect example of truth, grace and peace. The destiny of mankind is to reflect these characteristics as Jesus did when He walked the earth. Since ALL of Peter & Paul’s epistles in the New Testament begin and/or end by writing “*Grace and Peace*” to us, we can be sure these are major building blocks that God has been trying to instill in mankind for thousands of years. Jesus wept over Jerusalem saying, “*If you had only known, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.*” (Luke 19:42) Israel had

God's truth, but was blinded to most of His grace. Therefore, the peace they desired was not yet possible because true peace requires the divine balance of understanding both Truth AND Grace. Just like a balanced diet is a pre-requisite to good health, having a BALANCED spiritual diet will be a key characteristic in those who will partake in the coming Age of Peace.

Government & Peace

Government and Peace are connected, because peace comes from order and order comes from government. This is why the millennial reign of Christ will be a reign of peace, because God's order/government will be established. For example, when a region is at war with rebellion and disarray, we want to bring peace and order. This means going in and setting up some form of government that people are willing to submit to. The Kingdom of God is also a government. Unlike the governments of this current age, the Kingdom of God is a government that is pure, righteous and perfect, but it is only in effect where it is welcomed and received.

Let's compare the government of God to the current kingdoms of this world. Imagine all of the current nations of the world together at a United Nations meeting. Everyone at this meeting is concerned about one thing: what is best for me. They are all thinking, "What can I do here to benefit my nation which is of course the best nation." They are willing to step on others in order to better themselves. Their motto is to look out for themselves because no one else will.

Now imagine all of the nations of the world coming together at the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem with the main objective to honor the Lord and focus on Him for an entire week. It would be like a huge family reunion where everyone is concerned about how they can bless and benefit others. I compare it to when my extended family goes out to dinner and everyone is fighting to pick up the bill because we want to be a blessing to our family members, and we are more concerned about what is best for them rather than what is best for ourselves.

In order to bring about God's government of peace, the current world order of government must be changed drastically. Revelation 18 describes this world system as "Babylon" and portrays her downfall. God has to bring His people out of Egypt (another type and shadow of the world system) so that we can worship Him according to His system of government based around the three main celebration Feasts of the Lord. God is going to bring judgments upon this world system as He says once again, "Let my people go, so that they may worship Me." These hardships (plagues) will begin to separate those in Goshen (trusting in God's provision) from those in Egypt (trusting in money). Just like plagues were sent in Abraham's day to set his wife Sarah free, the plagues coming in our day will set the Lord's wife (His Bride Body) free from the order of this Babylonian world system. Any part of our lives which is founded on the selfish principles of this world will be judged along with the world.

This pattern of judgment and then blessing is found over and over in the Scriptures, especially in the Scriptures that pertain to the Covenant of Peace. We see judgment on God's leadership/people and then judgment on God's enemies. Blessing and peace only comes after the fires of cleansing judgment. If we really had eyes to see like the Lord, we would rejoice in the judgments of the Lord in our own lives, because after the heartfelt repentance we would have the peace that we so desire. Lord, have mercy on us and on those around us so that we may embrace the cleansing fires of Your judgment and be a part of Your righteous Covenant of Peace!

Covenant of Peace Word Study

In the King James translation of Scripture the word "covenant" appears 272 times, and the word "peace" appears 400 times. However, the phrase "covenant of peace" occurs only four times:

#1 Numbers 25:12-13 – "Therefore say, "Behold, I give to him (Phinehas son of Eleazar) My **covenant of peace**; and it shall be to him and his descendents after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel."

#2 Isaiah 54:9-10 – “For this is like the waters of Noah to Me; For as I have sworn that the waters of Noah would no longer cover the earth, So have I sworn that I would not be angry with you, nor rebuke you. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from you, Nor shall My **covenant of peace** be removed,” says the LORD who has mercy on you.”

#3 Ezekiel 34:25 – “And I will make with them (My flock/people) a **covenant of peace**, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods.”

#4 Ezekiel 37:26 – “Moreover I will make a **covenant of peace** with them (the combined house of Israel); it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore.”

There are many Scriptures which speak indirectly about the Covenant of Peace, often referring to it as “*an everlasting covenant*” (Isa. 55:3, 61:8, Jer. 32:40), “*an everlasting sign*” (Isa. 55:13), “*My covenant*” (Isa. 59:21, Jer. 33:20, Ezekiel 16:60), “*a covenant*” (Hos. 2:18), or a “*perpetual covenant*” (Jer. 50:5). Even more indirectly, the Covenant of Peace could be referring to the “*everlasting kingdom*” (Dan. 7:27), the “*tabernacle of David*” (Amos 9:11), the “*Day of the Lord*” (Joel 2, 2 Pet. 3:10), or even the “*latter temple*” (Hag. 2:9, Zech 8:9, Mal. 3:1). However, this study will only take a look at the four direct quotes of the “covenant of peace.” Then we can try to draw some conclusions about what God’s Covenant of Peace involves. We will look the longest at #1 because we want to take a deep look at Phinehas, who was the first to be given this “*Covenant of Peace*.”

Phinehas: The Example of Peace

#1 Numbers 25:12-13 - “*Therefore say, “Behold, I give to him (Phinehas son of Eleazar) My **covenant of peace**; and it shall be to him and his descendents after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood,*

because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel.”

Who is Phinehas? And why was he the first one to be given this “covenant of peace” or “covenant of an everlasting priesthood?” Phinehas was the son of Eleazar, who was the son of Aaron. This is the same Aaron who was the first chief priest and brother of Moses. Phinehas’ name is mentioned fifteen times in Scripture: five times in connection with genealogy records, and ten times in connection with four different incidents, which we will discuss in detail. (This Phinehas son of Eleazar should not be confused with Phinehas son of Eli, mentioned in 1 Samuel chapters 1-4 who was killed by the Philistines and had a child named Icabod.)

Phinehas, son of Eleazar, was a Levitical priest whose royal-priesthood lineage produced Ezra the priest who later led the captives up from Babylon (Ezra 7:5). 1 Chron. 9:19-20 says that “*the Lord was with him (Phinehas)*” and that he was officer over those in charge of the work of service in the tabernacle, and over the gatekeepers and keepers of the entrance to the camp of the Lord. Although Scripture never says that Phinehas was a “*high (chief) priest*” it is almost certain that he was a high priest, because his father Eleazar was a high priest after Aaron died (Num. 3:32) and Phinehas was Eleazar’s only son listed in Scripture (Ex. 6:25). This would put him next in line for the chief priesthood.

So Phinehas was definitely a priest and most likely the high priest at some point in time.

Scripture also tells us exactly why Phinehas was honored with Yahweh’s Covenant of Peace and repeats it twice... once in Numbers 25:11 – “*Phinehas has turned back My wrath from the children of Israel because he was zealous with My zeal among them, so that I did not consume the children of Israel in My zeal.*” ... And a second time in Numbers 25:12,13 – “*Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace and it shall be to him and his descendants after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement (covering/intercession) for the children of Israel.*”

Psalm 106 confirms that Phinehas' zeal & intercession was rewarded by God with an everlasting covenant when verses 30-31 say, "*then Phinehas stood up and intervened, and so the plague was stopped. And that was accounted to him for righteousness to all generations forevermore.*" Our father Abraham, who was given an everlasting covenant, is often called the "Father of Faith" because he trusted God to raise his son Isaac from the dead "*and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*" (Gal 3:6) Likewise, our father Phinehas could rightly be called the "Father of Peace" because he was zealous to judge and remove the unrighteousness in the camp of the Lord and was therefore given an everlasting covenant. Both Abraham and Phinehas serve as our examples. (1 Cor. 10:11)

This account of Phinehas stopping the plague is one of the four stories in which he appears in the Scriptures. The other three have amazing parallels, where each time he appears on the scene, he is acting as a peacemaker bringing first judgment and then peace among the Israeli brethren. The four accounts of Phinehas the priest are found: first in **Numbers 25**; second in **Numbers 31**; third in **Joshua 22**, and fourth in **Judges 19-21**. Each of these will now be discussed:

The **1st mention of Phinehas in Numbers chapter 25** covers the entire account of how Israel began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab/Midian and how Phinehas intervened to turn back God's wrath. The people of Israel accepted invitations to sacrifice to Moab/Midian gods and "*so Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel.*" (vs. 3)

The Lord then told Moses to execute (hang) all the offenders so that His anger would turn away. However, Zimri - a leader among the Israelite men, would not kill Cozbi his Midianite wife and they paraded in front of Moses and the tabernacle in open defiance. Cozbi's father was also a leader: "*head of the people of a father's house in Midian.*" So when Phinehas saw this rebellion, he rose up and thrust a javelin through both Zimri and Cozbi while in their tent. This stopped the plague that had already killed 24,000, and ended up sparing many lives in the long run.

So Phinehas' zeal to obey God and get rid of the unrighteous leaders in the camp of Israel was the attitude that God was looking for to be His model peacemaker. Hence, it was accounted to him as righteousness to all generations forevermore, because even today he serves as our example of the way to make peace: to have the zeal of the Lord... **“to love righteousness and hate lawlessness.”** (Ps. 45:6,7; Heb. 1:9)

The **2nd mention of Phinehas in Numbers chapter 31** contains the account of Moses taking vengeance for the children of Israel on the Midianites according to the Lord's command. Verse 6 mentions that Moses sent Phinehas to war against the Midianites with the holy articles and the signal trumpets in his hand. This command to war is in connection with the first account of Phinehas in Numbers 25 because Numbers 25:16-18 says, *“the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Harass the Midianites, and attack them; for they harassed you with their schemes by which they seduced you in the matter of Peor and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of a leader of Midian, their sister, who was killed in the day of the plague because of Peor.”*

The thing to remember is that Moses' wife was a Midianite! (Exodus 2:16,17). Moses himself had lived in Midian for 40 years, and had two children who were half Midianite. It was like attacking your own family! So once again Phinehas, the man awarded with the everlasting Covenant of Peace, leads the battle cry against people close enough to be considered family.

I am sure that it was a painful decision for Moses and Phinehas to attack family in Midian, yet they had more zeal for the righteous standards of Yahweh God than they did for “protecting their own turf.” It reminds me of Jesus' words when He said, *“If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.”* (Luke 14:26)

The **3rd mention of Phinehas in Joshua chapter 22** gives the next story of our hero Phinehas. Guess when the “man of peace” gets called in again on the scene? Again, it is during a time of conflict between brethren (the tribes of Israel). At least this time, Phinehas was able to solve the problem without bloodshed.

The point of contention was over an altar that the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh had built. These three tribes were on the east side of the Jordan River, while all the other tribes of Israel were west of the Jordan. All of the tribes on the west side of the Jordan thought that these three tribes were rebelling against the Lord by building this altar outside of the only tabernacle prescribed by God to worship. Therefore, they prepared to go to war against them.

Phinehas was the man chosen by Israel to go with their 10 tribal leaders and speak to these three tribes about this altar they had built. However, it turned out that the reason they built the altar was not to worship falsely outside of the tabernacle, but to teach their children to fear the Lord. Since the Jordan River was a barrier to the Lord's tabernacle on the west side of the Jordan, they wanted to teach their descendents the ways of God. So the altar was a "witness/testimony" of the Lord and not a place where they actually offered burnt offerings. It served as a replica of the altar of the Lord.

This pleased Phinehas and the 10 western tribe leaders as Joshua 22:30-32 confirms:

"Now when Phinehas the priest, and the princes of the congregation and heads of the thousands of Israel which were with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the children of Manasseh spake, it pleased them. And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said to the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the children of Manasseh, "This day we perceive that the LORD is among us, because you have not committed this trespass against the LORD: now you have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the LORD." Then Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and the princes, returned from the children of Reuben, and from the children of Gad, out of the land of Gilead, unto the land of Canaan, to the children of Israel, and brought them word again. So the thing pleased the children of Israel; and the children of Israel blessed God, and did not intend to go up against them in battle, to destroy the land wherein the children of Reuben and Gad dwelt. And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad called the altar Witness: for it shall be a witness between us that the LORD is God."

Phinehas was acting as a judge between the tribes of Israel. He was a righteous judge who was not afraid to confront wrongdoers and go to battle if necessary. Yet he was also sensitive enough not to judge by outward appearances but get to the heart of the matter, such as in this case, when it was simply a misunderstanding and not a sin against God. Isaiah 11:3-4 describes the Messiah who will rule in the 1,000 year reign of peace, but also describes the heart of Phinehas and all of those who will rule and reign with Christ during the millennium: *“His delight is in the fear of the Lord, and He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, nor decide by the hearing of His ears; But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth.”*

The **4th mention of Phinehas in Judges chapters 19-21** provides the final account of Phinehas. Once again, Phinehas is called on the scene during a major conflict between the (brethren) tribes, which ends up in a bloody war of all Israel against the tribe of Benjamin. This civil war almost wiped out the entire tribe of Benjamin.

The story begins with a traveling Levite who stayed the night in a town called Gibeah in the land of Benjamin. Perverted men came at night and raped and murdered his concubine. To make a graphic point of the evil that these men from Benjamin had done, the Levite, *“took a knife, laid hold of his concubine, and dismembered her into twelve pieces, limb by limb, and sent her throughout all the territory of Israel.”* (Judges 19:29)

Needless to say, this fired things up in Israel and all of the tribes in Israel rallied to go up against the city of Gibeah and kill the perverted men of Benjamin who did this wicked thing. But the children of Benjamin would not listen to reason and decided to go to battle against all of Israel.

The children of Israel went up to the house of God to ask counsel about the battle and twice God told them to go fight Benjamin. However, both days Israel was defeated before the mighty men of Benjamin losing 22,000 men the first day and 18,000 the second day!

The third day Israel fasted and wept and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings to the Lord and again inquired of the Lord. Then, the

only time Phinehas' name is mentioned in this account, Judges 20:27-28 says: *"the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, and Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, stood before it in those days, saying, "Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of my brother Benjamin, or shall I cease?" And the Lord said, "Go up, for tomorrow I will deliver them into your hand."* Then Israel went to battle and killed almost ALL of the 26,000 men of Benjamin. The men of Israel struck down men and beasts and all who were found and set fire to all the cities of Benjamin. Only 600 men of the tribe of Benjamin were left, and they fled toward the wilderness and stayed for four months.

Although Israel was able to restore Benjamin by providing wives for the 600 Benjamites who were left, it was a costly way to have to bring peace to rebellious brethren.

So in all of these accounts of Phinehas, who was given the "covenant of peace" and the "covenant of the everlasting priesthood," we see a man who would not tolerate unrighteousness in the camp of the Lord. We see a man who was willing to endure temporary bloodshed and warfare with the greater vision in mind of having a lasting peace where righteousness rules. Yet, he was not "blood thirsty" and just looking for the wrong in everybody. He was able to discern the heart of an issue, whether it was a sin against God or just a misunderstanding.

How opposite from what our current world governments uphold as a peacemaker! I have seen our generation give a terrorist the Nobel Peace Prize and honor him at national prayer breakfasts with the hope that he will "try harder and change his ways." A study on this terrorist will reveal that even from his childhood his life was characterized by brutal murders and deceiving his own people. He was responsible for untold numbers of atrocities which would make the wicked men in Benjamin blush! And yet we call him a peacemaker?

Although God's idea of a peacemaker may make it necessary to go to battle and war, it is only to uphold true justice and not for selfish motives. Notice what Jesus, who is our ultimate example of a peacemaker, says in Matthew 10:34-39: *"Do you think that I came to bring peace on the earth? I did not come to bring peace but a sword."*

For I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes will be those of his own household. He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take up his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it."

These words come from the Prince of Peace, who understood that sometimes it is necessary to divide against our brethren if they are in disobedience to God. This is what Phinehas did when he interceded and went to war against the tribe of Benjamin. He was standing for what was right. Instead of winking at sin, he allowed sin to be judged and in the long run this brought liberty to all of Israel.

Even Solomon, whose reign is a foreshadow of the peaceful millennial reign of Christ, had a period of warfare for the first four years of his reign where there was much bloodshed and vengeance on the enemies of God within the camp of Israel. Adonijah, one of David's sons who presumed to be king, was executed. Abiathar the wicked priest was exiled and later executed. Joab the commander of David's armies who had shed innocent blood was executed and Shimei who had cursed David was also executed. So even Solomon's reign of peace was preceded by the dividing of God's true leadership from those who had presumed leadership.

God's coming leaders for the new age will be peacemakers. These peacemakers are called "*sons of God*" (Matt. 5:9), and the whole creation longs for the revealing of these "*sons of God*" (Rom 8:19). These peacemakers may bring momentary division and warfare, but afterward there will be the millennial reign of Messiah where peace and righteousness reigns throughout the earth. Paul warned of this "*great falling away*" (2 Thess. 2:3) that would come before Messiah's second coming, and Revelation also speaks about a 3 ½ year tribulation period that acts as a transition time into the 1,000 year period of peace. "*We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.*" (Acts 14:22)

So the next time you see division in the body of Christ, perhaps the Lord is in the process of bringing true everlasting peace? This is not free license to get into strife with brothers and sisters in Christ, but Paul said, *“I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you.”* (1 Cor. 11:19-20) Sometimes the best way we can walk in love with someone is to confront them on sin and allow their sin to be judged so that they can repent and be reconciled back to God and man (1 Cor. 5:5). This is how Jesus loved the Pharisees and Scribes.

How do we know who is on the Lord’s side in a division among brethren? *“The purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart”* (1 Tim. 1:5), and the pure in heart will see God. If we have a pure heart, we will have pure doctrine. *“Let no one deceive you, He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He (Jesus) is righteous.”* (1 John 3:7) So, our morality will effect our doctrine. Corruption and sin blinds us to the truth. People with corrupt hearts have corrupt doctrine and they CANNOT see the truth because God blinds them (John 12:40). The answer is not to choose sides, but to choose the Lord and His righteousness. As Joshua found out in battle, the Lord is neither on our side nor on our enemy’s side, He is for righteousness (Joshua 5:13)!

The conclusion that can be drawn from the life of Phinehas is that we must make a stand for righteousness bearing the necessary warfare that often comes before a true lasting peace. One caution that we must always keep in mind is that *“we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this age, and demonic forces in the heavenlies”* (Eph. 6:12). If we are walking in love and find ourselves in confrontation with brethren, the real battle is with the spirits of evil that are blinding them and not the person himself/herself (2 Cor. 4:4). Even in the midst of confrontation our ultimate goal is restoration and reconciliation, not separation.

We have just looked at the first reference of “Covenant of Peace” in the scriptures, and the man Phinehas who was first given this covenant. Our study will now continue with the second reference:

Covenant of Peace in Isaiah

#2 Isaiah 54:9,10 – *“For this is like the waters of Noah to Me; For as I have sworn that the waters of Noah would no longer cover the earth, So have I sworn that I would not be angry with you, nor rebuke you.*

*For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, But my kindness shall not depart from you, Nor shall My **covenant of peace** be removed, says the Lord who has compassion on you.”*

This promise spoken by Isaiah above is compared to the Covenant of Noah, which is a covenant of preservation where God promised to preserve the earth and mankind and never again destroy all living things. In the context of Isaiah 54, God is speaking this comforting word to a woman who is “barren” (vs. 1) and “forsaken and grieved in spirit, like a youthful wife when you were refused” (vs. 6). God tells this woman that, “for a mere moment I have forsaken you, but with great mercies I will gather you. With a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; but with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you.” (vs. 7,8) Surely, this woman represents the Bride of Christ and the spiritual descendents of Phinehas who will inherit the “Covenant of Peace.” At first she is grieved and forsaken because of judgment and chastisement on her sins, which works righteousness in her life, but then she is comforted with a reign of peace. (Heb. 12:3-11, Isa. 32:17)

It is interesting to note that the chapter just before this one is Isaiah 53 which speaks in detail about the sin-bearing suffering servant. Then chapter 55, which follows our “Covenant of Peace” chapter, discusses in detail about the abundant life of joy and peace. Just like in the life of Phinehas, we find the pattern of judgment and then blessing. We see sin having to be dealt with openly and honestly before we see the effects of peace becoming a reality in the earth.

Jesus’ finished work on the cross is the only work that can take care of the sin that blocks us from peace. We only have access to the Covenant of Peace through the blood of Jesus. We only have an inheritance in the Covenant of Peace through being found “**in Him.**” As Ephesians 2:12-13 shows us, ALL of God’s promises or covenants are made available to us through the Blood of Christ: *“At that time you were*

*without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from **the covenants of promise**, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been made near by the **blood of Christ.***”

Covenant of Peace in Ezekiel

#3 Ezekiel 34:25 – *“And I will make with them (My flock/people) a **covenant of peace**, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods.”* The third and fourth places where the term “covenant of peace” is used in the Scriptures is found in Ezekiel.

Once again, we find in the context of the Covenant of Peace a judgment upon God’s leadership. Chapter 34 starts out with the Lord rebuking the irresponsible shepherds for feeding themselves instead of feeding His sheep. He then gathers His flock and judges them and establishes His new leadership/government for them.

The Lord says in verses 23 and 24: *“I will establish one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them - My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them.”* The very next verses (34: 25-31) explain in the best detail available in Scripture what the Covenant of Peace will be like:

*“I will make a **covenant of peace** with them (God’s sheep/flock/people), and cause wild beasts to cease from the land; and they will dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. I will make them and the places all around My hill a blessing; and I will cause showers to come down in their season; there shall be showers of blessing. (God’s people will finally be a blessing in the earth where the land and animals will thrive too) Then the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase. They shall be safe in their land; and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke and delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them. And they shall no longer be a*

prey for the nations, nor shall beasts of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and no one shall make them afraid. I will raise up for them a garden of renown, and they shall no longer be consumed with hunger in the land, nor bear the shame of the Gentiles anymore. (A picture of restoration similar to the garden of Eden when man has dominion over the earth and uses it wisely) Thus they shall know that I, the Lord their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are My people says the Lord God. You are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you are men, and I am your God, says the Lord God.”

This is an awesome description of the restoration of mankind and His purpose to live and rule the earth! Notice that this Covenant of Peace is made with **us** His people, and that Ezekiel is writing in future tense: “*I will make.*” What a great time we live in today, when the King of kings will soon make a Covenant of Peace with us and with all His creation here on earth! It will truly be a “new age.” Just like when Jesus came the first time and initiated the age of Grace, a new age of Peace is literally at our doorstep.

#4 Ezekiel 37:26 – *“Moreover I will make a **covenant of peace** with them (the combined house of Israel); it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore.”* This final place in Scripture where the phrase “covenant of peace” is found is located only three chapters after the last occurrence in Ezekiel.

Again we find the judgment and then blessing pattern repeated, because chapter 35 discusses the judgment against Mount Seir and then chapter 36 discusses the blessing on Israel. Since Mt. Seir and all of Edom has always had an ancient hatred for Israel and shed innocent blood, they will reap what they have sown and be “desolate.” Yet Israel who was made desolate by Edom and her surrounding neighbors shall be rebuilt and inhabited and stumble no more.

Chapter 37 then reiterates Israel’s restoration in two graphic visions. The first vision is the valley of dry bones, representing natural Israel, which comes back to life from the dead. The second vision is the two

sticks of Joseph and Judah, which become one in God's hand. The stick of Joseph in the hand of Ephraim represents spiritual Israel (the Church), and the stick of Judah represents natural Israel (the Jews). After the two are joined together in the land of Israel, the Covenant of Peace will be in operation in a much greater way. This chapter then ends with the Lord describing His Covenant of Peace:

Ezekiel 37:23-28 – *“They (the combined house of Israel) shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God. David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them. Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children’s children, forever; and My servant David shall be their prince forever. Moreover I will make a **covenant of peace** with them, and it shall be an **everlasting covenant** with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore.*

My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people. The nations also will know that I, the Lord, sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.”

God's sanctuary (the Millennial Temple), as described in Ezekiel 40-48, will be set up and functioning for about 1,000 years as a teaching tool for His people so we can learn to BE His pure and holy temple for all eternity.

It is interesting to note the judgment and then blessing pattern once again in the final chapters of Ezekiel. Chapters 38 and 39 speak about judgment on Gog and Magog, and then the final nine chapters of Ezekiel describe in detail the blessing of God's Millennial Temple. This temple will be in the midst of Israel during the reign of Messiah. A study model of this temple will be discussed in chapter seven.

Judgment and the Covenant of Peace

So we find the pattern of judgment and then blessing over and over surrounding the Scriptures that pertain to the Covenant of Peace. Judgment on God's leadership/people and then judgment on God's enemies. Blessing and peace only comes after the fires of cleansing judgment. The book of Judges is almost redundant with Israel being judged for sins; then they repent and find blessing and then fall back into sin again, and the pattern repeats itself over and over. It seems like God has allowed this pattern to occur for 6,000 years, since the creation of mankind, to teach us to trust in Him and not our own righteousness. However, God's promise of a Covenant of Peace is hope that we will finally learn from history and our own mistakes not to fall into this vicious cycle of sin and judgment. Hebrews 12:11 tells us, "*...no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*" We need to rejoice in the judgments of the Lord in our own lives, because afterward we would have our desired peace in a perpetual covenant of peace.

"Your judgments are good... true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, sweeter than the honey and the honeycomb... by them your servant is warned." (Ps. 119:39; Ps. 19:9-11) God's judgment on nations is also good, true and righteous. Scripture is clear that ALL the nations of the earth will be judged at the beginning of the 1,000 year Age of Peace (Joel 3, Zech. 12:9). The book of Revelation describes in detail this transition period of judgment between the Age of Grace and the Age of Peace. About this judgment Jesus says, "*except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.*" (Matt. 24:22, Mark 13:20) Isaiah 26:20 tells us to hide during this short time of wrath saying: "*Come my people, enter your chambers, and shut your doors behind you; Hide yourself, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation (wrath) is past. For behold, the Lord comes out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth will also disclose her blood, and will no more cover her slain. In that day the Lord with His severe sword, great and strong, will punish Leviathan (a principality of Satan) the fleeing*

serpent, Leviathan that twisted serpent, and He will slay the reptile that is in the sea.”

Satan has been “*cast to the earth*” knowing that “*he has a short time,*” but he will be bound during the 1,000 years of Christ’s rule on the earth through His Bride (Rev. 12:9,12; Rev. 20:2).

Throughout the ages, God’s people have always gone through the judgments of the Lord, and been spared alive on the earth. This time will be no different. When Noah was told by God that judgment was coming, God spared him through the flood. Peter and Jesus both compare the end of this Age of Grace to the days of Noah (1 Pet. 3:20, Matt. 24:37, Luke 17:26) where the righteous are saved alive on earth and the wicked are taken from the earth. Also, Jesus compares Lot and the destruction of Sodom with the judgment period we are about to enter (Luke 17:28-37). Again, we see the righteous (Lot and family) being saved alive on the earth, and the wicked (those in Sodom) taken from the earth in judgment.

1 Thess. 4:17 does mention a “rapture” which is a “changing” into our immortal bodies, but it happens in the “*twinkling of an eye*” (1 Cor. 15:52) and then we remain **on the earth** to rule and reign with Jesus. The previous raptures in Scripture (Enoch, Elijah, Philip, and Paul) were not for the purpose of removing God’s people from judgment. Rather, it was because they “*walked with God.*” (Gen. 5:24) Only after Jesus’ Bride walks close to her Bridegroom (Jesus) and is cleansed without spot or wrinkle (Eph. 5:27) will there be any rapture. The coming judgments will bring this cleansing in our walk with the Lord. The rapture is for the purpose of exchanging this corruptible body for an immortal body (1 Cor. 15:35-58) so that we can be more intimate with our Bridegroom. The rapture is not to spare us from judgment, but simply so we can better “*be with the Lord.*” (1 Thess. 4:17)

Abraham survived the plagues in his day. Joseph was spared and even prospered during the famine in his day. Moses and the children of Israel were safe in the land of Goshen during the judgment God sent during their day, while the Egyptians suffered the full force of the plagues. Likewise, we will see the judgments of the Lord fall on the rebellious in our day and it will be a sad and tearful sight to witness.

However, by God's grace we will be spared from it ourselves if our lives are founded upon Jesus. His life in us is the ONLY thing that will not burn up in the judgment. *"Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire."* (Heb. 12:28,29)

Be Led By God's Peace

We have all had to make decisions in life where we seek God earnestly and ask for His direction. If you ask someone how they knew God's will for where they are to be living geographically, or what job to take, you may get an answer like, "I had a peace about it." But if we're honest with ourselves, we can admit that sometimes we've "missed it," and looking back we can see that the "peace" we were being led by in some situations was not God's peace, but rather our own peace often being directed by our selfish desires. Being led by the peace of God is definitely a Scriptural way to make decisions (Phil. 4:7), but we will only have God's peace if we have God's government established in our lives. Peace is like an umpire at a baseball game who enforces the rules that are already in place. Umpires cannot change the rules, they only enforce them. The peace of God does not make the rules; it only enforces the rules that are already established in our hearts. God's peace comes from having the government of God in your life. If we don't have God's government in our lives, then we will have Satan's government, which is based on lawlessness, or "doing what is right in your own eyes." If our lives are not based on God's Word (His Law - His government) then the "peace" that we are led by is not necessarily the peace of God, but will reflect the order/law/government that is already established in our heart. Satan's government has a motto... "Survival of the fittest;" whoever is the strongest will kill and devour the weaker. Everyone's life is established on some form of government. It may be lawlessness, but that is still a government... the government of this current world.

BUT... There has been a seed planted (Jesus) in the earth whose fruit is righteousness! This seed is sown in peace by those who make peace (James 3:18), and by the laws of sowing and reaping this seed will

generate more righteousness. Although this kingdom of righteousness is currently operating on an individual basis right now, the time is at hand when the corporate Bride of Christ will be established by God Himself into a full fledged central government. There are two spiritual governments currently in operation on the earth: Satan's and God's. Although the kingdom of darkness currently has a very poorly managed natural government (the current world system), Satan's government is about to be bound for 1,000 years which will create a climate of righteousness, and in a climate of righteousness peace flourishes! Matthew 13:19 explains that the Word is likened to a seed which is planted and the evil one comes and steals the seed (Word) that was sown. So, when Satan, the evil one, is bound for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:2), He will not be able to steal the Word (seed) that will be sown in the hearts of people. Hence, that seed will be able to grow and we will have God's peace!

God's kind of peacemakers are not pre-occupied with themselves, because *"where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing will be there"* (James 3:16). The opposite of peace is confusion (Babylon). Therefore, peace is the absence of envy and self-seeking. The Age of Peace will be where everyone else is thinking about your needs. You will not be concerned about yourself and your own needs, because you will be too busy concerning yourself with others. Instead of today's attitude, which is "Look out for yourself because no one else will," the Kingdom Age attitude will be "I am my brother's keeper."

What will the Kingdom Age be like?

A kingdom is a reflection of the king who rules it. The greatest thing about the coming Kingdom is that it will reflect the character and purpose of King Jesus! *"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To **order** it and establish it with **judgment** and justice from that time forward, even forever. The **zeal of the Lord** of hosts will perform this."* (Isa. 9:6,7) Doesn't this also remind us of Phinehas?

Scripture further describes what this Kingdom Age will be like. Isaiah 11:6-9 is quoted often to describe the 1,000 year period of peace:

“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat; the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the nursing child shall play by the cobra’s hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper’s den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”

However, we must read the preceding Scriptures before these to understand HOW it will happen: *“But with righteousness He (the Messiah) shall **judge** the poor, and **reprove** with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall **smite** the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he **slay** the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.”*

This shows that Messiah must first bring righteous judgment **before** the promised peace becomes a reality.

Even the current world system desires to have the type of peace that the Bible describes the millennium will have, because the United Nations building in New York has written above its doors the second half of Isaiah 2:4 – *“They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.”* However, they conveniently leave out the first half of this verse which shows the method of HOW this peace will be brought about – *“He (the Lord) shall **judge** between the nations, and shall **rebuke** many people; **THEN** They shall beat their swords into plowshares...”*

Also, the peace described in this above Scripture will not come from the U.N. building in New York. If you read the three verses (Isa. 2:1-3) before the one quoted on the U.N. building, it will tell you exactly where the government of true peace will be headquartered:

*“The word that Isaiah the son of Amos saw concerning **Judah and Jerusalem**. And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD’S house (His seat of government) shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from **Jerusalem**.”*

Jerusalem, Israel is the eternal capital of the earth where Jesus the Jewish Messiah will be king over all the kingdoms of the earth. Ezekiel chapters 40-48 describes His temple building which will serve as a 1,000-year object lesson for His Bride the Church who will be learning to BE the eternal temple.

The reason that God has brought the natural nation of Israel back together in our generation is to set the stage for Jesus’ Millennial Kingdom. This 1,000 year period is mentioned six different times in Revelation 20:1-7, and is also very clear about who will be reigning with the Messiah: *“**the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.**”*

These souls beheaded for their testimony of Jesus, along with the martyrs mentioned in Rev. 6:9, and the two witnesses who are murdered in Rev. 11:7 could be considered the “shed blood” that all God ordained Covenants witness. The Covenant of Law was witnessed with the blood of bulls and goats. The Covenant of Redemption was witnessed with the blood of Messiah Jesus, **which makes valid all of the Covenants**. And the Covenant of Peace will be witnessed with the blood of those who have followed and will follow in the footsteps of their mentor Jesus and lay down their lives. *“And they did not love their lives to the death”* (Rev. 12:11). *“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints”* (Psalms 116:15).

Likewise, all of God’s ordained Covenants are “sealed” or have some kind of a “sign” for authenticity. The Covenant of the Law had the sign of the seventh day Sabbath (Exodus 31:12-18): *“My Sabbath is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever.”* The Covenant of Redemption had the sign or seal of Jesus’ bodily burial and resurrection (John 6:27, Luke 11:29). The Covenant of Peace is sealed by the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:30, 2 Cor. 1:22). *“You were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession”* (Eph. 1:13,14). We, the saints, are God’s purchased possession and our redemption is not complete until Jesus returns and redeems our bodies as well. (Read 1 Cor. 15:35-58 to see this promise of eternal incorruptible bodies)

The return of Jesus is the beginning of this coming new age of peace. The disciples asked Jesus, *“What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”* Jesus answered them and said, *“...the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory”* (Matt. 24:3,30). However, Jesus will first return IN His Mature Sons before He fully returns physically. His Second Coming will be a progression like it was when He came the first time and was: 1) incarnated & born, 2) grew up, and 3) finished His earthly ministry. The Second Coming of Christ will be further discussed in chapter 14, but it is sufficient here to say that His Second Coming will be the sign that the Millennial Age has begun. The chart below adds more understanding onto the first chart shown at the beginning of this chapter:

Age of TRUTH	Age of GRACE	Age of the KINGDOM
<i>Covenant of Law</i>	<i>Covenant of Redemption</i>	<i>Covenant of Peace</i>
Manifestation of the Holy Spirit	Manifestation of the Son	Manifestation of the Father
<i>Feast of Passover</i>	<i>Feast of Pentecost</i>	<i>Feast of Tabernacles</i>
Moses (type of Christ)	Jesus’ 1st Coming	Jesus’ 2nd Coming
		Jesus in His Bride

The Lord required that His people appear before him three times per year (Ex. 23:17). Likewise, mankind will experience the manifest presence of the Lord on three major occasions. The Holy Spirit manifested Himself through a cloud and a pillar of fire to Moses and the children of Israel in the wilderness giving us the Covenant of the Law. The Son manifested Himself in the person of Jesus giving us the Covenant of Redemption. Finally, the Father will manifest Himself through His Bride during the Kingdom Age giving us a Covenant of Peace. The Feast of Tabernacles is a great foreshadow of what the Kingdom age will be like. This Feast was a big celebration after the general harvest where there was much thanksgiving and rejoicing in the goodness of God and His works.

Although the Old Testament prophets were somewhat blinded to the Age of Grace, they saw the Kingdom age very well. King David spoke often in the Psalms about God's kingdom being established on earth (Psalms 2, 24, 45, 47, 48, 72, 98, 110, 122, 132, 149). Except for Jonah, ALL of the Old Testament prophets spoke of the Kingdom Age where Jerusalem Israel will be the central government for all the nations. A few of these Scriptures from each Old Testament prophet is listed below:

Isaiah 55:3-56:8, 59:21-62:12, 66; Jeremiah 23:1-8, 32:36-33:26; Ezekiel 16:60-17:24, ch 36; Daniel 7:27, 12:1-4; Hosea 2:14-23; Joel 3:18-21; Amos 9:11-15; Obadiah 1:17-21; Micah 4:1-13; Nahum 1:15; Habakkuk 2:14; Zephaniah 3:9-20; Haggai 2:6-9.19; Zechariah 1:16-17, 2:8-13, 8:1-23, 14:16-21; Malachi 3:1-5.

These Scriptures referenced above speak about the blessing of the Kingdom age. However, if you look at the context of the prophet's messages, you will notice that they all speak about judgment too. These prophets usually spend more time speaking about the judgments than they do the blessings. This is because the Lord's judgment will actually be the catalyst, which brings about the peaceful reign of the Kingdom Age.

Covenant of Peace Conclusion

Peace comes through righteousness, and righteousness comes from the judgments of the Lord: *“For when Your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Let grace be shown to the wicked, yet he will not learn righteousness.”* (Isa. 26,9,10) So if we really desire the peace of God, we will rejoice when His judgments begin to fall. This is why the apostles and prophets and all of heaven rejoice when Babylon (the current world order/government) is judged, because they see that the Kingdom of God is soon coming. (Rev. 18:20)

This is not freedom to hold wrath in our hearts, because *“the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.”* (James 1:20) Man will not accomplish this peace by His own merit, rather it is the Lord IN us who will bring about this peace, as Isaiah 26:12 says, *“LORD, You will establish peace for us, For You have also done all our works IN us.”* All the focus and attention must be put on Jesus, who is the only reason that we have access to this wonderful Covenant of Peace which will soon be a reality in the earth. He paid the highest price of His life for our peace, as Isaiah 53:5 shows us, *“the chastisement for our peace was upon Him.”*

“For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed.” Mountains and hills are Scriptural symbols for governments and ruling authorities. The current world governments will depart, and the occult religions will also be removed. *“But my steadfast love shall not depart from you (the Lord’s Bride/wife). And My covenant of peace shall not be removed, says the Lord who has compassion on you”* (Isa. 54:10). This Covenant of Peace will extend beyond the millennium and into eternity.

Chapter 6

Finances

Another characteristic of mature sons is that they are able to handle their financial affairs in a God-given manner. A good father will not give an inheritance to a son who is not properly trained with the Spirit of Wisdom to manage the estate. Many of Jesus' parables deal with correct ways to handle possessions and finances. This is because God created mankind to have dominion over the earth and therefore, He also has a blueprint for proper management of earthly resources. Deuteronomy 8:18 tells us why: *"You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, **that He may establish His covenant** which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day."*

Having wealth and finances is all about establishing His everlasting Kingdom in the earth as it is in heaven! This has nothing to do with giving to organized religion as Jesus showed us when he overturned the money tables of the merchandisers in the temple: *"Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those who sold doves."* (Matthew 21:12)

Jesus said, *"He who is faithful in what is **least** is also faithful in much. For if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?"* (Luke 16:11-13). Jesus calls money "least" and gives us the impression that money is a really minor issue in the kingdom of heaven, but nevertheless it is still a **test** for us here on earth because money is a major idol in this world. *"You cannot serve both God and mammon."* (Luke 16:13)

In the Age of Truth (Covenant of Law) financial giving was measured in tithes and offerings. In the Age of Grace (Covenant of Redemption) it upgraded to gifts and free will giving. In the Kingdom age (Covenant of Peace) that we are now entering, giving finances is

measured in sowing and reaping or free will exchange. Each age brought more freedom and liberty in giving of finances. Ultimately the Kingdom age will bring about abundance for everyone, but as a whole we are not there yet.

Jesus said: *"Woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass by justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone."* (Luke 11:42) *"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone."* (Matt 23:23)

Understanding the love and justice of God is more important than finances. Jesus is looking for the fruits of the Spirit in our lives which are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. However, finances can be used as a means towards this end. Our intent and desire in our heart as a giver is EVERYTHING in God's eyes, and not the money itself or the amount of money given. Finances are just a way to connect with others in expressing these fruits.

Jesus encouraged the practice of giving in these verses by saying *"not to leave it undone"* and it is therefore important that we give as well as understand the principle of tithing. The words "tithe" "tithes" and "tithing" appear 40 times in the KJV of Scripture and 8 of them are from the New Testament. Forty is the Scriptural number of testing, and Jesus said that money is a **test** to see whom He can trust to handle the true riches of heaven.

Tithing was the starting point for Abraham in the Old Covenant in learning Kingdom finances. A "tithe" means a "tenth" and the Israelites were required to give 10% of their increase to the LORD. Abraham was the first person recorded in the Scriptures to give a tithe (Gen 14:20), and he taught his children to tithe because his son Jacob did it as well (Gen. 28:22). Abraham tithed by faith because the law of Moses (which discussed the tithe) had not even been written yet! Although we should follow Abraham's example in principle, we should

not give a tithe out of an Old Covenant mentality under obligation or fear of retribution.

In the New Covenant, we don't give finances in order to earn "brownie points" with God or to win favor with Him. We do it because we love God and want to obey Him like any loved child would want to obey His earthly father. Romans 4:4-5 says that, "...to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness." Likewise, giving finances toward charitable works does not make us any more righteous in God's eyes than those who don't, because only those who are giving for the right motives (from faith) will be honored by the LORD.

A slave or servant mentality is often found in the current church models of tithing. Giving 10% of your income to church organizations as a duty is not even how the older covenant worked, much less the newer covenant! Instead as sons, we give finances based out of relationship with our heavenly Father. Therefore giving finances is not done out of obligation, but rather honor:

"Honor the LORD with your possessions, and with the firstfruits of all your increase; so your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine" (Prov. 3:10-11). This verse shows that when we give, God blesses us. However, we should not give money to the LORD for the purpose of getting. This is the false message behind the popular "prosperity message" that is commonly taught today. This false teaching says if you will "plant a seed" of money in certain ministries then the Lord is required to bless your finances. While the Lord does operate by certain principles set in His word and His desire is to bless us, He is not "required" to give us anything. Faith and obedience is what He honors, not money. After all, Jesus' perfect obedience led Him to a cross and not to a pile of earthly riches.

The man Job is a perfect example of one who walked in covenant with God and had God's "hedge of protection" due to his obedience, yet God still allowed Satan to attack Job for the purpose of refining and perfecting him (Job 1-2). We can never put God in a box and use His goodness for our own purposes. His covenant principles work, but they

are so manifold that we cannot totally understand His works from beginning to end as Job learned and Solomon wrote about in Ecclesiastes 3:11. Even when we are faithful, sometimes God takes away our finances temporarily to put us in a wilderness where we will learn to trust in Him alone.

Nevertheless, this example of Job is the exception and not the rule. Spiritual laws work just like the natural laws and it is a spiritual law that you reap what you sow. Those that give much will receive much: *"Give, and it shall be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."* (Luke 6:38)

The current world economy is based on working, doing and performing in order to gain prosperity for yourself. It revolves around being concerned for yourself and what you can "get." However, God's kingdom economy is very different. Although there is much work to be done in God's Kingdom, the Kingdom economics are based on giving and not getting. It is based on being your brother's keeper and giving without expecting anything in return. If everyone operated with this attitude, then life on earth would be so much more like it is in heaven. An even higher principle of giving is in trading or leveraged trading. This takes sowing and reaping to the next level where you "invest" into things eternal here on the earth!

These eternal things that we can trade into in the earth can include any revelation that Holy Spirit may show you. For example, the revelation of the blood of Jesus or the cross of Christ can be "traded" into when we are praying. Also, when other revelations come forth at meetings through servants of Christ, we can give financially towards that revelation. This is a much better way to give as our heart leads us, instead of being manipulated to give ten percent of our income.

There are many lessons or principles that we can learn from the Old Covenant tithe regarding our financial giving. The first, is that the LORD considered the tithe His own (Lev. 27:30). This law of the tithe can be applied to a New Covenant heart when we ask the question: WHERE should we give finances? Because without obedient hearts

investing resources towards His purposes, the Kingdom will not come on earth as it is in heaven. We all need to be asking where to sow our finances.

This is a question that the Scriptures answer directly and one that has not been understood by a majority of those who give generously. The bottom line is that the LORD's tithe went directly to PEOPLE and not to building projects or organizational overhead expenses. Deuteronomy 26:12-13 specifies four different types of people that were eligible to receive the Lord's tithe: 1) "Levites" - which include apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, singers and psalmists; 2) "the stranger" - which is anyone who doesn't know the LORD; 3) "the fatherless" - orphans or homeless, and 4) "the widow" - people who do not have family to care for them.

Deuteronomy 26:12-15 - *"When you have finished laying aside all the tithe of your increase in the third year, which is the year of tithing, and have given it to **the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow**, so that they may eat within your gates and be filled, then you shall say before the Lord your God: "I have removed the holy tithe from my house, and also have given them to **the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow**, according to all Your commandments which You have commanded me; I have not transgressed Your commandments, nor have I forgotten them. I have not eaten any of it when in mourning, nor have I removed any of it for unclean use, nor given any of it for the dead. I have obeyed the voice of the Lord my God, and have done according to all that You have commanded me. Look down from Your holy habitation, from heaven, and bless Your people Israel and the land which You have given us, just as You swore to our fathers, a land flowing with milk and honey."*

Tithing in the Old Covenant was never meant to be bondage as Deuteronomy 14:22-29 indicates that they could have even spent the LORD's tithe to finance a feast in His Name: *"spend that money (the tithe) for whatever your heart desires"* (vs. 26). The tithe strengthened FAMILY during feasts as well!

The LORD's tithe was used to build PEOPLE and not ministry centers. Moses' tabernacle was built with the wealth of Egypt and the Jewish

temples were built and maintained from free will offerings and not the LORD's tithe. The key thought in WHERE the LORD's tithe went was to PEOPLE, and not to things. We should also give directly to people and not in the name of a church or organization because His body was meant to be an organism and not an organization. This is why the early church in Acts 6:2-4 had to appoint *"seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom"* over the matter of distributing the treasury that was delivered to the apostles. This is part of the true "work" of the church, and it requires men and women of wisdom to deliver it properly as the Spirit leads. It is an important matter to get finances WHERE the LORD says to give it, and this requires being led of the Holy Spirit to give it into the hand of the people whom He desires to have it.

"For God so loved the world that He GAVE..." We can be cheerful givers too if we ask God for the grace to be like Him. If we love God, we will obey His commands to love one another. Giving financially to whom He tells us is an important part of loving God and loving one another. If we love and fear God, then we will want to give towards things that please Him, and give with the right attitude, *"not grudgingly or out of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver."* (2 Cor. 9:7)

As New Covenant believers, everything that we have is the LORD's. Everything we do with our finances is like sowing seeds, and whatever we sow into we will then reap. Therefore, it is important to ask Him to whom we should give.

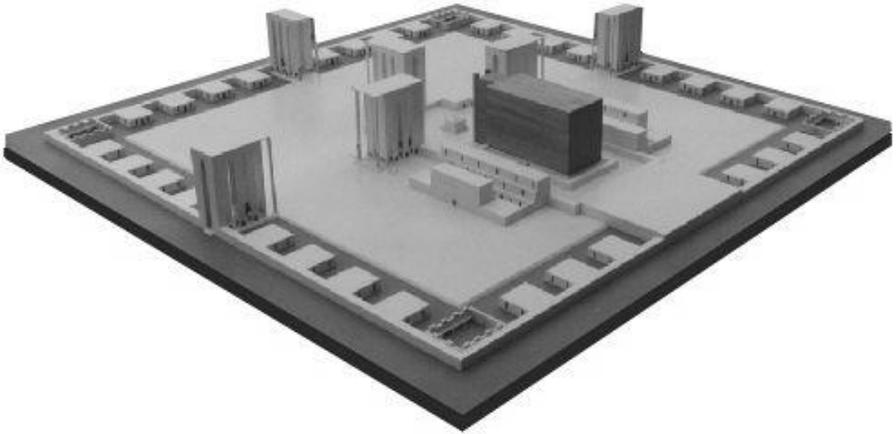
Finally, be directed in your giving by your LOVE for God. It is all about Him, and the reason we give is because we want to be a model of His great heart of giving. *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength." This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." There is no commandment greater than these.*" (Mark 12:30-31)

More important than giving finances on earth, is exchanging on the trading floors of heaven. Ephesians 2:6 says that we are seated with Christ in heavenly places, so we need to conduct business here in the heavenlies as well. The way this is done is by trading back to Him the revelations and gifts and blessings that Abba Father has given us.

We each have a treasury room in our hearts where we store up the experiences we have with Christ. All these blessings can be given back to Him in the same way that the 24 elders in heaven cast their crowns before the throne. (Rev. 4:10) These are the TRUE riches and treasures of heaven. The revelations that we receive can also be traded back to Him for more intimacy instead of showcasing them for others. His presence that we experience is like frankincense, and the true "meat offerings" are the deeper things that He shares with us in the secret place. We can offer these on heaven's trading floor as priests unto our God and not man.

Chapter 7

The Millennial Temple



“Describe the temple to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them measure the pattern. And if they are ashamed of all that they have done, make known to them the design of the temple and its arrangement, its exits and its entrances, its entire design and all its ordinances, all its forms and all its laws. Write it down in their sight, so that they may keep its whole design and all its ordinances, and perform them.” (Ezekiel 43:10-11)

In 1996, I began an in-depth study of Ezekiel chapters 40-48 which culminated in building a scale model of the temple shown to Ezekiel. My model, pictured above, is scaled to 1/16th inch per cubit. A cubit is somewhere between 18 inches and 24 inches. To date, **this temple has not yet been built**, and it is often referred to as the coming “Third Temple.” Solomon’s temple was the first, while Ezra and Nehemiah’s temple was the second (King Herod added onto this second temple).

Introduction

This model of the Millennial Temple is an ongoing study concerning the vision that was shown in tremendous detail to Ezekiel over 2,500 years ago. To date, this temple has not yet been constructed, but Scripture indicates that our generation will see it built in the land of Israel. The most exciting thing about this temple is that the glory of the Lord will be there, which is why the city is called Yahweh Shamah (The Lord is There). The knowledge of His glory in this temple will cover the earth like the waters cover the sea, and He shall reign over all the earth headquartered in this temple!

Since this is strictly a study of Ezekiel's vision of the temple (chs. 40-48), I will try to avoid speculation about what this temple may be like and only address the things that were shown specifically to Ezekiel. For example: there may be furniture in this temple similar to what was in the other temples (such as the Menorah, Table of Showbread, Ark of the Covenant, etc.). However, since these details were not shown to Ezekiel we will not address it in this study. It is a good thing to search God's Word and Spirit for answers, but the bottom line concerning many questions about issues during the millennium is that *"the Messiah will teach us His ways"* and we need to wait on His timing as both Micah 4:1-3 and Isaiah 2:2-4 declare:

*"Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; **He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.**" For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and shall rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore."*

Before beginning this study it is necessary to address a common teaching regarding a temple being built in Israel. Many Christian's teach and believe that the next temple to be built in Jerusalem Israel will be one in which "the man of sin" or "the Antichrist" will enter into

and defile by declaring himself to be God. These beliefs are supported mainly from one single verse in Second Thessalonians 2:4, which states that the man of sin “*sits as God in the temple of God showing himself that he is God.*”

There are two different Greek words that are translated as “temple” in English. One word “*hieron*” is used by Paul when referring to an actual building made with wood and stones. The other word “*naos*” is used when referring to the spiritual temple of God which refers to His people. The word “*naos*” is the one used in this 2 Thessalonians 2:4 verse, and therefore is NOT talking about a physical temple.

Doug Fortune in his article “*Antichrist Revealed*” writes:

“Beginning with the Book of Acts, after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, through the Book of Revelation, the word *naos* is used ONLY when referring to people as the temple not made with hands. When referring to the physical temple building the word *hieron* is used. Of course, throughout the Book of Revelation, the word *naos* is used, as that Book is the REVEALING of Jesus Christ, and He is revealed in the MIDST of the Lampstand, the CHURCH (Revelation 1:20). Why then is there so much confusion when 2 Thessalonians 2:4 speaks of the man of sin seated in the NAOS of God, “*which temple (naos) YOU ARE.*” (1Corinthians 3:17). Why are we looking for a man seated in a building yet to be built in the Middle-East, when we should be looking in the mirror? As the man of sin, the Adam nature is revealed and “*the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of His mouth and bring him to an end by His appearing at His coming*” or “*the brightness of His coming*” (2 Thessalonians 2:8) as some translations read.”⁵

The New Covenant addresses first spiritual matters and secondarily natural matters (Likewise the Old Testament speaks first to natural things and second to spiritual things). Therefore, 2 Thessalonians 2:4 is NOT referring to an actual physical temple. Even if there is another “temple building” built in Jerusalem before Ezekiel’s temple, it has nothing to do with the construction of Ezekiel’s temple discussed in this study, because the Messiah Yahoshua (Jesus) will be responsible for building the Millennial Temple. Zechariah 6:12 and 13 is clear that the Messiah (and not unredeemed Jews) will build the Lord’s temple:

“Behold, the Man whose name is the Branch! (a term for the Messiah) From His place He shall branch out, And HE SHALL BUILD THE TEMPLE, Yes, He shall build the temple of the Lord. He shall bear the glory, and sit and rule on His throne; So he shall be a priest on His throne, And the counsel of peace shall be between them both (both natural and spiritual governments - or kings and priests).”

The apostle Paul speaks of mankind as God’s temple often. A few examples include 1 Cor. 3:16, 1 Cor. 6:19, and Eph. 2:21. Now that we have established that Second Thessalonians 2:4 is referring to the “temple of mankind,” rather than an actual physical temple in Jerusalem, we can interpret the rest of this verse: The temple of mankind, (or the arm of the flesh/self) rises up and declares itself as God, instead of submitting to the will of God. Relying upon our own strength and understanding to accomplish God’s purposes is one of the meanings of “the abomination of desolation” spoken of by Jesus and Daniel. Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus, is one foreshadow of the “abomination of desolation” and “the man of sin” at the end of the age. First John 3:18,19 describes how Judas is a perfect example of the “man of sin” or “son of perdition”:

“Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. THEY WENT OUT FROM US (like Judas did), but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us, but they went out that they may be MADE MANIFEST, that none of them were of us.” (See also John 17:12 & Acts 1:16-20)

The antichrist comes out from among us (the temple of God) just like Judas came out from among the disciples of Jesus, yet he was not manifested (made known) until the end of Jesus’ ministry. Likewise, “the man of sin” who has been among us for the past 2,000 years just like Judas, will be made known (manifested) now at the end of this age in a more obvious manner. This Judas spirit, which is the selfishness in all of us, is being dealt with by God.

Without the mercy and grace of God, we are all capable of being like Judas. Only by God’s mercy can our eyes be opened so we can see that

acting in our own strength will only lead us to betray the Lord no matter how much knowledge we have about Him. Judas had tremendous knowledge ABOUT Jesus, and that He was the Messiah, but he never developed an intimate passionate love relationship with Him or cried out for His mercy and grace. If he had, the Lord would have forgiven him, just like he forgave Peter who also betrayed him. Instead, Judas tried to force the hand of Jesus to be king when it was not yet His time to be king. Judas Iscariot wanted the kingdom to come and wanted to rule and reign with Jesus, but he didn't understand that the Cross (death to our own strength) is the only way to obtain true life in the kingdom of God. (Matt. 16:25) Any time we refuse the Cross (death to selfishness) we will always end up betraying the Lord too.

Ezekiel 43:7 and 44:9 are very clear that *“no foreigner uncircumcised in heart or in flesh shall enter My sanctuary.”* Therefore the antichrist will never be entering this temple. With the understanding that this Millennial Temple will not be “defiled by the Antichrist,” let’s now take an honest look at what was shown to Ezekiel. As this study will show, Ezekiel was given a very detailed description of what Messiah’s temple will look like and the functions within it.

This study will be broken down into 5 sections:

- 1. Jewish Temple History:** A look at the previous “abiding places” of the Lord throughout mankind’s 7,000 year lease on planet earth.
- 2. Photo Description of Ezekiel’s Temple:** Several pictures of this scale model to look at the actual physical characteristics of the Millennial Temple clearly detailed in Ezekiel chapters 40-48.
- 3. Temple Floor Plans:** A more detailed “blueprint” look at some of the many specific measurements given to Ezekiel for this future temple.
- 4. Millennial Temple Order of Services:** The ordinances, statutes and laws specified for the Millennial Temple to function according to God’s desires. This includes: the duties of the Levites & priests, the specifics of the sacrifices & offerings, and the worship system set up according to the Feasts of the Lord. Other temple logistics that were shown to Ezekiel will also be studied, such as: the consecration of the

altar, those allowed in the temple, temple economics, and the ordinances for the prince.

5. Israel's Land Divisions: Maps of the specific area of land in the Middle East that Ezekiel declares will be allotted to the nation of Israel. This section will also detail the Holy Portion of the land where the temple and the city of Jerusalem (called "The Lord is There" - Yahweh Shamah) will be located.

Throughout this study we want to relate the significance and purposes of God for having the Millennial Temple on earth during the allotted 1,000 years (Rev. 20). **The fact must be emphasized over and over again that WE, God's children, are His ultimate temple**, and that all other temples are for the purpose of teaching us how to be the holy pure and undefiled dwelling place of the Great God Yahweh. He deserves nothing less than our very best.

"You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 2:5)

1. Jewish Temple History

History really is His story (God's story); and Yahweh has chosen His story (history) to repeat itself. As Ecclesiastes 1:9 says:

"That which has been is what will be, That which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything of which it may be said, 'See this is new?' It has already been in ancient times before us."

So we can find clues to what God plans to do in the future by looking back at what He has done in the past. First Corinthians 10 and Hebrews 9 shows us that Old Testament Israel is a parable or mold for New Testament Israel. In other words, the Old Testament temples were examples, types and shadows of what we as "living temples" are to be as the completed product. Old Testament Scriptures are more than just stories of natural history, they are prophetic models pointing us to

God's eternal purposes. The final purpose being: "*Christ in us the hope of glory.*" (Col. 1:26)

"For you are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in you. The temple of God is holy, which temple you are. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's" (1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:20). So we are God's temple created by God at a precise point in time for a specific purpose and destiny, and not evolved from other animals as the false science of evolution would teach. The scientific laws of thermodynamics clearly show that matter left alone will tend towards disorder and decay rather than the incredible unity and order found in mankind and our universe.

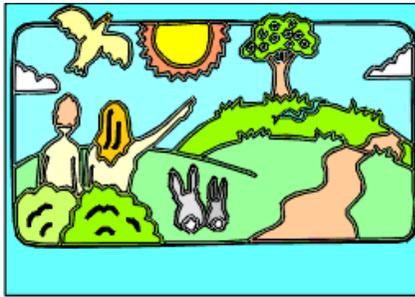
This section will step through a pictured timeline of seven "temples" or "houses" or "abiding places" where the Lord has allowed His glory to manifest. These Seven abiding places of the Lord include: 1) the Garden of Eden, 2) the Tabernacle of Moses, 3) the Temple designed by David and built by Solomon, 4) the Temple built by Ezra, Nehemiah, & Herod, 5) the person of Yahoshua (Jesus) the Messiah, 6) the Millennial Temple, and 7) the Bride of Messiah.

The dates shown in this timeline are intentionally **not exact dates**, but rather are listed to show a general time period for each dwelling place of Yahweh in His-story. The Scriptures very clearly document a 7,000 year plan of God for mankind. This documentation can be found in: the Genesis genealogy records (Genesis 5 and 11), the Exodus records (Exodus 12:41), the accounts in Judges, and the Biblical history books. Scripture pinpoints exactly 6,000 years from Adam until now (with room for debate within about 50 years). Throughout the accounts of Noah, the Exodus, the Babylonian captivity and more, we find exact dates and numbers given in Scripture, and all for a purpose.

We are all ignorant about many of the deep truths found in the exact dates and numbers given throughout the Bible. However, 2 Peter 3:8 states very clearly that we should: "**be not ignorant of this one thing, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years.**" This simple truth opens up the Scriptures for great understanding of the times in which we live. There are several Scriptures which point to "*the third day*" (2,000 years after Messiah) as the final 1,000 year millennial

reign of Christ, or the “*Day of the Lord*” time of Rest. This study is not to prove that truth, but for further confirmation read: Heb. 4:3-4; Psalms 90:4,12; Gen. 1; Mark 9:2 and Matt 17:1-2; Hosea 5:15-6:3; Exodus 19:10-11; Luke 13:32; Mark 5:13; John 2:1-2; and Joshua 3:4.

First “Dwelling Place” of God



Garden of Eden

4000 BC

The first “abiding place” of God with mankind was in the paradise He created for them in the beginning. “*The LORD God walked in the garden in the cool of the day.*” (Genesis 3:8)

Second “Dwelling Place” of God

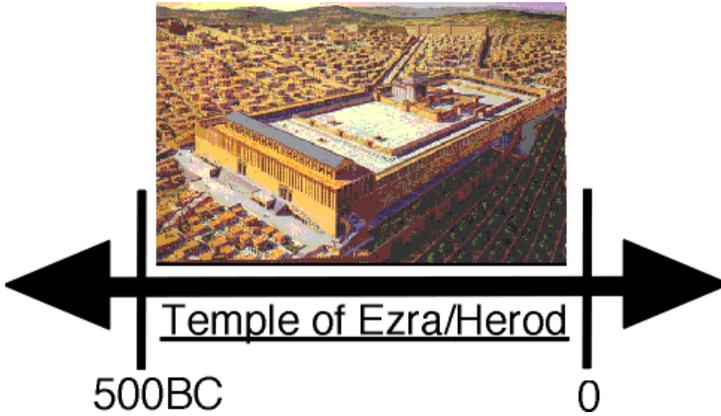


Tabernacle of Moses

1500 BC

1000 BC

Fourth “Dwelling Place” of God
(Second Temple)

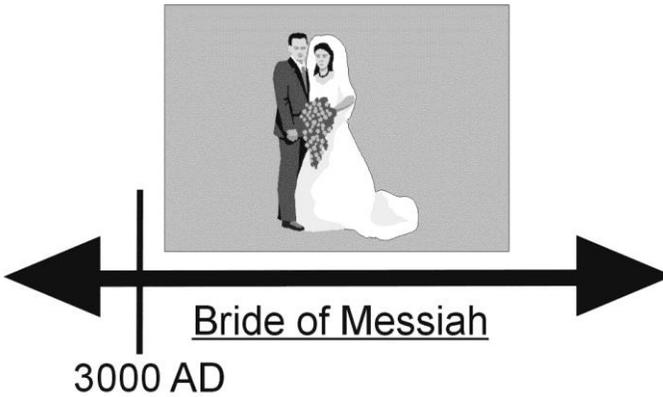


This temple was started by the political decrees of Cyrus and Darius, and built by Ezra, Nehemiah, Zerrubabel, and expanded later by Herod. *“Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the Lord God of heaven has given to me. And He has commanded me to build Him a temple at Jerusalem which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all His people? May his God be with him! Now let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel.”* (Ezra 1:2-4)

Fifth “Dwelling Place” of God



Seventh “Dwelling Place” of God



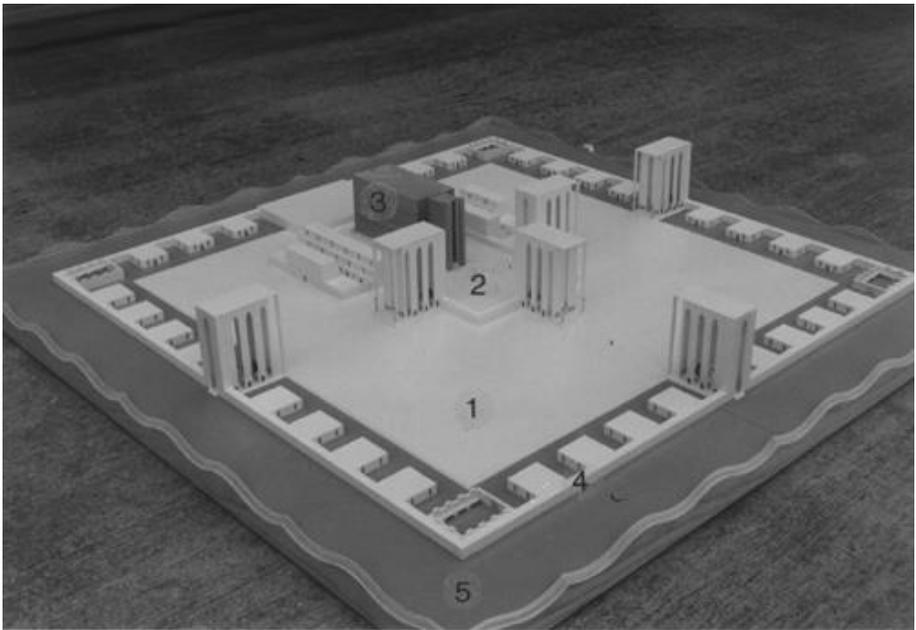
The Seventh and final temple is the ultimate purpose of God in creating mankind, and that is for US to be His temple. This temple is the spiritually mature Bride of Christ or the New Jerusalem, where God’s Spirit is able to FULLY dwell in man similar to the way He dwelt in our protégé Jesus Christ.

“Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Col. 1:27) “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with man, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God... But I saw no temple in it (the New Jerusalem - Bride of Christ) for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.” (Revelation 21:3,22). “To know the love of Christ which passes knowledge, that you may be filled with ALL the fullness of God.” (Ephesians 3:19)

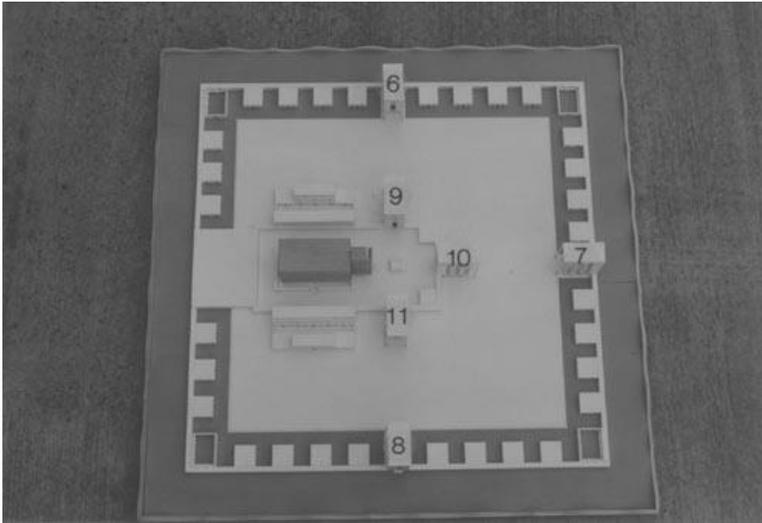
Thus says the LORD, “Heaven is My throne, And earth is My footstool. Where is the house that you will build Me? And where is the place of My rest? For all those things My hand has made, And all those things exist, Says the LORD. But on this one will I look: On him who is humble and of a contrite spirit and who trembles at My word.” (Isaiah 66:1-2)

2. Photo Description of Ezekiel's Temple

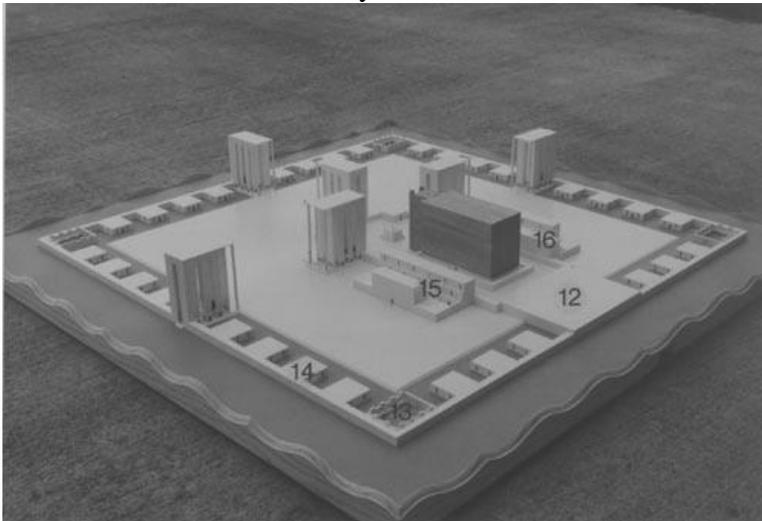
This section will show eight different pictures of my scale model of Ezekiel's temple. The model scale is 1/16th of an inch equals one cubit. Each photo is labeled with numbers which coordinate with a brief explanation of the main components of the temple listed underneath the photo. References will be made to these pictures and numbers throughout this study so the reader can see photos of the components being discussed. The Scripture reference, from the book of Ezekiel, is listed after each temple component.



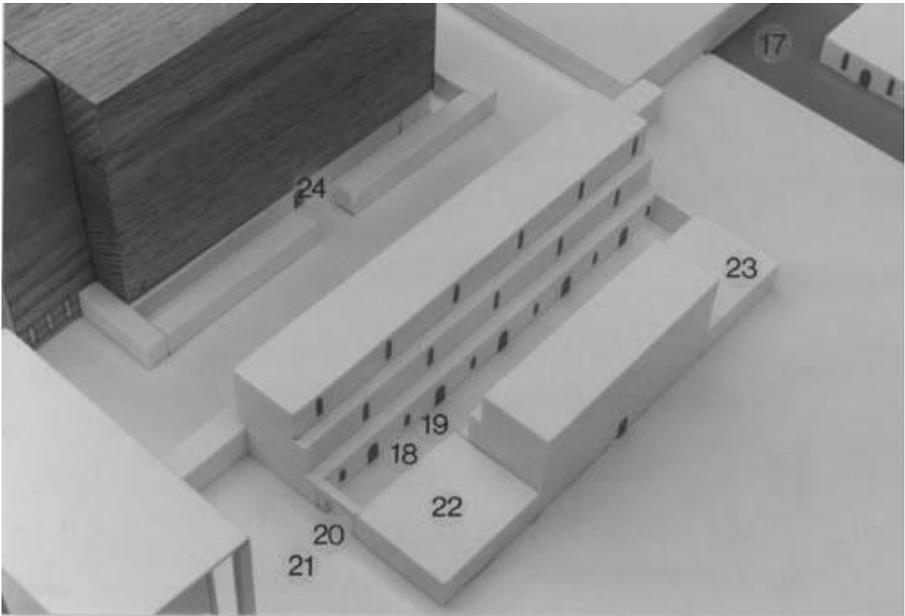
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| 1. Outer Court - | 40:17-19 |
| 2. Inner Court - | 40:44,47 |
| 3. The Temple or Sanctuary - | 41:1-26 |
| 4. Wall around the outside of the Temple - | 40:5 (42:15-20, 45:2) |
| 5. Fifty cubits of open space - | 45:2 |



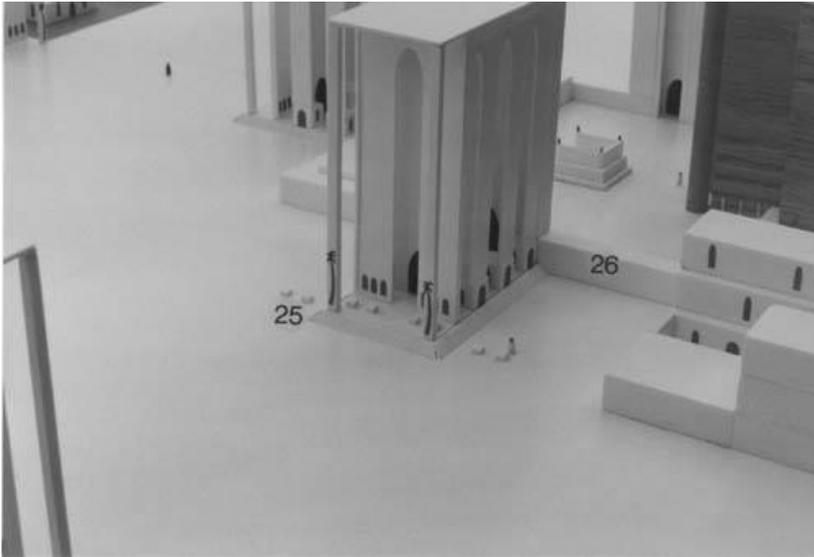
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| 6. | Outer Court Northern Gateway - | 40:20-23 |
| 7. | Outer Court Eastern Gateway - | 40:6-16 |
| 8. | Outer Court Southern Gateway - | 40:24-27 |
| 9. | Inner Court Northern Gateway - | 40:35-37 |
| 10. | Inner Court Eastern Gateway - | 40:32-34 |
| 11. | Inner Court Southern Gateway - | 40:28-31 |



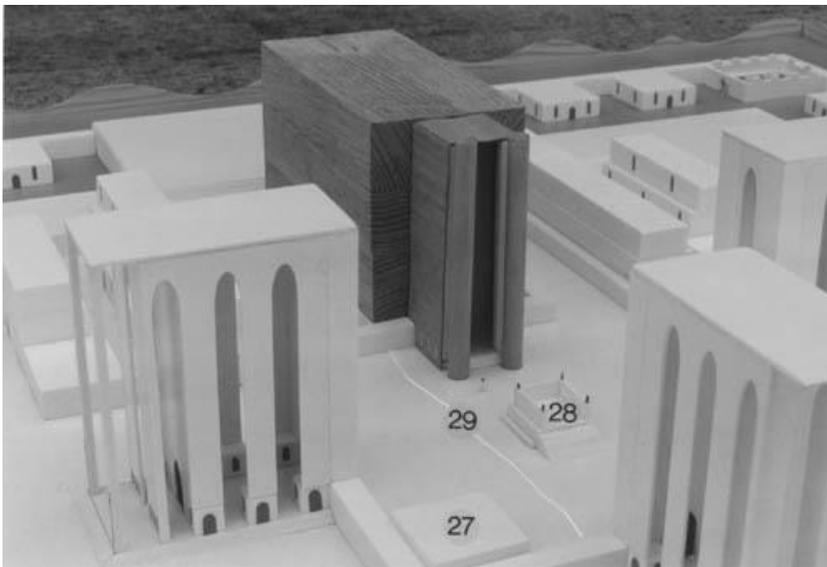
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| 12. | Building at the Western End - | 41:12 |
| 13. | Four Kitchens (one in each corner of the Outer Court) - | 46:21-24 |
| 14. | Outer Court Chambers (30 total) - | 40:17 |
| 15. | Northern Priests Chambers in three story Galleries - | 42:1-9 |
| 16. | Southern Priests Chambers in three story Galleries - | 42:10-14 |



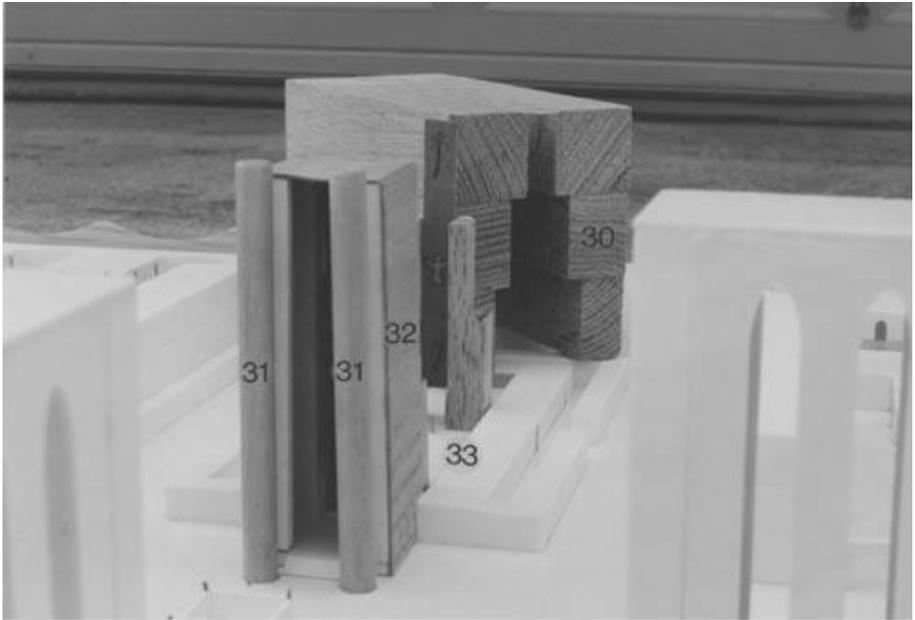
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| 17. Lower Pavement of the Outer Court
(top right of this picture) | 40:17-18 |
| 18. Walkway of Northern Priests Chambers - | 42:4 |
| 19. Walkway of Southern Priests Chambers
is the same on the opposite side of temple - | 42:11 |
| 20. East side Entrance of the Northern Priests Chambers - | 42:9 |
| 21. East side Entrance of the Southern Priests Chambers
is the same on opposite side - | 42:12 |
| 22. Chamber where they wash the Burnt Offering - | 40:38 |
| 23. Priests' Boiling and Baking Room - | 46:19-20 |
| 24. Foundation of the Temple Side Chambers - | 41:8 |



- 25.** Eight tables in the Northern Gateway to slay the Burnt Offering - 40:39-43
- 26.** Wall of the Inner Court - 41:10

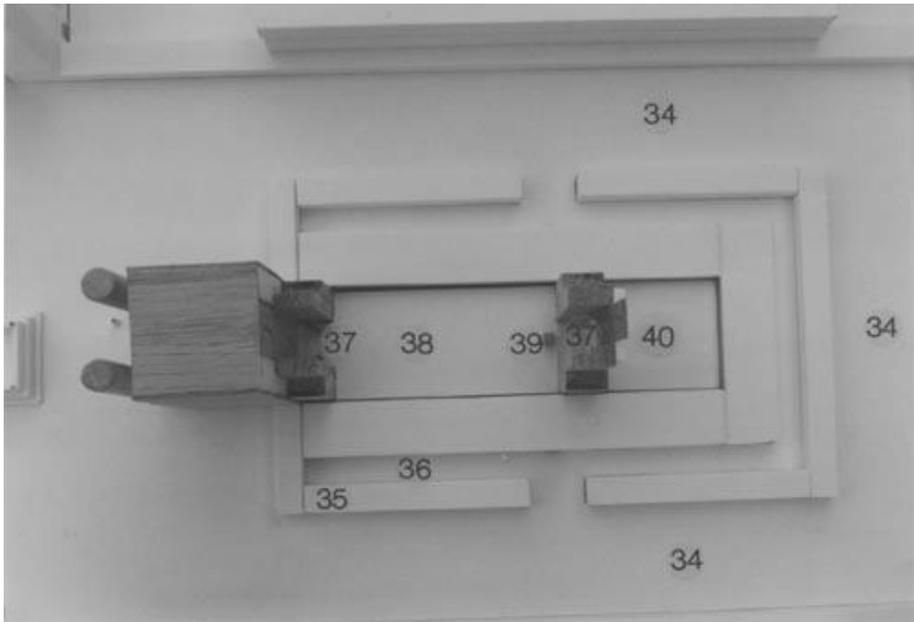


- 27.** Two Inner Court Chambers for the Singers (the other is on opposite side of east gate) - 40:44-46
- 28.** Altar of Sacrifice - 43:13-17 (40:47)
- 29.** Water flowing east from under the south side of the temple - 47:1-12



In this photograph the Sanctuary Galleries have been removed and pushed towards the back so the inside can be seen.

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 30. Temple Side Chambers or Galleries in three stories
(30 interior chambers per story) - | 41:5-11 |
| They have Cherubim & Palm Tree Carvings
all around on the inside - | 41:16-20 |
| 31. Two Pillars - | 40:49 |
| 32. Vestibule of the Temple - | 40:48-49 |
| (with windows, wooden canopy,
and palm trees carved on the inside) - | 41:25-26 |
| 33. Wall of the Temple - | 41:5 |



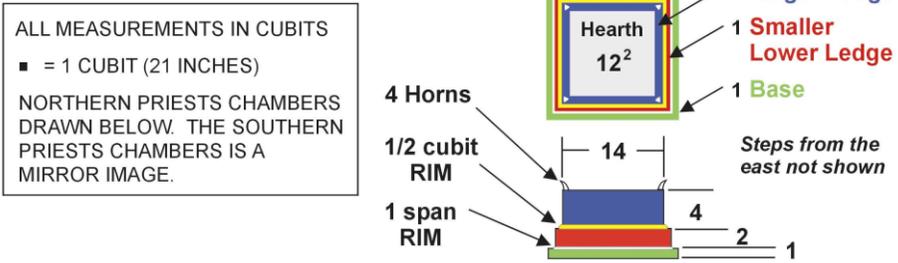
The Sanctuary Galleries have been removed in this Top View photograph of the Sanctuary.

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|---|----------|
| 34. Separating Courtyard - | 41:13-15 |
| 35. Outer Wall of the Side chambers - | 41:9 |
| 36. Terrace around the Galleries - | 41:9-11 |
| 37. Two Temple Doors that were bi-fold
with cherubim & trees carved in them - | 41:23-25 |
| 38. Sanctuary or Holy Place - | 41:1-2 |
| 39. Wooden Altar or Table Before the Lord - | 41:22 |
| 40. Inner Sanctuary or Most Holy Place - | 41:3-4 |

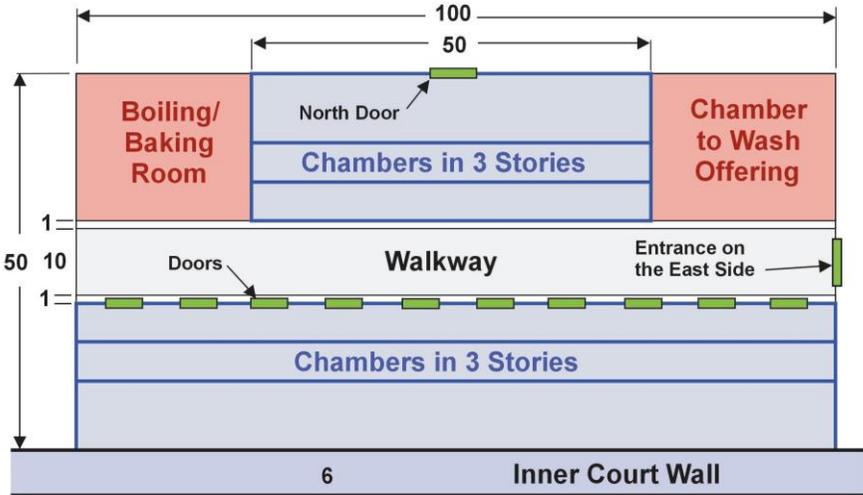
3. Temple Floor Plans

This section gives the measurements and details of the: **1)** Sanctuary, **2)** Gateways, **3)** Altar of Sacrifice, and **4)** Priests' Chambers. The only measurements shown in these diagrams are the ones specifically given in Ezekiel 40, 41, 42, 43:13-27, and 46:19-24. Ezekiel gives all measurements for this temple in cubits. Therefore, all dimensions in these floor plans are given in cubits. One cubit equals 21 inches according to most accounts (some history books record it at 18 inches).

3) Altar of Sacrifice (Top and Side Views)



4) Priests Chambers (Top View)



4. Millennial Temple Order of Services

Since there is going to be a physical temple built in the land of Israel, as the book of Ezekiel expressly shows, then there demands an order of service for what needs to be done in this temple. These ordinances, statutes and laws are specifically written out in Ezekiel chapters 43-46, and will now be shown in this section in the order written in Ezekiel:

- 1) Ezekiel 43:18-27 specifies the ordinances for: **Consecrating the Altar**
- 2) Ezekiel 44:1-9 specifies the laws of: **Admittance into the Temple**

- 3) Ezekiel 44:10-31 shows ordinances for: **Ministers of the Temple**
- 4) Ezekiel 45:9-14 discusses laws of: **Economics in the Temple**
- 5) Ezekiel 45:13-16 specifies the: **Ordinances for the Prince**
- 6) Ezekiel 45:17-46:15 discusses the: **Worship System in Keeping the Feasts**
- 7) Ezekiel 46:19-24 discusses the: **Preparation of Offerings**

“Make known to them the design of the temple and its arrangement, its exits and its entrances, its entire design and all its ordinances, all its forms and all its laws. Write it down in their sight, so that they may keep its whole design and all its ordinances, and perform them. This is the law of the temple: The whole area surrounding the mountain top shall be most holy. Behold, this is the law of the temple.”

(Ezekiel 43:11-12)

Are animal sacrifices in a future temple blasphemous towards the finished work of Jesus?

One truth about the 1,000 year reign of Messiah that is often hard for believers today to understand is that there will be animal sacrifices in this coming Millennial Temple. As we will see, Ezekiel is quite clear about this. If you believe that the book of Ezekiel is inspired prophecy from God, then there is no alternative but to understand that what Ezekiel saw over 2,000 years ago will come to pass in a literal sense. This is NOT blasphemous to the finished work of Jesus' Blood on the cross, but rather it is a reminder of His ultimate sacrifice for all of humanity.

Since 1998 when I first published this Millennial Temple information on the internet, I have received more questions on this one issue of animal sacrifice than anything else. Therefore, I want to take some time to establish the truth of this matter of sacrifice and atonement. The bottom line fact is that Jesus (Yahoshua) is the ONLY sacrifice that can take away our sins and give us eternal life. Hebrews 10:4 is clear that *“it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.”* The 11th verse in this same chapter declares that animal sacrifices *“can never take away sins.”* So, the blood of bulls and goats have NEVER taken away sins for anyone past present or future! There

is a wrong concept in many people's minds that animal sacrifices, during the Old Covenant before Jesus came, took away peoples sins - but this is not true. The saints who lived before Messiah came were saved by FAITH (Rom. 4:3) just like us today. The animal sacrifices were a "*shadow of good things to come*" pointing forward to the blood of Messiah Yahoshua (Jesus). It has always been about Jesus, and not animal sacrifices. Likewise, in the coming Millennial Temple the animal sacrifices will point backward to the Blood of Jesus, which is our only forgiveness for sin.

God told the Old Covenant believers to sacrifice animals to give them a point of reference in which to base their FAITH since the Messiah had not yet come. Hebrews chapters 7-10 explains how the Old Covenant sacrifices were copies and replicas of what Jesus did for us on the cross. After explaining the meaning of the blood sacrifices in chapters 7-10, Paul explains in Hebrews chapters 11-12, that it is by FAITH we please God and appropriate His promises for us, and not by the works He commands us to do. The works that we do out of obedience are merely expressions of the faith, which is in our hearts.

During the millennial reign of Jesus Christ, the animal sacrifices will be **object lessons** that look BACK in remembrance of what Jesus has done for us, similar to the way that the Old Testament sacrifices looked FORWARD to what He would do. These sacrifices in no way take away our sins. Only faith in the finished work of the shed blood of Jesus can take away sins. Everything done in this temple points us to Jesus, because all things can be summed up in Jesus "*in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.*" (Col. 2:9)

Now that we have established that animal sacrifices are not blasphemous to the finished work of Jesus; let's take a look at all of the incredible details that were shown to Ezekiel regarding the order of services for this millennial temple which to date has not yet been built.

1) Consecrating the Altar (43:18-27) (See Pictures #28 for the altar)

Since the concept of being a "living sacrifice" is so central in the life of the believer (and we are His ultimate temple), then it should be no surprise to find that the altar of sacrifice is located in the very

geometric CENTER of the Millennial Temple. It is also the first thing to be consecrated and dedicated once the temple is completed.

The sacrifices to consecrate the altar involve an eight day process:

Day 1) Bull of the Sin Offering – blood is placed on: the four horns, the corners of the ledge and rim around it. Then burn the bull in the appointed place of the temple.

Day 2) The altar is cleansed in the same way as the bull above, but also with:

- A kid of goats for a sin offering
- A young bull for a burnt offering with salt
- A young ram for a burnt offering with salt

Day 3-7) The same process is done as on day 2 to make atonement for the altar, purify and consecrate it.

Day 8) The priests can now offer the people's burnt offerings and peace offerings on the altar and the Lord will accept the offerings.

In the same way that the blood of the bulls and goats are only a representation of the ultimate sacrifice that Jesus made for our sins, the natural animal sacrifices that will be offered in this temple will only be a reflection of the sacrifices that are already in their hearts. Hebrews 13:15 says, *“Let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.”* The sacrifice that God really desires is praise and thanksgiving from our hearts. *“But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”* (Heb 13:16) 1 Peter 2:5 describes believers saying, *“...you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”* The Psalmist realized that it was not animal sacrifices or grain offerings that was God's final purpose, but rather having God's law within our hearts (Ps. 40:6-8). Micah also realized this when he wrote:

“With what shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams or ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has shown you, O man,

what is good; and what does the Lord require of you: To do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.” (Mic. 6:6-8)

We conclude therefore, that the animal sacrifices and other offerings which are given in the Millennial Temple will serve as **object lessons** for the spiritual sacrifices of a heart that is pure, cleansed and sanctified in praise and thanksgiving to Yahweh God. Walking daily in justice, mercy and humility are the sacrifices which God really desires from us.

2) Admittance into the Temple (44:1-9)

“And the glory of the Lord came into the temple by way of the gate which faces toward the east.” (Ezek. 43:4)

Because the Lord enters the temple by the eastern gateway, no man shall enter the temple by this gate, but it shall be closed (44:2). The “prince” is the only one who is allowed at certain times to enter into this eastern gateway by the vestibule of the gateway to sit and eat bread before the Lord. (The prince will be discussed further in section 5 - Ordinances for the prince) Everyone else must enter by either the northern or southern gates and, *“whoever enters by way of the north gate to worship shall go out by way of the south gate; and whoever enters by way of the south gate shall go out by way of the north gate. He shall not return by way of the gate through which he came, but shall go out through the opposite gate. The prince shall then be in their midst.”* (Ezek 46:9) This is symbolic of being changed from glory to glory – (2Cor 3:18). Every time we come into the presence of the Lord we are changed more into His likeness, and we leave different than when we first came.

Yahweh God told Ezekiel, *“mark well who may enter the house and all who go out from the sanctuary.”* He then explains to Ezekiel the abominations that Israel has done in the past by allowing *“foreigners, uncircumcised in heart and flesh”* to be in His house and therefore defile it and break His Covenant. Therefore, the only people allowed into the temple will be those who are saved/redeemed or *“circumcised in heart.”* The unsaved or unredeemed who are *“uncircumcised in heart”* may never enter the temple.

“Thus says the Lord God: No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart or uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter My sanctuary, including any foreigner who is among the children of Israel.” (Ezekiel 44:9)

3) Ministers of the Temple (44:10-31)

“Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who may stand in His Holy Place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart. Who has not lifted up His soul to an idol, Nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of His salvation. This is Jacob, the generation of those who seek Him, Who seek Your face.” (Psalm 24:3-6)

Although all saved or redeemed people will be allowed to enter the temple, not every person is allowed to minister in the inner court or in the Sanctuary. The Levites will be the ones who are called to be in charge of the temple. And not all Levites will have the same duties, rather the Levites will be broken up into: **1) Gatekeepers, 2) Ministers of the House (Nethinim) and 3) Priests**. The “Prince” will also have ministering duties, which will be discussed later. A brief description for the services of these three types of Levites is listed below:

1) Gatekeepers:

The Levites who went astray from Yahweh after idols will be gatekeepers of the temple. They will not be allowed to enter the Holy of Holies or come near any of Yahweh’s holy things. There are six main gateways in the Millennial Temple. (See Pictures #6-11 for the six gateways and #25 for a close-up of a gateway) Each gateway has six gate chambers with windows in each gate chamber. Most likely, these gate chambers will serve as “checkpoints” for people when they enter the temple and when they leave the temple to be sure that only redeemed people are admitted into the temple and that only the priests are admitted into the Inner Court.

Because the knowledge about God’s glory in this temple will cover the earth, many people will be coming here from all over the world to seek the God of Israel and His glory. The outer court gatekeepers may share

some of the responsibility of ministering to these inquiring people and telling them about the way to be saved through faith in Yahoshua (Jesus) the Messiah of Israel and the world. The city “Yahweh Shamah” will also serve this purpose to help disciple the nations.

2) Ministers of the House (Nethinim):

The Levites who went astray from Yahweh after idols will also be the ministers of the temple. They will slay the burnt offerings and the people’s sacrifices. They will stand before the people to minister to them, but they will not be allowed to enter the Holy of Holies or come near any of the Lord’s Holy things. They will be responsible for keeping charge of the temple, for all its work and for all that has to be done in it.

Although it may seem like an honor to minister before the people today, during the millennial reign of Christ the highest honor will be to minister before Yahweh God and not to the people. Ezekiel infers that because certain Levites taught the people wrongly to worship before their idols that they shall *“bear their iniquity and **not** minister to Me as priest, nor come near any of My holy things, nor into the Most holy place, but they shall bear their shame and their abominations which they have committed.”* (44:13)

These ministers of the temple will probably be responsible for preparing the meals that will be cooked and served in this temple at all of the Feasts of the Lord. In each of the four corners of the outer court there are large kitchens (See Pictures #13 for the kitchen locations). These large kitchens indicate that the outer court will serve as a dining place for the meals that will be prepared from the animal sacrifices. The annual Passover celebration has always required that each family bring a lamb for sacrifice and then eat it as a meal. Jesus (Yahoshua) upgraded Moses’ Passover to the Lord’s supper just before His crucifixion. During the millennium, the Passover (the Lord’s Supper) will be upgraded again to The Marriage Supper of the Lamb which will be celebrated annually in this temple.

3) Priests:

Certain Levites shall be the temple Priests. These will be known like the “sons of Zadok” who were faithful to Yahweh when all of Israel

went astray. They will offer to the Lord the fat and the blood of the sacrifices. They will stand before the Lord and enter His sanctuary to come near to the Lord and minister to Him. Ezekiel lists several laws and ordinances which concern the priests:

- They shall wear linen garments (turbans on their heads and trousers on their bodies) when entering the inner sanctuary. They shall not wear any wool or anything causing them to sweat. Then they shall leave these garments in the holy chambers when leaving to sanctify the people.
- They shall keep their hair well trimmed (not shaved or long).
- They shall not drink wine when entering the inner court.
- They shall not have a wife who is divorced or widowed (unless she is a widow of a priest), but rather take virgins of Israeli descent.
- They shall teach people the difference between the holy and unholy and discern between the clean and unclean.
- They shall stand as judges in controversy.
- They shall not defile themselves by coming near a dead person, (except for father, mother, son or daughter, brother or unmarried sister). After he is cleansed, count 7 days and offer a sin offering for him in the sanctuary and then he may continue to minister before the Lord.
- They shall have no land possession in Israel *“for I, the Lord, am their possession.”*
- They shall eat the grain, sin, and trespass offering. Every dedicated thing in Israel shall be theirs.
- They shall receive the best of every sacrifice or firstfruits offering.
- They shall not eat any bird or beast that died naturally or was torn by wild animals.

“You shall give to the priest of the first of your ground meal, to cause a blessing to rest on your house.” (Ezekiel 44:30)

4) Economics in the Temple (45:9-14)

Just like the previous temples were economic centers, the Millennial Temple will also serve as an economic center where the trading standards will be established with justice.

“Thus says the Lord God, ‘Enough O princes of Israel! Remove violence and plundering, execute justice and righteousness and stop dispossessing My people.’ You shall have a just ephah, and a just bath.” (Ezekiel 45:9)

The ephah is the unit of measure for dry products such as grain or wheat or flour. The bath is the standard unit of measure for liquid products such as milk or oil. The shekel is the standard unit of measure in weight for precious metals such as gold or silver. The following chart shows these units of measure with their larger and smaller units of measurement.

	Smallest Unit	Small Unit	Large Unit	Largest Unit
Liquid Measure	Log (1/3 quart)	Hin (1 gallon)	Bath (6 gallons)	Cor/Homer/Koros (60 gallons)
Dry Measure	Xestes (1 1/6 pints)	Omer (2 quarts)	Ephah (6 gallons)	Cor/Homer/Koros (60 gallons)
Precious Metal Weight	Gerah (1/50 ounce)	Shekel (2/5 ounce)	Mina (1.25 lbs.)	Talent (75 or 88 lbs.)

It is exciting to know that when the governments of the nations rest upon the shoulders of the promised Messiah Yahoshua (Jesus) that the economy will be established with God’s order, justice and righteous judgment from this time forth even forever! (Isa. 9:6,7). Those who will rule with Jesus will be like Him in that they: *“shall delight in the fear of the Lord. They shall not judge by the sight of their eyes, nor decide by the hearing of the ears; but with righteousness they shall judge the poor, and decide with EQUITY for the meek of the earth.”* (Isa. 11:3,4 paraphrased).

5) Ordinances for the Prince (45:13-17, 46:16-18)

The prince is given many privileges and duties in the Millennial Temple, and Scripture seems to imply that the resurrected king David will be the prince in this temple. In the context of the end of the age

when Israel is gathered back together in their original land, Ezekiel 37:24-28 states: *“David my servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them. Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children’s children, forever; and My servant David shall be their prince forever... The nations also will know that I, the Lord, sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.”*

Also, in the context of the millennial reign and the Covenant of Peace Ezekiel 34:23,24 says: *“I will establish one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them -- My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them; I, the Lord, have spoken.”*

Jeremiah 30:9 also speaks about king David reigning as king of Israel at the time when God brings back His people from captivity saying: *“They shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will RAISE UP for them.”* Isaiah 55:3-5 says that David will be a future *“leader and commander for the people”* at a time when God makes an *“everlasting covenant with you... for He has glorified you.”*

Hosea 3:4,5 is further confirmation that king David of old will be the eternal king over the nation of Israel: *“For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim. Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God and David their king. They shall fear the LORD and His goodness in the latter days.”*

If we really believe in the resurrection, then it should not be hard to believe that God will bring the ancient king David back to earth to be the prince during the millennial reign of Christ. After all, God created us in the earth, from the earth and for the earth. So, it should not be a surprise when the saints who have lived before us start coming back for their earthly inheritance and rewards as Revelation 20:4-6 tells us: *“they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years... they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.”* Paul also encourages us that *“if we believe that Jesus died and*

rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep (have died) in Jesus. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first." (1 Thessalonians 4:14,15)

When Jesus came the first time there were several people who were raised from the dead to walk on earth again. Matthew 27:50-53 records: "*And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.*" So also in the days of Jesus' Second Coming there will be many more people raised from death to walk the earth again.

Yahoshua (Jesus) will be ruling over the entire earth, while David will only be the king of Israel. See Isa. 4:2, 11:1; Jer. 33:15 and Zech. 3:8, 6:12 and notice the key word "Branch" of David. It is Yahoshua (Jesus) the "Branch / descendant of David" who will rule as the head of all government during the millennium. Jeremiah 23:5,6 speaks of Jesus the son of David when it says: "*Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, that I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell safely. Now this is His name by which He will be called: YAHWEH TSIDKENU - The Lord our Righteousness.*"

So the resurrected king David will be the prince and king of Israel, while Yahoshua (Jesus) will be the one good shepherd over ALL His people and the king of ALL the earth (Rev. 11:15, 19:15). David, the prince, will be responsible for giving special burnt offerings and peace offerings at the celebrations of each weekly Sabbath, monthly New Moon (beginning of each month), and the yearly appointed Feasts of the Lord (Ezekiel 45:13-17):

These are the prescriptions for these grain offerings, burnt offerings, and peace offerings for the prince in Israel:

- 1/6th of an ephah from a homer of wheat

- 1/6th of an ephah from a homer of barley
- 1 bath of oil
- 1 lamb from a flock of 200

When the Lord returns to this temple, He will enter through the inner court eastern gate and then it will be shut where no man can enter through it, *“because the Lord God of Israel has entered by it; therefore it shall be shut. As for the prince, because he is the prince, he may sit in it to eat bread before the Lord. He shall enter by way of the vestibule of the gateway, and go out the same way.”* (Ezek. 44:2,3) David will worship at this gate and eat bread before Yahweh and then leave by the same vestibule. The priests will prepare his burnt offerings and peace offerings as described above *“to make atonement for the house of Israel.”* (45:15, 17) Atonement, which is a temporary covering for sins, can be made by men who intercede for others, but forgiveness is the complete cleansing of sins only by the life of Jesus.

Ezekiel also gives details for the land inheritance laws for the prince. The prince will inherit all of the land on the east side and the west side of the Holy Portion. This land stretches from the Mediterranean Sea to the west side of the Holy Portion and from the Dead Sea to the east side of the Holy Portion (A map will be shown in section 5 Land Divisions). The prince is allowed to give any of his land inheritance to his sons and it shall become their possession. However, if he gives some of his land inheritance to any of his servants it shall be theirs only until the year of liberty (Year of Jubilee - which comes every 50 years), then it gets returned to the prince. Also, the prince is not allowed to take away the people’s land inheritance so that *“none of My people may be scattered from his property.”* (46:18)

6) Worship System in Keeping the Feasts (45:17 - 46:15)

“It shall be the prince’s part to give burnt offerings, grain offerings, and drink offerings at the feasts, the New Moons, the Sabbaths, and at all the appointed seasons of the house of Israel.” (45:17)

Ezekiel is shown the manner of worship in the Millennial Temple, which is governed by the Feasts of the Lord outlined in Leviticus 23.

The Feasts of the Lord are the very heart and soul of God's worship system. Below is a list of the days that Ezekiel specifically mentions to honor with special sacrifices and worship:

- **1st day of 1st month:** Cleanse the Sanctuary with a young bull. The priest puts the sin offering blood on: temple doorposts, four corners of the altar, and gateposts of the inner court gateways.
- **7th day of the 1st month:** Do the same as day one above for everyone who has sinned unintentionally. This will make atonement for the temple.
- **Passover:** on the 14th day of the 1st month prepare a bull for a sin offering.
- **Feast of Unleavened bread:** from the 15th-21st of the 1st month prepare each day 7 bulls and 7 rams for a burnt offering and a kid of the goats for a sin offering. And prepare a grain offering of one ephah (with one hin of oil) for each bull and one for each ram.
- **Feast of Tabernacles:** from the 15th-21st of the 7th month do the same sacrifices and offerings as the Feast of Unleavened bread listed above.
- **Sabbath:** Once a week on the Sabbath the prince shall offer:
 - *6 lambs:* with the grain offering (as much as desired) with 1 hin of oil per ephah.
 - *1 ram:* with the grain offering of 1 ephah with 1 hin of oil.
 - The inner court east gate will be shut all week long except on the Sabbath when it will be opened for the prince to enter and stand in the vestibule by the gatepost. The priests will prepare the required burnt offering and sin offering for the prince who will worship at this gate every Sabbath, and then the gate will remain open for the rest of the day. The people of Israel shall worship the Lord at the entrance of the east gateway on the Sabbath day.
- **New Moon:** Once per month at the beginning of each month (at the new moon) the prince shall offer:
 - *1 young bull:* with a grain offering of 1 ephah and 1 hin of oil.
 - *6 lambs:* with the grain offering as much as desired with 1 hin of oil per ephah.

- *1 ram*: with the grain offering of 1 ephah with 1 hin of oil.
- And the people shall worship like they do on the Sabbath day.
- **Festivals & Appointed Feast Days:**
 - *for bulls*: the grain offering is 1 ephah with 1 hin of oil.
 - *for lambs*: the grain offering is as much as desired with 1 hin of oil per ephah.
 - *for rams*: the grain offering is 1 ephah with 1 hin of oil.
 - And the people shall worship like they do on the Sabbath day.
- **Voluntary Offerings:** The prince may offer voluntary burnt or peace offerings whenever he desires. The east gate will be open for him during the sacrifice and then shut when he is done. The offerings will be prepared just like on the Sabbath day.
- **Daily Morning Sacrifice:** Every morning a burnt offering shall be prepared “as a perpetual ordinance” which includes:
 - *One year old lamb*: with 1/6th of a ephah of grain offering and 1/3rd of a hin of oil to moisten the flour.

Although our entire lives should be an expression of worship, we can see that there are special times that Scripture has ordained for corporate celebrations of worship in honor of Yahweh. These appointed Feasts are for the purpose of changing us more into God’s image thus giving Him glory. Ezekiel 46:9 tells the worshippers at the appointed Feasts not to leave by the same gate that they entered. Likewise, every time we come in worship to offer our lives as a sacrifice to the Lord we will be changed from glory to glory and not leave the same way that we entered.

7) Preparation of Offerings (46:19-24)

Since the Cross of Christ (laying down our lives for the sake of others) is so central in the life of a believer, it should be no surprise that the Millennial Temple is set up for physical offerings such as grains and oils and animals. These offerings typify the spiritual sacrifices we offer to God. One example of a spiritual sacrifice from Psalm 27:6 is **joy and praise**: “*I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing; yes I will sing praises to the Lord.*”

Jesus' ministry was focused on the cross. He was constantly talking about his purpose of going to the cross and admonishing his followers to *"take up their cross and follow him"* (Mark 10:21). Jesus did not only die on a cross; he lived the message of the Cross daily. He was always laying down His life for the sake of others. A selfless life of sacrifice for others is the Cross which Jesus taught and lived.

The apostle Paul's message and mission was also the Cross (Gal. 6:14) and he was determined to make his focus *"Jesus Christ and him crucified"* (1 Cor. 2:2). Therefore Paul could say in Gal. 2:20:

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me."

Just like the entire life of the believer revolves around the Cross, the entire Millennial Temple is set up for the purpose of sacrifice with the altar in the very geometric center of the temple. At each of the four corners of the temple outer court there are kitchens. Each kitchen has rows of stones around their courts with cooking hearths all around the rows of stones. These are the kitchens where the ministers of the temple boil the sacrifices of the people in the outer court. (See #13 in the Pictures section for the kitchen locations)

There is also a place in the Priest's Chambers where the priests can prepare the offerings so that they don't have to bring them out into the outer court. This is where the priest's boil the trespass offering, and sin offering, and bake the grain offering. This chamber is on the north west side of the Priest's Chambers. (See #23 in the Pictures section for the priest's boiling/baking chamber).

The place where the sacrifices are first prepared is in the inner court northern gateway. There are eight tables in the vestibule of this gateway where they slay the burnt offerings, sin offerings and trespass offerings. There are tables for slaughtering the animals and for the flesh of the sacrifices, and there were also tables for laying the instruments with which to slaughter the offerings. Hooks were fastened all around the area, probably used for hanging the instruments of

slaughter and flesh of the sacrifices. (See #25 in the Pictures section for the sacrifice preparation area)

The cross of Messiah was not a pretty sight. During an age of peace, the sacrifices in the Millennial Temple will be a needed reminder of the high price that was paid for our redemption. It will also be a constant reminder that if we desire to be like Jesus there is a sacrifice to make. Although salvation is a gift from God, conformity into the image of Christ as a mature son of God will require that we make some sacrifices. If Jesus is our example, how can we expect to be in His image and yet ignore the daily sacrifices that it takes to be like Him?

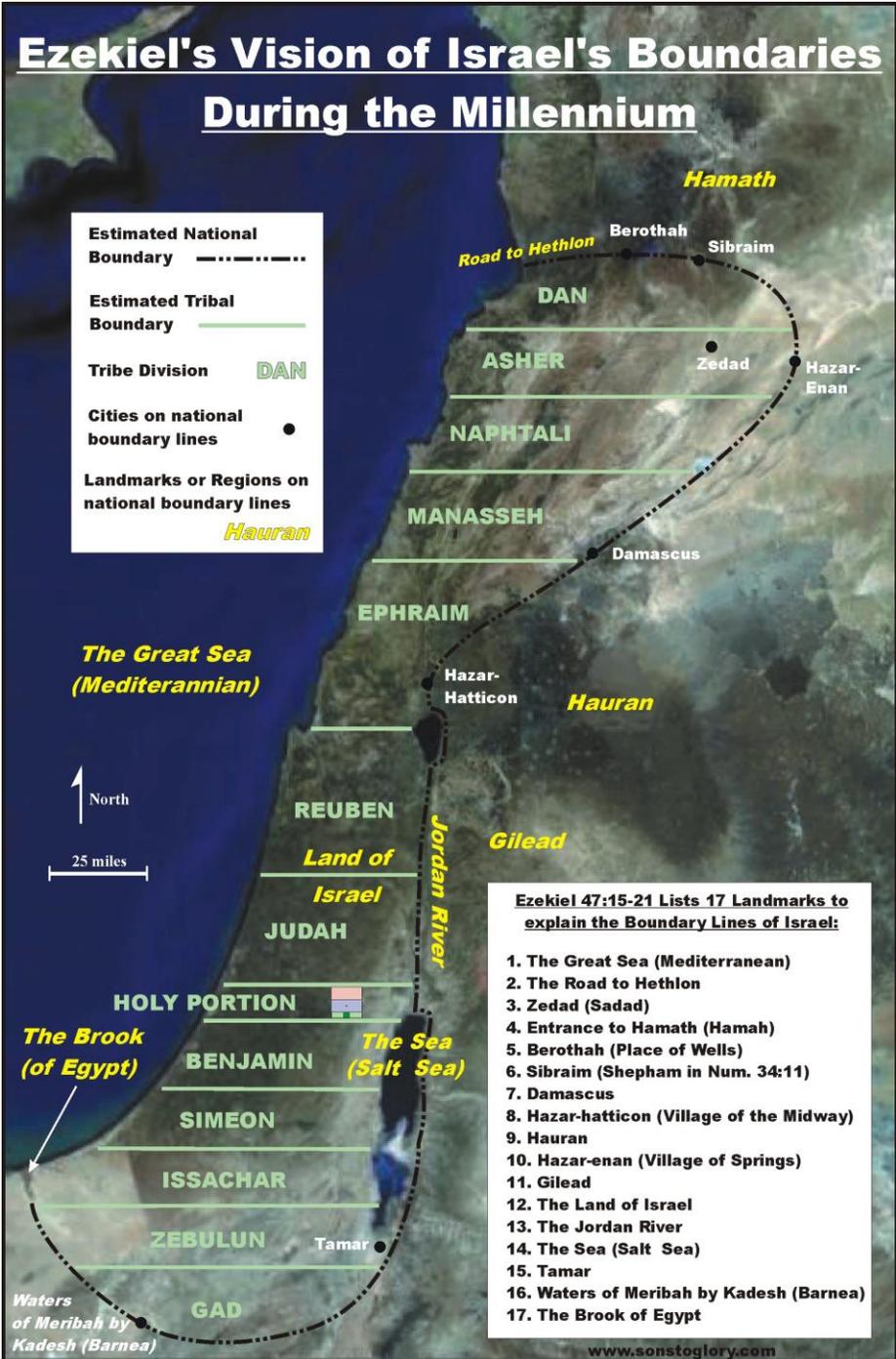
5. Israel's Land Divisions

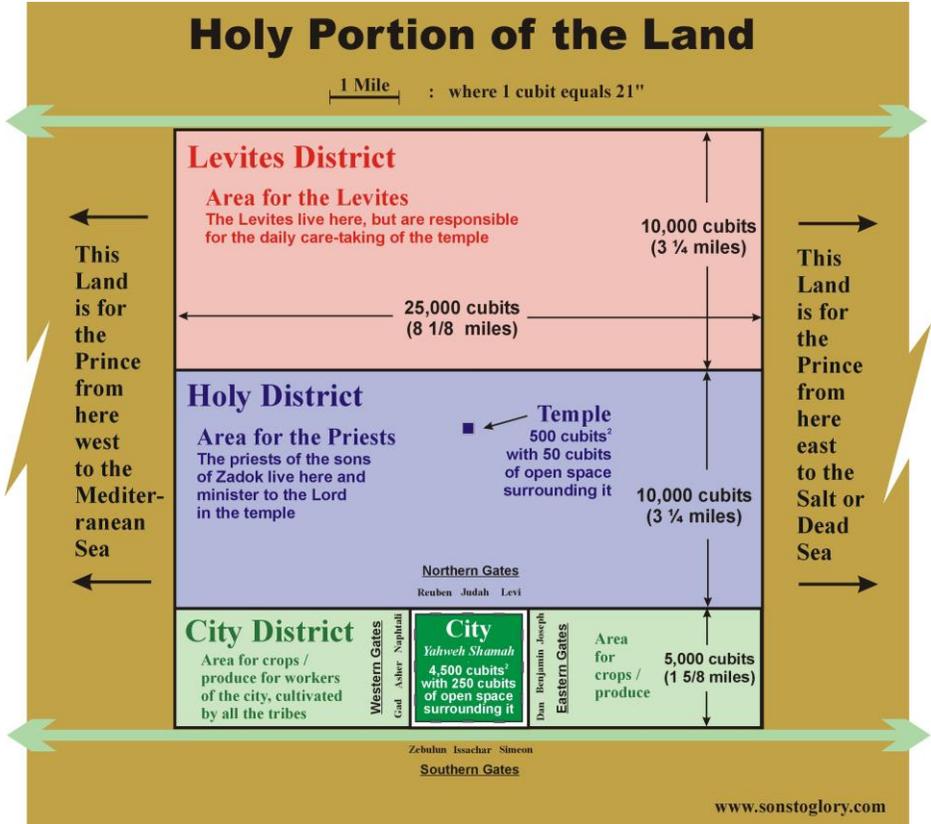
“It shall be that you will divide it (the land) by lot as an inheritance for yourselves, and for the strangers who sojourn among you and who bear children among you. They shall be to you as native-born among the children of Israel; they shall have an inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel.” (Ezekiel 47:22)

The map on the next page shows the estimated land portion that is promised to Israel during the millennial reign of Jesus on earth. This information is derived entirely from Ezekiel 45:1-8 and 47:13 - 48:35. A few of the cities listed by Ezekiel do not exist today, and their exact historic location is uncertain. Therefore, the boundaries in the following map may not be exact, but they are relatively accurate based on the latest archeological and historical evidences.

In Numbers 34:1-12, the Lord spoke to Moses almost the exact same boundaries for the land of Canaan as was shown here to Ezekiel; even using most of the same cities as boundary markers. Some cross-referencing with Numbers 34 was used to derive the map boundaries.

On the page after this map is a detailed blow-up diagram of the “Holy Portion” of the land. This Holy Portion is located in the center of Israel around the area of modern day Jerusalem and is pictured to scale on the map as well.





This diagram is a detail of the Holy Portion from the previous map.

Conclusions on Ezekiel's Temple

When Solomon built the Lord's temple, Second Chronicles 2:4 declared that it was for the purpose to:

- 1) burn sweet incense to the Lord,
- 2) put continual showbread before the Lord,
- 3) offer the morning and evening sacrifices, and to
- 4) celebrate the Sabbaths, new moons and appointed Feasts.

This Scripture then proceeds to declare, "this is an ordinance FOREVER to Israel." Did God really mean FOREVER when he spoke these temple purposes through Solomon? After all, the temple of Solomon is no longer standing. How can these purposes be forever?

Ecclesiastes 3:14 says:

“I know that whatever God does, it shall be FOREVER, nothing can be added to it, and nothing taken from it. God does it, that men should fear before Him.”

Yes, these purposes will be fulfilled forever if we understand the principle that Yahweh’s ultimate “temple” is Mankind. All other temples serve as a foreshadow of redeemed mankind being God’s temple. All of the above listed purposes for Solomon’s temple will be fulfilled in redeemed man. For example, we will offer prayers and intercessions as “*sweet incense,*” and the “*morning and evening sacrifice*” will be our daily offerings of praise and thanksgiving from our hearts. The analogies and lessons that we can draw from the physical temples of God being compared to Mankind as Yahweh’s temple are limitless. Likewise, **the physical millennial temple is meant to be an object lesson for us to learn how to be the holy temple of Yahweh.**

The 1,000 year period after Messiah returns will be an Age of Discipleship in learning the ways of the Kingdom (This can also be termed the Kingdom Age). The previous 2,000 years have been correctly termed an Age of Grace (or the Time of Salvation) where we have learned that the arm of the flesh cannot redeem us, but only faith in the finished work of the cross in the life of Yahoshua (Jesus) our Messiah. Now it is time for another paradigm shift similar to the paradigm shift that Jesus initiated when He came the first time to transition between the Age of Law into the Age of Grace. This time we will enter the Kingdom Age, where we will be learning from Jesus Himself the ways of the Kingdom and how to be the pure undefiled temple of the Lord. The fulfillment of “*Christ IN US the hope of glory*” (Col. 1:26) will be realized at the end of this 1,000 year period, just like the fulfillment of the Age of Law came at the end of that particular age (where Jesus was the fulfillment of the Law -Matt. 5:17). Similarly, the second coming of Yahoshua (Jesus) will bring a fulfillment of grace since we are ending the Age of Grace, and entering the Kingdom Age.

We are only just beginning the Kingdom Age. The fullness of the Kingdom will be realized 1,000 years from now. We have a lot to learn and be disciplined in before we can have the fullness of God dwell in us which Ephesians 3:19 declares will be a reality:

“to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with ALL the fullness of God.”

Therefore, the previous temples in history have been for the purpose of teaching us what it means to be the true *“temple of God”* not made with hands. Physical temples explain to us in a practical *“hands on”* manner how we become a holy and pure and undefiled place for God to dwell. The reason previous temples had to be destroyed (like Solomon’s, & Herod’s) was because of OUR (Mankind’s) unfaithfulness to the Covenant that God has made with us, and not because Yahweh’s purposes have been changed.

The Millennial Temple will not be any different than previous temples in its eternal purpose. It will serve the same eternal purposes by providing a natural object lesson for the spiritual reality that God will be working out in His true temple *“not made with hands.”* We still have much to learn about what it really means to be God’s dwelling place. To be exact, we will have one thousand years worth of discipling and perfecting.

Solomon ended his prayer of dedication for the temple in Second Chronicles 6:41,42 by crying:

“Arise, O Lord to Your resting place, You and the ark of Your strength. Let the priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, And let Your saints rejoice in goodness. O Lord God, do not turn away the face of Your anointed; Remember the mercies of Your servant David.”

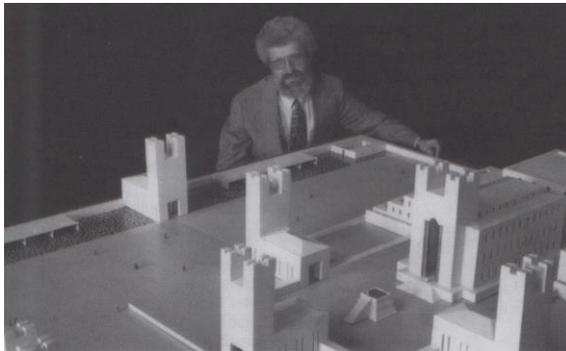
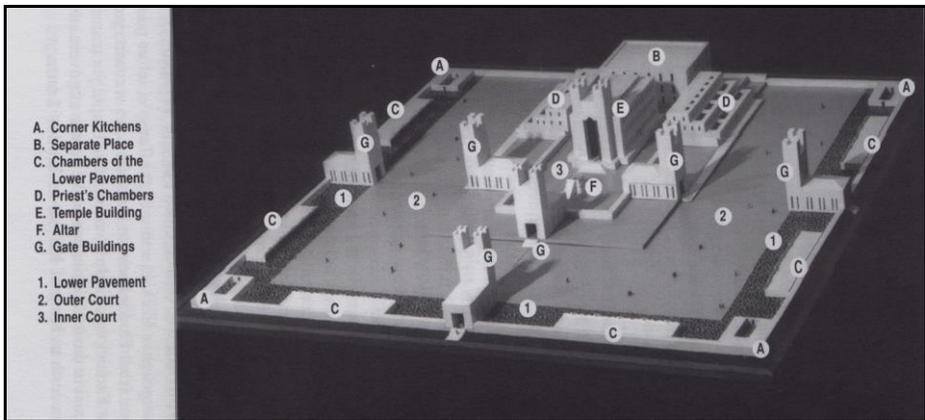
Then all of Israel worshiped Yahweh with sacrifices and said:

“For He is good, For His mercy endures forever!”

Likewise, let us continually offer the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving! Let us rest in the mercy and goodness of our Friend

Yahoshua (Jesus). He is our Savior, He is our Priest, and He will soon be King of all the earth ruling from His Millennial Temple!

John Schmitt's Model of Messiah's Coming Temple



Pictured above is a different model of the same temple built by John W. Schmitt. John has been studying and building models of Ezekiel's temple for over thirty years. These pictures, and more, can be found in his excellent book "*Messiah's Coming Temple*."⁶

I came across John's book in late 1997, shortly after I had already finished my model in July of 1997. It was a wonderful confirmation to see that other Christians were also studying this yet to be constructed temple in Jerusalem Israel.

PART 2

Acting Like Mature Sons

APOSTLES

Chapter 8

The “Passion” Movie

There are two truths that the Lord showed me using Mel Gibson's “*Passion*” movie. The first truth is that the Cross (representing death to selfishness) is what Jesus lived DAILY and not just at the end of His life. The second truth is that the religious deception in our days is rampant. The first part about **The Cross** is what I wrote on March 12, 2004 in this chapter immediately after watching the movie. The second part about **The Deception** was written here on August 19, 2005 after I learned about the occult influences that inspired this movie.

This *Passion* movie glories in the violence and murder of Jesus on the cross and this was actually Satan's pleasure. However, the TRUE Cross of Obedience to Christ will give His people the kingdoms of this world that Jesus won back for us when He fully obeyed His father and gave up His life for us. The TRUE “Cross of Christ” is not some psychotic “death wish,” but rather a life of obedience: a type of obedience even unto death. Presently, at the “end of the age” it is every person’s individual choice to either take up their cross and follow Jesus, or to serve the god of this world who will gladly give you fame and fortune if you will bow down to serve him.

Satan is the god of this age (2 Cor 4:4), and he is able to give money and power and honor to those who will follow him. Many of the people in high-level places of influence in media, entertainment, government and organized religion have bowed to worship demons whether they realize it or not. Due to the inherent selfishness of the human heart we are easily deceived, and without Christ and death to selfishness, we are doomed to be used by the enemy. When Satan tempted Jesus, he “*took Him up on a high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, “All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.”*” (Matt. 4:8,9). So Satan DID indeed have this world’s kingdoms to offer Jesus, but Jesus wouldn’t bite because he knew that His Father

had prepared to give Him these same kingdoms of the world, only it would be through the Cross of obedience and not the easy way of bowing to Satan. We must follow in Christ's footsteps the same way. He is our ONLY hope, and only those with Jesus' character and self-sacrificing attitude will bring the kingdom of heaven to this earth. *"Thy kingdom come, and Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven!"* (Matthew 6:10)

The Cross

March 12, 2004 - I was very inspired and touched by the recent film "The Passion of the Christ." I have been praying for and anticipating this movie for over a year, and I was not disappointed. Although it is a true work of art, you are not thinking about the good cinema quality as much as you are transfixed on the man Jesus Christ and the forgiveness and love of his character. What a man! What an awesome God! While other religions often require you to sacrifice to gain their god's approval, only Christianity offers a God who sacrifices His only son so that we can know Him and be saved.

I am sure everyone gets something different out of this movie, but what struck me personally was the message of Jesus the Chief Apostle, because our generation will see the office of apostle restored to the corporate "Body of Christ." In the Early Church everyone knew who and where the apostles were, but this is not the case today. Often times, our many denominations and institutions hinder the operation of true apostolic anointing in the region-wide Body of believers. Nevertheless, this seems to be changing with prayer, and this movie could help the cause of uniting the city-wide local body of believers under true apostolic authority.

An example of this type of unity happened here in my town of Huntsville on the day that the movie opened. A group of thirteen local pastors were in the middle of a four day, three night prayer summit retreat in order to pray for the city and get to know each other better. They all went to see this movie together and as a group were very moved by what they saw. I was told that they all left the movie theater without saying a word to each other during the entire ride back to the

retreat lodging (quite a miracle for preachers!). Although these pastors were all from different denominations and backgrounds, they found common ground with this movie, and it helped their focus for the remainder of the retreat.

Here is a movie produced by one of the greatest stars in Hollywood that may do more to promote the sacrificial character of Jesus than hundreds of church institutions combined. I believe this type of breakthrough will start happening in other fields of service like business, science, education, government, etc. The Church was never meant to be an institution, but rather a living example of Jesus on the earth during every day life -- **The kingdom of God is much bigger than the church!** Life is really about relationships: first with our creator God and then with one another. Deep and lasting “father/son” type relationships will become the backbone of this apostolic revolution.

Jesus is the Chief “Apostle” which simply means a “sent one,” and so His life and death is the example for all apostles. In the New Testament, Paul was also a great example of the gift of an apostle and he wrote, “*I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified*” (1 Cor. 2:2). That is what I saw in this movie – Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Jesus died to “self” every day of His life and not just at the cross. Likewise, the apostle Paul wrote, “*I die daily*” (1Cor. 15:31). This same heart attitude is resident and readily apparent in all true apostles. When discerning true apostles, this type of humble character is more important than gifting or miracle working, and even Jesus refused to perform a sign when religious people required it from Him.

It was truly Jesus’ Passion to endure the cross with the longer term vision of a harvest of souls for the Kingdom of God. Likewise, all future true apostles of the Lamb will have this same gentle, humble attitude of laying down their lives for the sake of others. This was the message of the Cross and the obvious focus of this movie. I pray that this movie will wake up a slumbering generation to take up their crosses and follow Jesus.

The Deception

August, 19, 2005 - It has been a year and a half since I first saw this Passion movie and I have learned some rather disturbing things about those who made this movie, as well as observed some bad fruit. When you are faced with truth, you can either accept it or reject it, but the truth will not be changed because truth is embodied in a person and that person is Jesus Christ. Those who seek truth will find Jesus, and those who honestly look to Jesus will find the truth. What I have learned since my first viewing of the movie is that many of the leading stars in this movie are blatant unrepentant pornography stars of the hard-core type. It is also apparent that the underlying spirit behind creating this movie has its roots in the occult.

Rather than go into detail on this matter and give much attention to the works of darkness, it is probably more helpful to the reader to explain how something like this happens in the spiritual realm, and how easily the human heart can be deceived. Satan's most effective tactic is to come as "*an angel of light*" to deceive (2 Cor. 11:14), so there are many who claim the name of Jesus that do not do what He says. They preach another Jesus other than the true Christ. While I still rejoice that Christ is being preached in "*The Passion of the Christ*" movie, I also feel that a warning is in order about following after a false god that is made in the likeness of man. Modern day "idol worship" can include an unhealthy focus on many good things including people we admire like actors or even ministers of the gospel.

Unfortunately the Catholic theology, which is what this Passion movie is based on, worships many idols and demons besides the real Jesus of the Bible. A mixture of the true and the false is the most deceptive because on the outside it can appear righteous yet lull people asleep as to their true spiritual condition. I was born and raised among Catholics in my family, and my mother grew up going to a Catholic school. Therefore, I realize that many individual people who attend a Catholic church may indeed be children of God, because becoming a child of God is a matter of faith and confession in Messiah Jesus and not a matter of what organization with which you are affiliated. However, I am saying that the hierarchical system of the Catholic church is based

upon the wisdom of man and not the order of God, which will always open up spiritual doors for people in the occult to bring demonic influence and deceive. The Catholic church was founded upon the pagan worship of Mithra the sun God and is most certainly a major part of what the book of Revelation calls "*Mystery Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth*" (Rev. 17:5). A study of the pagan occult roots of the Catholic church is outside of the scope of this book, but an excellent resource for this topic is a book by Robert Fischer called "*The Children of God.*"⁷

While on the surface this movie uplifts and honors Jesus, there is a subtle deception that Satan may be using in this film to draw people into the occult and idol worship. Even a casual look into the history of the actors and producers of this movie will show a multitude of violent and hard-core pornographic material as well as mystic pagan witchcraft. 1 John 3:10 clearly tells us: "*whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God.*" While I am glad that this movie exalts the man Christ Jesus, I do not endorse the immoral character of those who played a part in creating it. For more information on the depths of this religious deception problem please read Part 2 of Robert Fischer's book "*The Children of God.*"

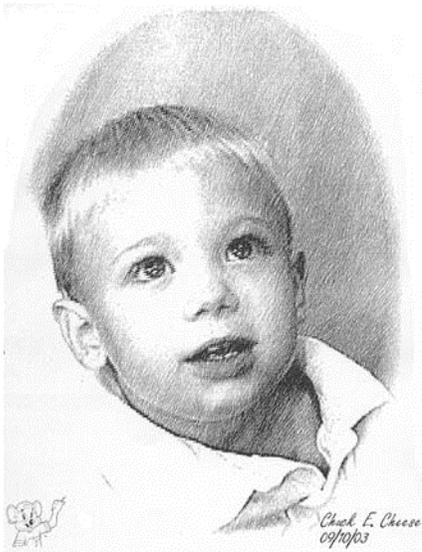
On the surface it may not seem important regarding the character and integrity of those who preach or teach the gospel. It may be easy to think that as long as people's words (or movies) line up with the Scriptures, then things are alright. However, in the spirit realm we impart to others what and who we are. The words we speak are just vehicles that carry who we are in the spirit. This is why Jesus said, "*it is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.*" (John 6:63)

Others can speak the exact same words that Jesus spoke in order to try and mimic His life, but it will not contain the real heart and life of Jesus unless His character is truly in them. In Acts 19:11-20, the seven sons of Sceva used the same words as the apostle Paul to try and drive out demons, but the demons "*overpowered them and prevailed against them so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded,*" because they did not have Paul's godly character. Discerning the heart and character of Jesus in other people is a major act of mature sons.

Chapter 9

The Wonder of September 11th

Written September 11th 2003 –



“Here am I and the children whom the LORD has given me! We are for signs and wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, who dwells in Mount Zion.” (Isaiah 8:18, and Hebrews 2:13)

Pictured to the left is my son Stephen who was born September 11th 1999. The tragic events which occurred in America two years ago today on September 11th 2001 was a sign from hell of just how desperate the kingdom of darkness is trying to keep control of the earth.

On the other hand, the events of September 11th 1999, four years ago, was a sign from heaven that God’s plans to rule the earth are indeed right on schedule. You can be sure that what God has promised in destroying Satan, He will certainly fulfill.

While most people are familiar with the September 11th 2001 events, not very many know about the sign from God that occurred exactly two years before on September 11th 1999. On this day there were signs in the stars that were very similar to the sign described in the book of Revelation chapter 12. This passage of Scripture talks about a pregnant woman who is clothed with the sun and giving birth to a male-child who will rule the earth with a rod of iron. The dragon then tries to devour her child but is unsuccessful (Rev. 12:1-5). This exact scenario

was played out in the stars on September 11th 1999 when the constellation Virgo, which was just below the horizon (clothed with the sun), gave birth to the moon (male child) at the same time that the constellation Draco (dragon) stood at the feet of Virgo. The details of this very rare celestial event and its similarities to the “star” of Jesus’ birth will be discussed thoroughly in the next chapter.

Revelation 12:1-5 (with my comments in parentheses) - *“A great and wondrous sign appeared in heaven: a woman (constellation Virgo) clothed with the sun (just below the horizon), with the moon (male-child) under her feet and a crown of twelve stars (constellation Bernice) on her head. She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth. Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon (constellation Draco) with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads. His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born. She gave birth to a son, a male child (the moon), who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter. And her child was snatched up to God and to His throne.”*

While these signs can always be perverted (such as in astrology), they were originally given to herald important events in the history of humankind (Gen. 1:14, Luke 21:25, Ps. 19:1-6). The Jews understood this concept which is why they asked Jesus for a sign in the heavens to back up His claim of being the Messiah (Matthew 16:1). While you may be able to fake a healing or an earthly sign, no one can manipulate or control the stars. Hence, a sign in the stars provided a fool proof way of prophetic identity. Jesus DID have the credentials in His prophetic birth and accompanying signs in the heavens, but the religious people of His day missed those signs because they didn’t come the way they were expecting. And so it is today. While the signs in the heavens have been all over the sky in our generation proclaiming a new era is about to dawn, few people are recognizing them.

What does this sign mean? God is certainly birthing something of great significance, but what is it? The signs would seem to indicate that this

birthing was foretold in the Scripture similar to the birth of Jesus 2000 years ago when His life was the fulfillment of Scriptures that He could not have manipulated. I believe that this sign is prophetic of the Apostolic office that God is now restoring to the Bride Body of Christ. The “Restoration” birth pangs have been coming ever since the reformation with Martin Luther. Over the past 1,500 years, the ministry gifts of pastor/teacher, evangelist, prophet and now apostle are being restored to the corporate understanding of “church.” With the restoration of the apostle, we can expect not just a revival of the old order “church,” but a whole new revolution of what “church” is and how we do it. Those who are desperately hungry for a genuine relationship with the living God and are weary of playing the religious games with institutional church are among those who will receive and embrace this new revolution of church order.

I am certainly not degrading the labor of our forefathers who have fought valiantly by establishing the great denominations which are known throughout Christianity. But it is now the proper time in ecclesiastical history to unite under one banner and allow Christ in His Bride Body to reclaim the earth for His glory. Part of the apostolic anointing in our generation is for the purpose of bringing together God’s Bride according to His pattern or matrix. The beginning of correct order involves Jesus truly becoming the chief cornerstone (Eph. 2:20) and the head of His church Body. This can only happen when we start giving our lives and meetings over to Him instead of looking to man’s ability. Our natural abilities are often an affront to the finished work of Christ. We need to embrace the Cross and let God be God.

One of the biggest wrong mindsets that true apostles will help to crucify is the clergy vs. laity mentality. The priesthood of ALL believers must be restored where Jesus is the only clergy and his Body functions according to directions from Him (the Head). This does not nullify the servant leadership gifts that the Lord gives to people, and it is not an excuse for independence from others. On the contrary, Jesus will most often speak to us through people in His Body, and we must be able to discern His voice through whomever He decides to speak. However, true apostles will not draw men unto themselves like a pope, but will point them to Jesus. God is not impressed with the giftings that He gives to His apostles and we shouldn’t be either. He rewards

our faithfulness and obedience, and not the gifting which comes from Him. Our obedience is the worship to Him.

Many of the Lord's apostles are working secular jobs and considering it a full time ministry. The marketplaces will be transformed when they witness the true life of Christ in everyday **action** and not just in our preaching. We should preach the gospel always, and use words only when necessary.

Apostles will also help to restore the correct **pattern** for church, which includes a restoration of a "*divine culture*" to house the "**life**" that always results from a true move of the Holy Spirit. This *divine culture* will be **an integrated pattern of: 1) thought, 2) speech, and 3) action** that is based on a proper balance of the Word of God and the Spirit of God. This pattern involves small group meetings weekly, larger "tribal" meetings monthly, and three big region-wide meetings yearly on the three main Feasts of the Lord (Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles). This order is simply the biblical "wrapper" to contain the life of Christ. If it is done without the LIFE, then it will just be a dead religious work. Nevertheless, the **Feasts of the Lord** are a big key to divine worship **order**.

My three sons all have birthdays during one of the seven major Feasts of the Lord. Joshua David, the firstborn, has a birthday which falls on Pentecost. Our second child, Stephen Paul who is being discussed in this article, was born on the Feast of Trumpets. Finally, the youngest, Seth Harlow, was born on the Feast of Pentecost six years after Josh. My wife Linda happens to have a birthday during the Feast of Tabernacles, and my birthday coincidentally also happens to be during the Feast of Pentecost like my first and third sons.

This "birthing" sign and wonder on September 11th 1999 happened on the Feast of Trumpets, which is the fifth yearly Feast out of the seven major Feasts of the Lord (Leviticus 23). Trumpets in Scripture are always symbolic of messages, and I know God is certainly trying to convey a message concerning the birth of a new age in Christendom. The specifics of this message will take decades to fully understand, but the **birth** of something very significant in the purposes of God for the earth has certainly been trumpeted for all who have ears to hear.

Chapter 10

A Sign of God Birthing the Apostolic

This brief study will show that God not only gave a sign in the heavens (the stars) as a witness to His Son Jesus' birth 2000 years ago, but that He is also giving a sign in the heavens (the stars) to our generation who is witnessing another birth: The birth of Jesus restoring modern day apostles to His Church government. When His government is fully established in His people, the spotless Bride of Christ will arise in the power of the Holy Spirit to finish the ministry of Jesus in the earth (see Isaiah 60). The Bride of Christ arising and shining is the beginning of Jesus' return to rule and reign the earth during this new millennium.

There is a difference between astronomy and astrology. Astronomy, which is good, is the study of God's creation in the stars, and "declares the glory of God." Astrology (horoscopes and fortune telling from your "sign"), which is forbidden in the Scriptures, is the perversion of the true study of the stars. Below are some quotes pertaining to astronomy in the Scriptures:

Genesis 1:14 – *“And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and seasons, and for days and years.”*

Psalms 19:1-6 – *“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows his handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them he has set a tabernacle for the sun, which is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoices as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the*

heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hidden from the heat thereof.”

Luke 21:25 – *“And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring.”*

Amos 5:8 and Job 9:9 - mention names of constellations such as **Orion**, **Arcturus** (the Bear -The Big Dipper), **Pleiades** (a seven star grouping). Job 38:31-33 mentions the **“Mazzaroth”** which is the 12 constellations of the Zodiac (Zodiac means stages of the sun’s path through the heavens in 12 months).

Jewish tradition, preserved by Josephus, suggests that Bible astronomy was invented by Adam, Seth and Enoch. For nearly 2,500 years the revelation of God’s redemptive plan for mankind was written in the naming of the stars and their grouping in the 12 signs of the Zodiac; each one having 3 other deacons (constellations) associated with it for a total of 48 constellations. The heavens therefore preserved the truth until the written Scriptures could be given to Moses. Some excellent resources on this subject include: *“The Gospel in the Stars”* by Joseph A. Seiss; *“A Voice Crying in the Heavens”* by Robert Scott Wadsworth; and *“The Witness of the Stars”* by E.W. Bullinger. Robert Wadsworth writes, *“I have checked the next 2,000 years and there is nothing that comes close to the portrayal that the heavens display from 1996 to 2000.”*⁸

First we will look at the sign that was in the heavens when Jesus was born, then we will see how it compares to the sign that is now occurring in the heavens:

The Sign of Jesus’ Birth

Thanks to projectors, like Chicago’s “Adler Planetarium,” and computer technology, like the program “Dance of the Planets,” we can chart the movements of the heavenly bodies to see what they looked like 2,000 years ago at the birth of Christ.

Matthew 2:1 *“After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men (magi) from the East came to Jerusalem, saying; “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.”*

The wise men (magi) were probably Zoroastrian priests who lived hundreds of miles from Jerusalem in Mesopotamia (Iraq) and were skilled astronomers studying the heavens from atop of ziggurats. A “star” to the magi could mean almost any light in the sky, whether star, planet, comet or nova. The tower of Babel having “*its top with the heavens* (meaning signs of the zodiac)” (Gen. 11:4) was probably a ziggurat used for star gazing. Since the magi were familiar with the Hebrew religion, they interpreted rare celestial events as omens.

The celestial events detailed below told the wise men that the prophesied Jewish Messiah and king was being born. These astronomical statistics have been printed in several well known publications including Guideposts Magazine.⁹

Each number below is shown in the celestial map on the next page:

1) August 12, 3 BC - They saw the two planets **Jupiter and Venus rise in conjunction**. (A conjunction is when celestial bodies line up so closely that they appear to us as a single super bright light.) Jupiter signified kingship or Messiah and Venus meant birth and motherhood. This occurred in the constellation of Leo, which is the symbol of the Hebrew tribe Judah. Since the magi were well studied in the Hebrew Scriptures, they probably knew from Genesis 49:10 that the Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah.

2) *September 3 BC* - They saw **Jupiter rise in conjunction with Regulus**. Regulus is the brightest star in the constellation of Leo - a symbol of rulership.

3) *February 2 BC* - a Second time they saw **Jupiter rise in conjunction with Regulus**.

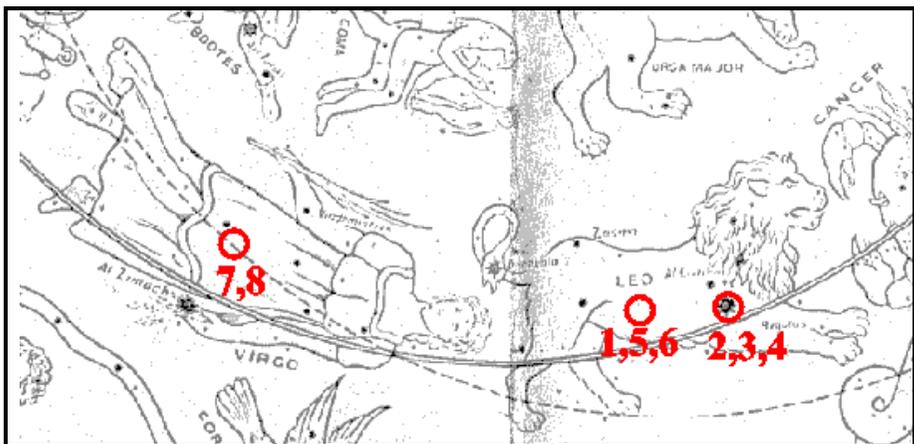
4) *May 2 BC* - a Third time they saw **Jupiter rise in conjunction with Regulus**.

5) *June 2 BC* - a Second time they saw **Jupiter and Venus rise in conjunction**. Again, Jupiter referred to kingship or the Messiah and Venus meant birth and motherhood.

6) *September 2 BC* - a Third time they saw **Jupiter and Venus rise in conjunction**. This occurred again in the constellation of Leo, which is the symbol of the Hebrew tribe Judah from which Jesus came.

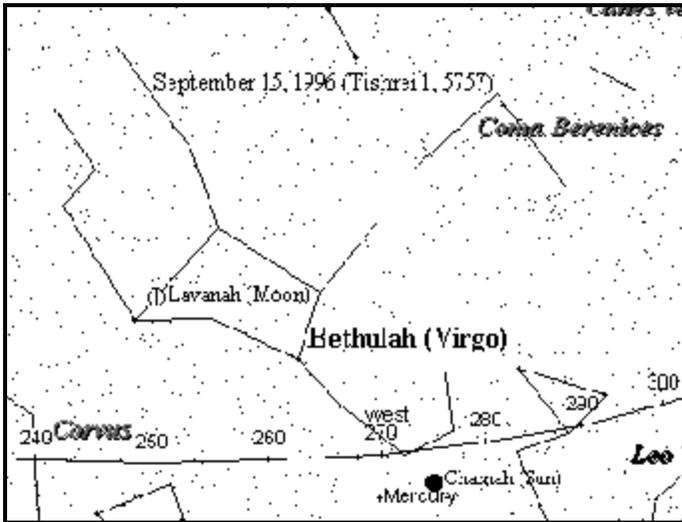
7 & 8) *August/September 3BC & December 2 BC* - On these two occasions, **Jupiter was located directly in the womb area of the constellation of Virgo** the virgin. Jupiter's Hebrew name is "Sedeq" which throughout the period of Jesus and the first apostles was a term used for the Messiah.

The graphic below shows the location references to the numbers above.

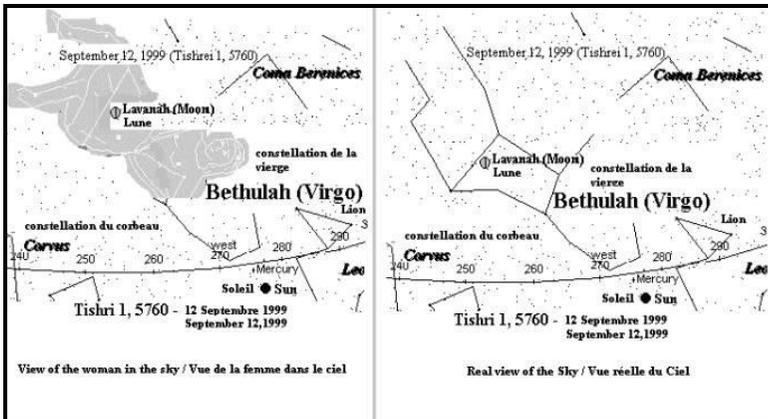


The Jews understood the principle that whenever God moves in a major way He would give a "sign" in the heavens. This is why they asked Jesus to show them a sign to prove he was the Messiah (Matt. 16:1). The heavens in the past several years have been lighting up like never before heralding the soon return of Messiah Yahoshua (Jesus). One particular sign that has been occurring each year from 1996 through 1999 during every Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah - The Jewish New Year) is Virgo the Virgin giving birth to the moon. The moon is located in the womb of the constellation Virgo. Revelation 12:1-17 compares this sign with the birthing of God's "man-child."

The Sign of the Revelation 12:1-17 Birth



September 15, 1996



September 11, or 12, 1999 (depending on time zone).

The October 2, 1997 and September 21, 1998 Feast of Trumpets Signs are not shown above, but they did take place and the graphics look very similar to the 1996 and 1999 events pictured here. All of these original graphics and astronomical statistics were taken from the website of astronomer and Jewish believer Greg Killian.¹⁰

Revelation 12:1-5 *“A great and wondrous sign appeared in heaven: a woman (constellation Virgo) clothed with the sun (just below the horizon), with the moon (male-child) under her feet and a crown of twelve stars (constellation Bernice) on her head. She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth. Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon (constellation Draco) with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads. His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born. She gave birth to a son, a male child (moon), who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter. And her child was snatched up to God and to His throne.”*

The moon represents the “male child” in this rare astronomical event. Virgo the Virgin (Bethula) is giving “birth” to the moon **every year** from 1996 to 1999, and it just happens to be occurring every year on the Jewish New Year (Rosh Hoshanah or the Feast of Trumpets), which is very rare indeed. By the year 2000, the moon is far beneath her legs (birthed). This positioning of the moon within Virgo (happening four years in a row on the same Hebrew date) has never occurred before, and will never occur again for another 26,000 years, due to the precession of the equinoxes!

The sun is just below the horizon such that Virgo (Bethulah) is “clothed with the sun” as the Scripture mentions. The sun must be below the horizon in order to have any possibility of seeing this “sign.” The moon is “new” and after “birth” the moon will move directly to the feet of Virgo (Bethula) within 24 hours. Over Virgo’s head is the constellation known as “Coma Bernice’s hair”. This is the “crown of twelve stars” in verse 1. Higher and above her legs we will find “Draco the Dragon” poised to devour Virgo’s child.

The above pictures do not show Draco the Dragon because it would make the picture curved and hard to relate to. If you had a larger picture you would see that Draco is poised above the woman, waiting to snatch the man-child. The moon is poised in the “birth canal” of the virgin who is lying down with her feet in the air. The word “Bethulah” is in the location where her head should be. The constellation of Coma Bernice is the crown of twelve stars above the virgin’s head.

This sign, as depicted above, is how it looks from Jerusalem. Notice that the Sun is below the horizon so that this sign can be seen. This sign would not be visible if the sun were to be above the horizon. Because the sun is below the horizon, the constellation is literally “clothed with the sun” as Revelation 12 says!

Isaiah 66 (partially quoted below) seems to be the closest match in all of the Scriptures to the Birth in Revelation 12. I think that it is more than a coincidence that Isaiah 66 just happens to be in the weekly Torah reading during the week of September 11th 1999 which is read by all orthodox Jews specifically when the New Moon (Rosh Chodesh) falls on the Sabbath; as it does when this sign occurs on the Feast of Trumpets (September 11 & 12 1999). The Lord obviously chose the readings so that His people would be informed before He takes any action. Isaiah 66:5-9 says –

*“Hear the word of the LORD, you who tremble at his word: “Your brothers who hate you, and exclude you because of my name, have said, ‘Let the LORD be glorified, that we may see your joy!’ Yet they will be put to shame. Hear that uproar from the city, hear that noise from the temple! It is the sound of the LORD repaying his enemies all they deserve. Before she goes into labor, **she gives birth**; before the pains come upon her, **she delivers a son**. Who has ever heard of such a thing? Who has ever seen such things? Can a country be born in a day or a nation be brought forth in a moment? Yet no sooner is Zion in labor than **she gives birth** to her children. Do I bring to the moment of birth and not give delivery?” says the LORD. “Do I close up the womb when I bring to delivery?” says your God.”*

Connection to Modern Day Apostles

So what is the connection between this sign and God restoring modern day apostles? During the same four years that the heavens were birthing a male-child, God was calling forth His apostles from all over the world and commissioning them to take their rightful place in His government that He is establishing on the earth. During the years 1996-2000 there were seven (7) different red moon eclipses over Jerusalem which all happened on Jewish Holidays!¹⁰

Joel 2:30-32 confirms the significance of this: *“I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness **and the moon to blood BEFORE** the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.”*

From 1996-2000 as the “Virgo birthing the moon” sign occurred, God was connecting many of His called apostles to begin taking their role in His Bride Body church. Jesus is the Head of His church, and He is therefore able to gather His apostles in each region of the globe whenever and wherever He desires. On September 11th of 1999 when the final “Virgo birthing the moon” sign stood in the heavens, it was a token of what was being carried out on the earth within God’s Bride Body Church. The current Church (woman) was giving birth to the Lord’s apostolic government (manchild) who will rule and reign over the earth with Him. I think it is more than coincidence that on this day (Sept. 11th 1999), my wife Linda gave birth to our second son Stephen as a token to me personally that God was indeed speaking through these heavenly signs which I had been studying at the time.

About eight months later, on May 17th 2000, another sign occurred in the heavens which was so similar to the sign at the time of Jesus’ birth that NASA called it “A Christmas Star” and compared it to the “star” reported in the book of Matthew.¹¹ Also around this time, a major aligning of the planets occurred in heaven on May 5th 2000.¹² Although this line up of the planets was hidden by the sun, another major line up of planets occurred two years later that was visible on Pentecost May 18th 2002.¹³ On this Pentecost day in 2002, my wife just happened to give birth to our third son Seth, May 18th 2002, which is the date that I had written two years prior would be significant because I knew the planets were “aligning” visibly again on the Feast of Pentecost. The Lord was speaking to me again that He has surely been birthing something of great significance in the earth concerning the aligning of His apostolic government. Although this government is currently unseen to the eyes of men, when God moves it will eventually affect everyone just like the birth of Jesus did.

Jesus is being birthed spiritually through His Bride Body in a most powerful way, which can be compared to His first birth in Nazareth

2000 years ago. Only this time it will be “Christ in us” His Bride Body who will do the “greater works” of Jesus in the earth as He promised in John 14:12 - *“Most assuredly I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and **greater works than these** he will do, because I go to My Father.”* These modern day apostles are like generals in the Lord’s underground army, except that these generals do not need to have recognition and status like worldly generals. Their identities can only be seen in the Spirit and it is usually best that they remain hidden and obscure from the authorities and structures of men. However, when the Lord’s manchild reaches maturity, several decades from now, everyone will be able to witness God’s government.

Other Confirmations of this Birth

1) Paula M. Cavu - Brisbane Australia

I met Mr. Cavu a few months after I first published this article in May of 2000. Paula and his internet discussion list at Daystar had been talking about God’s coming “manchild” for many years prior to these signs happening. Below is one particular quote in their discussion:

Spiritual experience to warn about the enemy’s plan to kill the child of God’s resurrection power, received by Paula M. Cavu on 20th April 1997 -- The meaning of this spiritual experience is obviously related to the revelation and identification, in the new additions to this web site, of the child of God’s resurrection power that is being birthed from The Church in the 1990s. This further advanced my perception that “the man child” that is being purged or refined from God’s judgment upon Christendom, represents a major and historical intervention of God in the affairs of The Church and humanity.

The Bible records two such major and historical times when God birthed into the world the man child of His intervention into the affairs of men. The first was Moses. Moses was God’s man child who was birthed into the world to be the mediator of His Old Testament Covenant. The powers of the kingdom of darkness were aware of this divine purpose of The Creator and they set out to kill every man child or boy child that was born of the children of Israel.

At the birth of Jesus Christ, the powers of darkness were again aware of Heaven's divine purpose. Accordingly they again set out to kill the man child or boy child of God's New Testament Covenant. Concerning killing the two "man child's" of God's covenants with humanity, the powers of darkness failed and God's purposes in the lives of Moses and His Son Jesus Christ were fulfilled.

In the same way **"the man child of God's resurrection power,"** which is being birthed from The Church in the 1990s, will overcome the desperate attempts of "the god of this world" to kill it. In agreement with the resurrection purpose of God, the man child of the 1990's will be resurrected *"up unto God, and to His throne."* May the prophets of the 1990's declare God's purpose in due season and give direction, motivation and purpose for the people of God!

Rev 12:1-5 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

The role in the 1990's of the Internet and E-mail is for global communication between God's called out and chosen people.¹⁴

2) Bob Schlenker - Sign of the Conception for this birth?

In 1991, nine years before this "birthing" there was another very rare celestial sign that took place in the stars which can be compared to the "conception" for this birth. It was again, very similar to the celestial sign which occurred at the birth of Jesus over 2000 years ago. I was

not personally aware of this sign until 2003, but a brother named Bob Schlenker was shown this significant heavenly sign back in 1991 and wrote the details on his Open Scroll website.¹⁵

3) Stephen Paul Jablonowski - Birth of a Manchild Poem

My son Stephen was born on the same day this Revelation 12 Sign appeared in the heavens on the Jewish New Year (Sept. 11th 1999 - Feast of Trumpets). This confirmation is only one of many that the Holy Spirit gave me to know that this “Revelation 12 Sign” is really a sign from the Lord and not just an interesting coincidence. The poem that I wrote on the day of Stephen’s birth, September 11th 1999, is written in the next chapter. Below is Stephen Paul’s birth announcement from Huntsville Hospital’s “BabyFace” website:

BABYFACE H
photo album

Congratulations
It's a boy!

Welcome:	Stephen Paul
Born To:	Linda and Paul
Date of Birth:	09-11-1999
Time of Birth:	7:48 A.M.
Length:	18 inches
Weight:	5 lbs 5 oz

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Chapter 11

Birth of a Manchild Poem

Stephen Paul's Birth - A New Beginning

Written on Stephen's birth date - September 11th 1999 - by his father
Paul Stuart Jablonowski

Conceived on New Year's day January one,
And born on the Jewish New Millennium,
Rosh Hashanna, and Feast of Trumpets the same.
So sound a trumpet, and fan the flame,
Stephen Paul is a miracle new beginning!

I find today's Sabbath Scripture reading interesting to note,
That on this day all Jews read what Isaiah wrote:
*"Before she travailed, she gave birth;
Before her pain came, she delivered a male child.
Who has heard of such a thing?
Who has seen such things?
Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day?
Or shall a nation be born at once?
For as soon as Zion travailed, she gave birth to her children.
Shall I bring to the time of birth, and not cause delivery?
Says the Lord.
Shall I who cause delivery shut up the womb?
Says your God."* (Isaiah 66:7-9)
For this one (Stephen Paul) was born in Zion!

On this day: September eleventh nineteen ninety nine,
There appeared in heaven the Revelation chapter twelve sign.
It never happened before and never will again in our time.
T'was Virgo giving birth to the moon,
Declaring that Jesus is coming soon!

How will this be done? you ask,
For the glory of God is no small task.
Stephen Paul has the answer in his weight,
The number of double GRACE: 5 lbs. 5 oz. was his fate.
Born in the 7th hour of the 7th Jewish month was his date.

Not by might, nor by power,
But by Yahweh's sevenfold Spirit in this hour.
As lightening flashes in the sky,
No flesh will glory, it must die.

I am reminded of a thought I will share,
Psalms 102 about "*the set time to favor Zion*" is there.
Here I see God's timing which makes me stare:
*"God will arise and have mercy on Zion,
For the time to favor her, Yes, the set time has come.
For your servants take pleasure in her stones, and show favor to her
dust.
So shall the nations fear the name of the LORD,
And all kings of the earth Your glory.
For the LORD shall build up Zion; He shall appear in His GLORY.
He shall regard the prayer of the destitute,
And shall not despise their prayer."* (Ps. 102:13-17)

What an awesome new thing to behold!
When in my arms little Stephen I hold.
A new thing has been born today,
God bringing life from dust and clay.

I think of Israel and Ezekiel's bones,
which are destined to live as Jesus clones.
The trumpet has been blown, the time is now here,
For the new age of God on earth to appear!

Stephen (means crowned one) Paul (means humble) Jablonowski
You were born for a purpose - fulfill your destiny in Christ!

The Following day: 11/12/99

Some other interesting things surrounding Stephen's birth include:

1) The doctor telling Linda (my wife) that "today is a day of rest." The 1,000 year millennial reign of Christ is to be a "day of rest." Today's Feast day is considered a High Sabbath (day of rest).

2) At Huntsville Hospital when Stephen went into the nursery for the first time there were 12 boys and only one girl... "*she delivered a male child*" (Isa. 66:7 and Rev. 12:5). I overheard a doctor commenting on how unusual this was. I found out officially there were 11 boys and 4 girls born on Friday the 10th, and 6 boys and 1 girl born on Saturday the 11th.

3) Two other things, besides the Feast of Trumpets, are mentioned in the Scriptures to have specifically taken place on Stephen's birth date (1st day of the 7th Jewish month):

Genesis 8:13 -- It was a new beginning for Noah because, "*the waters were dried up from the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked and indeed the surface of the ground was dry.*"

Ezra 3:1-7 -- It was a new beginning for Ezra and the captives who returned from Babylon to restore the sacrificial worship system in Jerusalem. "*The people gathered together as one man to Jerusalem... from the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD.*" Also, Nehemiah 8:1-12 -- "*All the people gathered together as one man in the open square*" and Ezra read to them from the Book of the Law from morning until midday. They were repentant and sorrowful because they weren't doing these things, but Ezra encouraged them and said, "*Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our LORD. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength!*"

Chapter 12

Modern Day Apostles

Are there modern day apostles alive today? If so, how can true apostles be recognized? After all, Jesus commended the church at Ephesus for testing false apostles: *“you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars.”* (Rev. 2:2) Paul said in 2 Corinthians 11:13-15: *“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.”* So, the works and the fruit of false apostles will eventually show their true motives. However, there could only be “false” apostles if “genuine” apostles existed too.

I believe there have been true apostles walking the earth ever since the first century church. When Jesus ascended back into heaven after His resurrection, the Scriptures say that he “gave gifts unto men” and part of those gifts include the gift of apostles. Ephesians 4:11 names the five different equipping gifts as: 1) apostles, 2) prophets, 3) evangelists, 4) pastors, and 5) teachers. Scripture certainly records other apostles besides the original twelve. A few biblical apostles other than the first twelve include: Paul, Barnabas, Andronicus and Junias (who was most likely a woman) just to name a few (Acts 14:14, Romans 16:7). The GIFT of apostle was never given to draw attention to personalities, but rather to live out a function for the Kingdom of God on earth. A gift is GIVEN by God and not earned by man. So being an apostle is not a promotion, but a living function.

The first twelve apostles of the Lamb were given authority from Christ and spiritual authority is often a hallmark of an apostle. However true spiritual authority is always based on relationship. And since relationships cannot be forced, apostolic authority is organic in nature and based upon family type relationships and not a hierarchical

structure. This is why Paul could say that to SOME he was an apostle but to others he was not (1 Corinthians 9:12). His authority in Christ to the Corinthians was based on the relationship he had with them. Consequently, all true apostles will be more concerned with relationships and not just enforcing their authority.

Listen to Paul's father-like heart, when he wrote to the church at Thessalonica:

*“For neither at any time did we use flattering words, as you know, nor a pretext for greed, God is witness. Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become so dear to us. For you remember, brethren, our labor and travail; working night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God. You are witnesses, and God also, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, **as a father does his own children**, that you would walk worthy of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.”* (1 Thessalonians 2:5-12)

There are, however, “spheres of authority” that must be recognized. Paul was an apostle to the Gentiles but not to the Jews, and Peter was an apostle to the Jews but not the Gentiles. Whenever these men stepped outside of their God given sphere of authority they would get themselves into undo trouble. We only have authority to the extent that Jesus' authority is manifested through us, and He gives that authority as He wills. So, it is not an advancement or a “step up the corporate ladder” in the Kingdom to be given the gift of an apostle. There are apostles with authority over their neighborhoods, and apostles with authority over their cities, but in each case it will be a burden and calling from God. It can be recognized by man or rejected, but men in and of themselves cannot appoint apostles.

Galatians 1:1 tells us that Paul was an apostle because God ordained Him and not man: *“Paul, an apostle - not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead.”* So God is the only one who calls and commissions apostles in His timing. People can either recognize the authority that God has given to His apostles or reject it, but it is still available. The problem is that there will be no unity in Christ’s Body, the Church, until each member properly *“submits one to another.”* (1 Peter 5:5) This mutual submission includes acknowledging the authority that God has given to His apostles.

The main problem with recognizing modern day apostles is that most people are looking for a worldly kind of authority. However, Jesus chose the foolish, and ordinary men of his day as apostles to confound the wise (1 Cor. 1:27). The forceful, domineering and “take charge” leadership that the world looks for in authority is often contrary to the spiritual authority of God. The institutional church has yet to learn this apostolic truth and therefore is set up more like a modern day corporation with government heads at the top. Apostolic authority is just the opposite from this hierarchical type authority. The current institutional church must be turned upside down before it will function in apostolic authority, because the apostles are the foundation, and not the top floor: *“having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.”* (Ephesians 2:20-22)

The ways in which apostolic authority works differently than modern day hierarchy authority is the most important characteristic in discerning true apostles from false apostles. Because this subject is so important, a full discussion on this topic has already been discussed in Chapter 4 *“Spiritual Authority vs. Civil Authority”* and it won’t be repeated again here. It is sufficient to say that true apostles will not be forceful in asserting the spiritual authority that Christ has given them. They will be humble and submissive to Christ in the rest of His Body and not “lone rangers” off doing their own thing. A focus on strong covenant relationships will always follow a true apostle, because

without strong gut-level trusting relationships there will be no unity, and true unity is the fruit of an apostolic anointing.

Apostles are taught by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 1:12), as should all believers. When people learn how the Holy Spirit teaches, I believe they will begin to recognize His apostles. We MUST be able to recognize the Lord as He speaks through His Word and through the “*things of the Spirit*” (1 Cor. 2:13,14). He may speak through a dream or a vision or a series of “coincidental” events or a word of prophecy. However, we must be mature and learn to put those things together as Isaiah 28:9-10 says: “*Whom will he teach knowledge? And whom will he make to understand the message? Those just weaned from milk? Those just drawn from the breasts (immature Christians)? For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line. Here a little, there a little.*”

Bringing all of these “things of the Spirit” together “here a little” and “there a little” requires patience and due diligence on our part to make a record of these things. This way we can bring all of the pieces of the puzzle together to comprehend what the Spirit of the Lord is saying on a certain subject or issue. This can be done on a personal basis, a small group basis, or on a city wide basis. But respecting what God says and writing down these things that the Lord shows us is very important and forms a personal or corporate journal from which we can derive direction. This method of following the Lord will also help us to discern the callings and giftings on people’s lives.

After Paul’s dramatic conversion, he spent fourteen years in Damascus being taught by the Holy Spirit. Paul explained to the church at Ephesus: “*I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles. If indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery - as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ; which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets.*” (Ephesians 3:3-5). From this Scripture, we can see that God often reveals the “big picture” revelations to His apostles. In Paul’s generation it was the mystery of the Gentiles being included in God’s

plan of the ages. Paul's generation saw the transition between the Age of Law into the Age of Grace. In our generation, the Lord is revealing the transition between the Age of Grace into the Age of the Kingdom, which includes the marriage of the Lamb to His Bride-Body Church. This larger perspective in vision is often what distinguishes apostles.

Apostle simply means "sent one" and there are many reasons that the Lord may "send" someone on a mission. Therefore, placing a definition on the function of an apostle is not a cut and dry task. Each apostle will have their direction from the Holy Spirit and it will involve different functions than others who are also called as apostles. The bottom line in discerning true apostles is to look for the fruit in their lives - "...for every tree is known by its own fruit." (Luke 6:44), and the fruits of the Spirit are: "...love, joy peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." (Gal. 5:22) Now that we have examined a few ways that we can recognize the character of a true apostle, let's explore the function of a "marketplace apostle."

What is a Marketplace Apostle?

Ron McKenzie in his excellent book, "*Being Church Where We Live:*" writes:

"A Church with an apostolic vision will train people up and send them out to work in the business world. The Kingdom of God expands as Christians extend the rule of God into areas of life where they have authority. Authority is an essential aspect of any kingdom. This means that Christians should seek positions of authority to help the Kingdom to expand. The idea has developed that politics and business are improper activities for Christians. These two very important areas of authority have been handed over to the devil. Even where Christians are involved in politics or business, there has been no serious attempt to apply biblical principles to these activities. This has severely weakened the Kingdom of God. As the church has retreated from the world, the belief has developed that the Kingdom will not be established until Jesus returns. This is a false doctrine, that has caused Christians to sit around and wait

for Jesus to come, while leaving the world in the hands of Satan.”¹⁶

Business is basic human transaction, and Jesus did most of His greatest miracles and teachings right in the middle of the marketplace. All of the original twelve disciples of Jesus were **marketplace apostles**. The only reason there is need today to coin the term “marketplace apostle” is because this lost art of discipleship within the business world has been sidelined and marginalized by the professional “clergy” mindsets of the institutional church. The real Church of Jesus Christ is not a building or a denomination. It is a people from every tribe, tongue and nation who have taken up their Cross to follow the Lamb wherever He leads them even unto death. Since real people work and live their lives in the marketplace and in the business of every day life, this is where real ministry should take place. Jesus is our example, and He did not build an organization, but rather He built people, and met with them where they lived and carried out their day to day activities.

Solomon’s temple had two main foundational pillars which were named Jachin and Boaz (1 Kings 7:21). Jachin was a priest and Boaz was a business man. Likewise, we are all called to be priests and kings (Rev. 1:6, 5:10) which are foundational pillars in us His temple. But the ratio of kings to priests in Israel was 92 percent kings (11 tribes) and only 8 percent who were in the priesthood (tribe of Levi). So the number of marketplace apostles and ministries should far exceed those called to full time equipping ministries. About the same percentage of heroes in the Bible were marketplace ministers who either worked in businesses or were farmers, fishermen, military men or government officials. Only a relatively few people like Samuel, Ezra and Ezekiel were full time priests.

So why does today’s Church subtly teach that in order to be really spiritual you need to be in a full time equipping ministry? We should have just the opposite attitude! The more mature Christians should be the ones sent out into the harvest field to do the work. Ambassadors should always be your BEST representatives and not your immature cadets who have little knowledge about the ways of the king. The same biblical principles, that made people like Daniel, David and Esther to become marketplace ministers who brought the Kingdom of God to

earth, are still in operation today. We must determine that we are going to serve God in the businesses and places of employment where God sends us. We must also see this as worship unto the Lord and as a valid “full time” ministry where we can disciple our employees or workmates.

Our jobs and the skills given to us are holy unto the Lord. When we start really living this out, then we will begin to see the kingdom of God come into our places of employment. **The kingdom of God comes to any place where He is worshiped in spirit and in truth.** Our skills and giftings are from God. How we use them is our gift of worship back to Him. For example, when we take a negative situation in the workplace and apply Kingdom principles such as love or forgiveness or patience to bring about change for good, then the Kingdom of God has come to that sphere of influence. Of course, the Holy Spirit is a perfect gentleman and never forces His kingdom on anyone. Jesus was the prototype in bringing the Kingdom, and He laid down his life for the very ones who crucified Him. How can we expect to expand His Kingdom without doing the same thing?

Marketplace apostles will do the work of an apostle in the business world and outside of the organized church. In the Scriptures, Joseph is a perfect example of a marketplace apostle “sent” on a mission outside of the family business. Bezelel is another example from the Scriptures. Bezelel was the very first person in the Scriptures of whom it was said he was “filled with the Holy Spirit.” It wasn’t a priest or even a king where the Bible first mentions a man being filled with the Holy Spirit, but a craftsman. *“Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: See, I have called by name Bezelel the son of Uri, the son of Hur of the tribe of Judah. And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to design artistic works, to work in gold, in silver, in bronze, in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all manner of workmanship.”* (Exodus 31:1-5) It is important to see that anointing from God is very practical and we can worship God through our work if we labor as if we are working for Him and not man.

True giftings such as apostle and pastor are often corrupted by using them as titles in front of people’s names, like Pastor Bob or Apostle

Paul. The Bible never uses these gifts as titles in front of people's names, because they are functions to be lived out, and not titles to carry for the sake of honor. We should honor one another, but our honor should come from the content of our character and not the giftings that God gives to us. Some of God's best pastors will never stand behind a pulpit, but will pastor their neighborhoods or their co-workers. Their most anointed teachings will be done one-on-one in the workplace cafeteria. This is how Jesus pastored the first disciples and how He intended for the Church to grow in the first place. Many people are going back to this simple method of discipleship.

Andrew Strom in his article, "*Out of Church Christians*" writes:

"This "Out-of-church" phenomenon has now grown so large that books are being written about it. In fact, several years ago I heard an estimate that there are TENS OF THOUSANDS of such Christians just in our largest city (Auckland, New Zealand) alone. And I believe it is the same right across the Western nations. I have personally come into contact with literally hundreds of such people. The surprising thing is that they are often the most committed kind of Christians - praying, insightful, deep- thinking. Yet they have grown tired of "playing the game" inside our church system and have opted out. Often their involvement goes back many years. In fact, they had commonly been leaders of various kinds. Most of these people have not given up on Christianity at all. It is today's church system that they have given up on. And many feel like they are "waiting" for something. Some of these people have started up home-fellowships. Or they meet with other couples on a casual basis."¹⁷

Are these thousands of Christians who have left the institutional church just being rebellious? "Church hoppers" is often what many are called who can't seem to fit into the common mold called "church" today. But just maybe it is the "church" that is out of order? Jesus said, "*I will build my church*" (Matt 16:18) and that we are to "*go make disciples.*" (Matt 28:19) Yet we have this backwards today and are trying to build churches and hope that God will make disciples out of

those who come to “our church.” But this isn’t working in God’s order, and we need to redefine our modern understanding of “church.”

One way to redefine church is to be **Kingdom** minded instead of church minded. In other words, we need to understand that the Kingdom of God is much bigger than the church. Robert Ricciardelli explains the seven main "gatekeeper areas" in any community where "church organizations" are just one of the seven. I believe these seven jurisdictions of authority line up perfectly with the seven Spirits of the Lord mentioned in Isaiah 11:2. The following chart will explain these seven spheres of authority:

Seven Spheres of Authority in a Community

Gatekeeper Area of Jurisdiction	Spirit of the Lord (Isa. 11:2)
1. Education	The Spirit of Knowledge
2. Business & Finance	The Spirit of Wisdom
3. Media & Entertainment	The Spirit of Understanding
4. Government and Politics	The Spirit of Love
5. Church Organizations	The Spirit of Counsel
6. Healthcare	The Spirit of Power
7. Military & Law Enforcement	The Spirit of the Fear of the Lord

Ricciardelli in his article, “*Nine Lies about the Marketplace*” writes:

“The marketplace is the place the Lord has always desired to influence with His presence. It is not a surprise to see His people rise up in many jurisdictions in the marketplace. The gatekeepers of the community are those areas of service and productivity for the people of that community. The Lord desires to have His servants serve and lead the way in each of these jurisdictions. For much of our church history, His people have had a dualistic mindset that basically presented two choices, serve God in the church, and/or, be a Christian in these other area’s but falling short of looking at it as your calling or ministry the Lord had led you into. We are seeing many of

these lies and deceptions becoming exposed as His children are hearing His voice.”¹⁸

Bringing order is another hallmark of an apostle. While the Body of Christ must be organic and free flowing like the human body, there is also a tremendous order in the human body and therefore this order should be in the Body of Christ as well. This order will begin to be restored when we start making disciples as Jesus commanded instead of trying to build churches. Let us allow Jesus to build His Church and focus on making disciples in small groups like He did. It is only in these small groups of disciples where covenant relationships can develop and growth into maturity (sons) can happen. If Jesus, our example, only discipled twelve men in a three year period, what makes us think that we can do it differently? Yet the institutional church is ordered like a manufacturing facility trying to pump out hundreds of sons (mature Christians) each year. The institutional church has not produced many mature sons because it does not disciple people the way that Jesus did. Therefore it does not know His ways and cannot be entrusted with His power.

The very structure of the current institutional church does not allow people to grow into maturity because it does not allow them to grow into elders of small groups themselves. Therefore, we have a lot of spiritual babies fed once a week by a professional clergy. Those who are hungry for God either get lazy and complacent, or frustrated and leave. This must change! The Church must come into the correct order if we are ever going to see people grow from infancy into Sonship in the Kingdom of God.

The Lord's apostles will help lead the way in this revolution of church order. However, true apostles will never draw men to themselves, but will point them to Jesus. Jesus our example, would heal people or give a profound revelation and then tell them NOT to tell anyone. Yet, the church of today boasts to the whole world anytime God shows up and does something miraculous. Here are twelve Scripture references of where Jesus said NOT to tell anyone what he did or said - Matthew 8:4; 16:20; 17:9; 21:27; Mark 7:36; 8:26,30; 9:9; 11:33; Luke 5:14; 8:56; 9:21; 20:8. Why? Because Jesus did not come to be a magician, and He often refused to give a sign or miracle when people demanded it

from Him. He came to bring the Kingdom of God and we must have this same discipleship focus.

This discipleship can and should happen in the workplace. With the advanced technology in communications, the marketplace is quickly changing into networks instead of hierarchy. It is simply more productive, and especially when there is creativity or research development involved. The new order Church can function within these workplace networks, and should take notes on how to use these same principles within other small group worship settings. Of course, the family is the FIRST place where this discipleship should be occurring. If we cannot impart Kingdom principles to our children, then it is foolish to think we can help others. The family is the beginning of true discipleship and should be treated as such.

In conclusion, we have ascertained the following:

- 1) Both genuine and false apostles can be recognized by their fruit - *“Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit... Therefore by their fruits you will know them”* (Matt. 7:15-20).
- 2) The characteristics of a true apostle include: a.) their focus on covenant relationships, b.) spiritual authority (not hierarchical authority), and c.) they will be taught by the Holy Spirit, and often given “big picture” strategic revelations.
- 3) Many true apostles are called to function in the marketplace. They cause the Kingdom of God to increase in the midst of every day business and government activities. This is really the “underground church” in the western nations where the basics of discipleship are being practiced in the workplace and Kingdom principles are being applied to benefit families, companies and governments.
- 4) Apostles will bring order and unity to the places where they are sent.

Chapter 13

Are There Women Apostles Today?

For years I held the view that God did not call women as apostles. I've read many books and articles on both sides of the spectrum of this issue. However, my thinking has now changed as I've waited on the Holy Spirit to give me His view of women in ministry. Does God call women into the equipping roles of an apostle, prophet, evangelist and pastor/teacher? The short answer is **YES**, and this chapter contains some of the Scriptural reasons why.

Since today is Martin Luther King Jr. Day, it seems appropriate at this time to write an article that contributes to the cause of liberating women to function in their God given gifts and callings. It is a shame that most of the civil liberties movements in America have come from outside of the institutional church. We should be leading the way in liberating all people but instead we often find ourselves fighting against what God is doing based on our wrong ways of thinking. The Pharisees had the greatest knowledge of the Scriptures but rejected the Word Himself when He came to them because Jesus didn't meet their expectations. Likewise, much of the Church is rejecting women in equipping roles because of the traditions of men, which make God's word of no effect. (Mark 7:13)

A spiritual "stronghold" is a wrong pattern of thought, and these patterns of thought are often instilled in us from the evil in our culture. By definition according to Webster's dictionary "**culture**" is an "**integrated pattern of thought, speech and action.**" The Islamic culture is very oppressive towards women in leadership roles and hence this attitude is infused into Islamic people from childhood. These patterns of thought do not die easily which is why Ephesians 6:12 says that we "wrestle" with these strongholds. Such mindsets are not cast

out like demons, rather they must be “wrestled” with and taken down through much prayer and intercession and patience.

But there is a DIVINE CULTURE where the Mind of Christ prevails. While this divine culture has not yet been physically established in the earth, it is steadily being established in the hearts of God’s people who seek the Lord with all their heart, mind, and soul and love not their lives even unto death (Rev. 12:10,11). This “divine culture” was the established “pattern of thought, speech and action” in the garden of Eden before mankind disobeyed and fell into sin. A “pure language” (Zeph. 3:9) will be restored during the millennium, which will help in this divine culture.¹⁹

It was a result of mankind’s sin that women were given a subservient role to man in marriage, and this is only in a **marriage** relationship, not every woman to every man. Notice what God said would happen to woman due to sin in Genesis 3:16- *“I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception, in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.”* But before the fall, Adam did not “rule over” Eve because they walked in perfect love and harmony with each other. Likewise, as this “divine culture” becomes more and more established in the earth by the power of the Holy Spirit, we can expect to start seeing these results of sin reversed back to the garden paradise unity where husband and wife walk as one.

The Scriptures call both Miriam and Deborah a “prophetess” (Exodus 15:20, Judges 4:4). The Lord spoke to Miriam, Aaron and Moses as a threesome in the tabernacle (Numbers 12:4, Micah 6:4), and Deborah was a judge in Israel, which is one of the functions of an apostle. So the precedent for women in leadership roles is firmly established in the Scriptures even within a culture where women were considered “second class.” Also, Lydia in Acts 16 was a woman leader of her home church, and Aquilla and Priscilla were a husband wife team that functioned as co-leaders at their local church. (1 Cor. 16:19)

Jesus had a habit of appearing to women first, such as after His resurrection to Mary and to the woman at the well at the beginning of His ministry. The virgin Mary set a precedent by being a woman given

the revelation of the miraculous to take place in her own body. A revelation which was to be taken to the whole world. If Christ entrusted a woman to bear such an important message for Him, wouldn't they be considered "apostles" in the definition of apostle as a "sent messenger"? If not in the office, they were certainly walking apostolically with a message for the church; i.e., the Holy Ghost has made me pregnant, or "*there is a man who told me all things I have done*", or "*He is risen.*" So God has sent and still does send women apostolically today with messages for various segments of the Church or world.

So what about all of the Scriptures where Paul tells women to be silent in church and to wear head coverings etc.? The answer to these questions can be summed up in one word - CULTURE. The advice that Paul was giving the first century church was the exact word they needed to hear in the culture in which they lived. While the words and principles of Paul's writings are divine, the culture in which he lived was not, and this cultural context must be taken into account in order to properly interpret the Spirit behind the words of Paul in Scripture. For example, in Corinth and Ephesus, Paul was combating the Gnostic teaching that woman was superior to man where they actually worshiped a woman goddess (Diana). So telling women to be quiet and submissive is what these particular churches needed to hear.

Slavery was also normal in first century culture, so both Paul and Peter admonished Christians to submit to their masters in their Scriptural letters (1 Peter 2:18, Titus 2:9, Col. 3:22). However, I know that Peter and Paul would rejoice today that much of slavery has been abolished bringing more of God's divine order to the kingdoms of this world. The attitude that man is superior to woman in leadership is just another form of slavery, and a mental roadblock that must be overcome.

In these situations above, Paul and Peter were speaking a "rhema" word into the early church, not a "logos" word. "Rhema" and "logos" are different Greek words for "word" referring to the Scriptures. The law and the prophets in the Old Testament word (logos) "*prophesied until John.*" Now, we have the Holy Spirit living in us which can speak the word of God into specific situations (rhema) but they shouldn't be taken out of context to prove our culturally biased preconceived notions

regarding women. One example is Matthew 10:5 where Jesus told his disciples NOT to go minister to the Gentiles but only to go to those in Israel. Well, a short twenty years later Paul was going to the Gentiles to preach the gospel and doing exactly what Jesus said NOT to do. Jesus was speaking a timely rhema word that did apply to His disciples but did not apply to Paul a few decades later.

When God sent His only son Jesus into this world, He limited Himself to human standards and that included submitting Himself to the culture into which He was born. Therefore, it was wisdom on the part of Jesus not to choose women among the twelve original apostles because it would have detracted from the purpose for which He had come - which was to establish the Kingdom. Jesus was meeting people where they were, and He did not force the kingdom, but trusted His Father to do the work through Him in due time. So he had no problem working within the cultural parameters and yet still being the perfect SEED for the Kingdom of God. But where the Kingdom of God is fully MATURE and a **divine culture** is established, there is no bias between male and female, rather we "*are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.*" (Galatians 3:26-28)

There is a saying: "A man with a theology is always at the mercy of a man with an experience." While my theology used to make me think that God did not anoint women to be in "equipping" leadership roles such as apostle, my experience has been that God has used many women to "equip" me in my own life. Cindye Coates is one such lady and scholar who has an excellent writing on this topic called, "*The Sonship of Woman*".²⁰ I know there are thousands of women apostles in the body of Christ, and my prayer is that they will be set free to function in the gifts God has given them and rise up as a mighty army in our generation to proclaim God's word - "*The Lord giveth the word: The women that publish the tidings are a great host*" (Psalms 68:11 ASV).

I hope this brief chapter helps to show that God DOES give equipping gifts to women in the body of Christ. We would be wise to start acknowledging this truth and helping our sisters to function in their callings rather than fighting against God like the Pharisees.²¹

Chapter 14

The Birthing of Zion's Sons

Jesus' first coming began with a birth, and Jesus' Second Coming is also beginning with a birth. His first coming started with a birth through a mother: It was a natural birth, through a natural mother (Mary), birthing Jesus the One and only unique Son of the Father. The Second Coming is also starting with a birth through a mother. It is a spiritual birth, through a spiritual mother (Zion), birthing Jesus IN His mature sons within His Body of believers. The purpose of this writing is to study this particular aspect of Jesus' Second Coming through a birth. *"For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God."* (Romans 8:19)

If the majority of God's people misunderstood Jesus' mission the first time He came, what makes us think that we will understand His mission this time? In Jesus' earthly time, the Pharisees and teachers of the Law, who loved God's Word more than anyone else, were actually the greatest obstacles to the purposes of God in their generation. Why? Because they already thought they knew how the Messiah should come. *"If anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself."* (Galatians 6:3)

So, how can we understand the Father's purposes for sending His son Jesus the second time to earth? Mary is our example with her simple trust and humble devotion to the Lord. She simply believed the Lord could and would do the impossible through her (Luke 1:38). The secrets of the Lord are for those who fear Him, not for those who study hard or think they already know everything like the Pharisees. It is only by God's grace that He gives us revelation into His purposes, and He looks for a broken spirit and a humble heart to impart His revelation. A sincere love for the truth (Jesus - **a person** - is truth) is the main focus to have in order to understand Jesus' mission during His Second Coming. The key is to keep your relationship with Jesus at the

center, and let Him give you revelation in His timing, as Mary did, out of that simple devotion to Him.

If we want to qualify to receive God's revelation we must realize in humility our role as clay pots, and understand that there is *"no good thing in me"* (Rom. 7:18) that can help Jesus fulfill His purpose. His Spirit alone IN His people will fulfill His purposes in the earth with or without us personally. True humility will allow God's grace to flow into our lives (James 4:6). Rather than "head knowledge" stemming from a fleshly mind, His GRACE is what we really need in order to receive revelation of His purposes for our generation. The Pharisees and Sadducees were proud because of their head knowledge in the Scriptures. But God resists the proud and blinds them no matter how much they might know (1 Tim. 6:4, John 12:40). I have always been amazed at God's ability to hide His greater truths from those who are earnestly seeking it, but with a wrong motivation. His ability to hide His secrets from the proud is much greater than our ability to "search and find."

Understanding Christ's Second Coming in our generation can only come to us as a gift of divine revelation. What is written in this study has been accumulated piece by piece over the past 14 years as I've walked day by day with the Lord and asked Him about His coming. Some things came to me by reading other people's books or articles, but they often came right at the time I was asking the Lord personally about that subject, so I received it as from the Lord and not from man. While there may be areas in this chapter that need minor adjustments and corrections, the overall picture given here I believe is from the Lord who is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.

To know Him as the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending is a tremendous key in understanding Jesus' Second Coming. A detailed study on the beginnings and endings of the Old Testament "Age of Truth" will reveal amazing similarities, which are not coincidental. However, this study primarily compares the beginning and the ending of the New Testament "Age of Grace," where we see that history repeats itself. After all, history really is His-story which *"was written for our admonition and instruction, on whom the ends of the ages has come."* (1 Cor 10:11) He really DOES want us to

understand His coming! May we all have ears to hear what the Spirit is saying to this “end of the age” generation.

The Alpha and the Omega

Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, which means He is the beginning and the ending (Rev. 1:8). Therefore, it should not be a surprise that the beginning and the ending of particular works of God have many similarities, because “*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever.*” (Heb. 13:8) One of the greatest keys to understanding the big picture in prophecy is to see the relationship that exists between the beginning and the ending. Likewise, in order to better understand the Second Coming of Jesus (the ending of this age of grace), a short comparison will be made to the First Coming of Christ (the beginning of this same age):

Comparison of Jesus’ First and Second Comings

<i>Jesus’ First Coming</i>	<i>Jesus’ Second Coming</i>
1. Preceded by the spirit of Elijah [through the ministry of John the Baptist]	1. Preceded by the spirit of Elijah [through many modern day prophetic ministries that exist today] (Mal. 4:5)
2. There is a pregnant virgin [Mary] before her wedding [to Joseph]	2. There is a pregnant virgin [Zion] before her wedding [to the Lamb] (2 Cor. 11:2; Rev. 12, 14:4, 19:7)
3. Government [Herod] killed many babies to try to prevent Christ’s coming	3. Governments are participating in killing many babies [through abortion] to try to prevent Christ’s coming “in His sons”
4. Jesus ministered for 3 ½ years	4. The two witnesses will minister for 3 ½ years; (discussed in the book of Revelation chapter 11)
5. Jesus died and was in the grave for 3 days	5. The two witnesses die for 3 ½ days (Rev. 11:7-8)

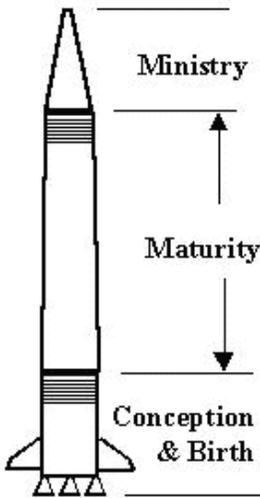
6. Jesus is resurrected from the dead and taken to heaven.	6. The two witnesses are resurrected from the dead and taken to heaven (Rev. 11:11-12)
7. Many saints are raptured (Matt. 27:52-53)	7. Many saints are raptured (1 Thess. 4:16,17)
8. Jesus returned in His glorified body to be with His disciples.	8. Jesus will return in His glorified body to be with His people (Rev. 20:4)
9. The various divided religious groups (Pharisees, Sadducees, etc.) rejected the way in which He came because He didn't come the way they were expecting.	9. The various divided religious groups (denominations) are rejecting the way He is coming in His mature sons, because it is not what we have been teaching or expecting.

So Jesus' first coming came in different stages. First, He was conceived in His mother Mary's womb and birthed. Then, He grew up in wisdom and stature with both men and God for 30 years. Then, He was baptized by John and started His 3 ½ year ministry on the earth. At the end of His ministry, He was crucified, buried and rose again from the grave. All of these events, over about a 34 year period, consisted of His "first coming," and it was a transition period between the Age of Truth and the Age of Grace.



Likewise, Jesus' Second Coming will not happen all in one day, but will occur in stages and cover many years (which is why the dates in the above chart are approximate and not exact). The Lord's "Second Coming" is a transition period between the Age of Grace and the 1,000 year Age of Peace. Let us compare the Second Coming of Christ to the

blasting off of a rocket with three different stages. The first stage of the rocket is the conception and birth process, which is the focus of this writing.



The second stage of His coming, which is the longest phase, is the growth of God's government (manchild) on the earth. This second stage can be compared to the 30 years before Jesus started His ministry where He was growing in spiritual maturity. The third and final stage of this rocket is the 3 ½ year ministry of the "two witnesses" discussed in Revelation chapter 11 and can be compared to Jesus' 3 ½ year ministry. These final two stages will destroy the "lawless one" by the "brightness of His coming" (2 Thess. 2:8). The Greek word "coming" in this verse is "parousia" and refers to the coming of God's manifest presence and glory IN His people.

These final two stages will include the return of the risen Lord to empower His people with His presence that will bind Satan and render him powerless to deceive people anymore. Jesus will return the same way that He did the first time at His resurrection. Again, the Scriptures have established a pattern for beginnings and endings. He did not return to unbelievers, but only to those looking for Him. He will simply appear to individuals and groups of people, as He chooses, to give them direction in establishing His kingdom on earth. There is much to say on this aspect of His return, but this writing is for the purpose of looking at the first stage of this rocket, which is the birthing of Christ IN His mature sons. For more information on how the Lord will return physically please read on the internet: "*The Shekinah Glory of Christ at His Coming*" by Roland Pletts.²²

Sonship

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you

received the Spirit of **adoption (Sonship)** by whom we cry out, "Abba Father." (Romans 8:14,15)

The apostle Paul uses this term "adoption" five different times in his writings (Romans 8:15, 23; 9:4; Gal. 4:5 and Eph 1:5). The word "adoption" here is translated from the two Greek words: "huios" (mature sons) and "thesis" (placing). So this could be translated "placing mature sons" or even better "Sonship." Some translations will use the term "children of God" or "adopted children of God," but the term *huios* means a **mature son** and one who is a legitimate heir of the father, not a child.

Sonship is about covenant and inheritance; and it is not based on being male or female. *"For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized in Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."* (Galatians 3:26-29) But babes and children do not get an inheritance until they are grown up. This maturing process is where the greater spiritual warfare is taking place today! Satan knows that these mature sons will finish the ministry of Christ in destroying the works of darkness that Jesus triumphed over at the cross. Children are not going to displace the powers of darkness. Only full grown mature believers who have learned to take up their Cross and follow the Lamb wherever He may lead them will rise to the task of defeating Satan's kingdom.

The main spiritual conflict today concerns God's people advancing unto full growth, but be of good cheer because maturity WILL happen! In 1943, T.A. Sparks wrote:

"God will reach His end; He will come in, in His Son in terms of sonship, to take up residence within those begotten of Him, and will grow in them, increase His measure in them, until at last, brought to the unity of the faith, they become a mighty embodiment and revelation of God Himself. Not in Deity, but in what He is spiritually and morally in this universe - conformed to the image of His Son, a living expression of God's own thoughts."²³

So, Christ will eventually fill this universe with Himself through Sonship by generating a mature body of people through faith. This Bride Body is coming to maturity in our generation and all of those generations who have gone before us have contributed to today's maturing corporate Bride of Christ. The goal of Sonship is why Paul's letters were written to believers, and why he labored towards this end that Christ may be "formed" in our character and habits.

"My little children, for whom I labor in birth until Christ is formed in you." (Galatians 4:19)

How could the apostle Paul say here that he was laboring in birth for the believers in Galatia "*until Christ is formed in them?*" The Galatians that he was talking to were already "born again" believers in Jesus. Didn't they already have Christ in them?

When a person confesses Jesus, he or she becomes a new creation with the Spirit of God coming to dwell inside their spirit. However, this does not mean that their character is instantly changed into the character of Jesus. Although this is the goal, it requires a process of "dying daily to self" and learning to submit "my will" to "Thy will." The distinction between having Christ in us at the new birth, and having Christ formed in us is a matter of spiritual maturity. Even Jesus had to "*grow up in wisdom and stature before both God and man*" (Luke 2:52) for thirty years. Notice that in this Scripture above (Gal. 4:19) Paul is addressing "*My little children.*" He is laboring so that these "little children" will grow up in their spiritual walk and learn to "take up their crosses daily" and follow Jesus' example as a "way of life" and not just a good teaching.

Although God's stated goal is that we "*be perfect as I am perfect*" (Matt. 5:48), the focus should not be on individual perfection. Rather Christ "in us" as His corporate Body will be the perfect man. It is corporately that we are given to understand the mysteries of Christ and the fullness of God (Eph. 3:19). Paul in 1st Corinthians 2:16 did not say, "I have the mind of Christ" - rather he said, "*WE have the mind of Christ.*" This is why God's people are called the "Body of Christ," because we are one with Christ, who is the head, and one with each

other as His body. It is TOGETHER that we, “*all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.*” (Eph. 4:11)

The glory that God will be pouring out upon His people is for the purpose of bringing us into unity with Him and with one another, so that we can be perfect. Jesus tells us this in John 17:22-23: “*the glory which You (Father) gave Me I have given them (disciples), that they may be one just as we are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one.*” This fullness and unity and oneness with Jesus is the reason for which the apostle Paul labored in birth. He labored for this maturity, “*so that we should be no longer children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the trickery of men.*” (Eph. 4:12) The apostle John mentions 3 levels of spiritual maturity that pattern after natural maturity:

Three Levels of Spiritual Maturity from 1 John 1:12-14

1. Little Children	Your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake	You have known the Father
2. Young Men	You have overcome the wicked one	You are strong and the Word of God abides in you
3. Fathers	You have known Him who is from the beginning	You have known Him who is from the beginning

As this chart above shows, maturity is a progressive revelation of knowing the Lord. Spiritual maturity is accomplished by the way of the Cross. Ask yourself this question: How much am I willing to give up in order to obey the Lord? Self-centeredness is the root of spiritual immaturity. On the other hand, maturity is “*speaking the truth in love*” from a heart that has submitted to God's dealings, discipline and testings (the Cross). The way of the Cross is the wisdom of God and the power of God. His life is able to live through us only when we are dead to “self.” Life comes through death. It was only after Jesus died that He was able to bring us eternal life. “*Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone, but if it dies, it produces*

much grain.” (John 12:24) This is foolishness to the world, but brings God glory because no flesh can boast in what “I’ve done for God.” The focus is on Christ and what He has done for us. Paul testifies:

“For I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.” (Gal. 2:20)

The Greek words used in the Scriptures for “sons” also reveal a three level pattern to spiritual growth: Infancy is “teknion,” while puberty is “teknon” and finally maturity is “huios.” Most importantly, the life of Jesus reveals the same spiritual growth pattern with **three** major milestones marking public attention to His maturity as a son in the Hebrew culture. The first was Circumcision and baby dedication, which happened at the temple when Jesus was only eight days old (Luke 2:21-35). This marks a Hebrew child as a “Covenant Man.”

The second was the Hebrew Bar-Mitzvah meaning “son accountable” which Jesus also publicly celebrated in the temple at the age of twelve. This marks the time when a son was able to become an apprentice under his father in the family business. This is why Jesus said to his parents, *“I must be about My Father’s business”* (Luke 2:41-52).

Finally, a “Huiiothesia” was celebrated around the age of thirty, which marks the age of maturity. This occurred in the life of Jesus at the beginning of His ministry when He was baptized by John (Matthew 3:13-17). Here is some history about this Hebrew maturity rite of passage:

“The word Huiiothesia means “Son Placement” and indicates the time when a male child reached what was considered to be the age of maturity somewhere around thirty. At this time, the father of the young man would place his hand on the head of his son and openly proclaim, “This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased! I bestow upon him now all of my riches and power and authority (through power of attorney) so that he might act on my behalf in all of my affairs.””²⁴

The entire creation is waiting for these mature sons of God to be revealed. Romans 8:20-25 shows that this manifestation of the mature sons of God is an event which has not yet happened. It is a great "hope" that all of us "wait for with perseverance." In another place, 1 John 3:1-2 explains that as children of God "**it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.**" The next verse explains that this is a "hope" (something in the future) which we prepare for by purifying ourselves. For as Jesus said, "*The pure in heart shall see God.*"

This process of maturity has taken 2,000 years to perfect, as each generation has learned from their forefather's mistakes and pressed on. Even the apostle Paul said that he had not attained perfection or even laid hold of it (Phil. 3:12-16). This attitude of "*pressing on toward the goal (perfection) for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus*" is what Paul called a "**mature**" mindset, saying "*to the degree that we have already attained (of maturity), let us walk by the same rule, and let us be of the same mind (unity in Christ and with one another).*" (Phil. 3:16)

We can see from this verse above that Paul did not focus on this perfection individually, but rather corporately, and this perfection is not of ourselves. Rather Christ IN us, His Body, will be manifesting His life through vessels who have died to self and have allowed the life of Jesus to flow through their lives to a hurting world. Individually we "*know in part and prophesy in part, but when that which is perfect has come (Jesus IN His mature unified body), then that which is in part (the current church structure) will be done away. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. But when I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now (in the present state of God's body) we see a poor reflection as in a mirror; but then (when Christ's body is perfected in unity) we shall see face to face. Now we know in part; then we shall know fully.*" (1 Cor. 13:9-12) Again, this "*perfect man*" in Christ will be a corporate Body of unified believers or the Bride of Christ.

The man Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh, but Jesus is still coming in the flesh everyday through His Body of believers. God

manifests in the flesh in terms of Sonship. 1 John 4:2-3 says that it is the spirit of antichrist to deny that Christ “*is come*” in the flesh. This Greek term “*is come*” is in the future tense and could easily be translated: “*is coming*” because Christ is coming today IN us. CHRIST IN US is the hope of glory and the secret mystery hidden from all ages, but now revealed to those of us who know Him. We are inheritors of His divine life and nature, not in His Deity, but rather in His character and love nature. Sonship is about maturity, and maturity is being like God in our character no matter what the circumstances may be in our lives. John 1:12 clearly tells us that it is our “*right*” to be sons of God. “*But as many as received him, to them gave he power (some translations say “the right”) to become the sons of God.*” (KJV) But to become sons we must MATURE. To help God’s people get a vision towards **maturity** is one of the main purposes for this writing.

Paul wrote, “*We who have the firstfruits of the Spirit groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the **adoption** (Sonship), the redemption of our body.*” (Rom. 8:23) Here, Paul links the placing of the mature sons of God with the resurrection of our bodies. In another Scripture (Philippians 3:10-12), Paul links the maturity of the saints or “*being perfected*” with the resurrection, where he rejoices in the sufferings of Christ that he may “*attain to the resurrection from the dead.*” So, the “*revealing of the sons of God (the maturity of the saints),*” which is still in the future, is intimately connected with bodily resurrection, and it is a completely different event from salvation. We will now see that laboring and sorrow is required before this “*revealing*” of God’s character and glory will take place. But like Paul we should, “*consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which **shall be** (future tense) revealed IN us*” (Rom. 8:18). Christ **in us** is our ONLY hope of glory! (Col. 1:27)

Laboring & Giving Birth

Marvin Byers writes:

“The Father’s desire is not merely to produce babes in Christ; He is also looking for mature sons who will bring His glory to a needy world. The life of Christ is formed in us through “*travail,*” and

travail involves suffering and sorrow. So, this is why Paul mentions that “our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us” (Rom. 8:18 NIV). That travail will bring forth that glory... The concept of giving birth to Christ’s life in a spiritual sense is a glorious hope set before us. It refers to a level of spiritual maturity where we become channels through which the fullness of His life flows to others. This is a theme that is repeated many times throughout the Bible. This is why the Bible refers so often to travail, intercession, and giving birth.”²⁵

*“For we know that the whole creation **groans and labors with birth pangs** together until now. And not only they, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, **even we ourselves groan within ourselves**, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.”*
(Rom. 8:22,23)

There is a birthing process to reveal the character of Jesus through His mature sons to all of creation. In order to bring forth new life, labor (pain) and birth (a sudden change) is required. When a baby is born, it goes through tremendous amounts of biological and chemical changes. For one, it starts breathing air for the first time and eating from the mouth instead of the umbilical cord. Likewise, during this spiritual birthing process, there are some major changes that take place suddenly. *“And the Lord whom you seek will **suddenly** come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant (Jesus the Christ).”* (Mal. 3:1) The Lord’s “suddenlies” may take years to fully grasp (just like it did when he was born the first time), but from heaven’s perspective it is like turning on a water faucet of God’s glory. If the hose is not strong enough to sustain the sudden thrust and continuous flow of water it will burst. Likewise, if we are not prepared vessels through humility and brokenness, we will burst and not be able to be used by the Lord to contain His glory that is coming. Jesus uses a similar analogy referring to us as wineskins (Matt. 9:17).

Jesus also says that *“whoever does the will of God is my brother and My sister and **mother**”* (Mark 3:35). So we can all become His mother, or vessels through which the Father can use to birth His life. As mentioned previously, Mary’s life is one of the greatest examples in Scripture of a vessel through which God was able to birth His purposes.

A detailed study of Mary's life will reveal many godly characteristics, but one that shines through the most is her faith in believing God's promise to her. She simply trusted that God was able to bring to pass in her what was impossible to happen in the natural. She believed God and knew Him intimately, thus revealing her spiritual maturity or Sonship. Listen how Mary responded to the Lord:

"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God... Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." (Luke 1:35,38)

Believing this promise did not come without suffering and sorrow and reproach. I am sure that Mary labored spiritually as much as she did naturally. How many of Mary's family and friends do you think actually believed along with her that her pregnancy was really from the Holy Spirit??? In that time period, if you were pregnant out of wedlock it was bad news! You were a social outcast. Also, it was a great step of faith for Joseph to take Mary as his wife. In the natural, he was admitting that he was the father of the child out of wedlock. Mary and Joseph were like Moses who *"esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt"* (Heb. 11:26), and they were also entrusted with the secrets of the Lord.

Also, John 16 explains how the first disciples were used as "mothers" to birth the life of Christ to their generation. He told them, *"...it is to your advantage that I go away"* (vs. 7) so that you can give birth! Jesus compares them to a woman in labor who is sorrowful during her labor, but rejoices when new life is birthed and forgets her initial anguish. *"Most assuredly, I say to you that you (disciples) will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you."* (vs. 20-22)

This explanation of the woman in labor is the answer that Jesus gives to the riddle that is mentioned three times just before in verses 16-19. This riddle gives us insight that it was Jesus Himself who was being birthed by the disciples. Jesus says, "*A little while, and you will **not** see Me* (because He was about to be crucified); *and again a little while, and you **will** see Me* (not because of His return, but), *because I go to the Father* (which will cause you to sorrow and labor)." Jesus left them right at the time when they had realized that He was the answer for all of fallen humanity! This caused the disciples to travail and labor like a woman in birth so that Jesus could be seen again through them. Jesus **was** seen again; not because of His return, but because His character and life was seen through the disciples as a result of travail and a birth.

There are many other women throughout the Scriptures who through faith and patience were able to be used by God to birth His purposes in their generation: Sarah, Hannah, and Elizabeth just to name a few. However, one of the most dramatic and climactic births in the Bible is one that is occurring in our generation, and it is found in Revelation chapter 12. Here we find "*a woman clothed with the sun* (glory of God), *with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars* (governmental authority). *Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth... And she bore a male child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her child was caught up to God and to His throne.*" (Rev. 12:2,3,5)

This birth sounds so much like the birth of Jesus that many scholars attribute this to Mary birthing Jesus. However, John clearly says that the book of Revelation is to show us things that will take place in the future (Rev. 1:1). Although we can compare this birth to the natural birth of Jesus, this Scripture is more accurately a reference to the spiritual birth of Jesus through a spiritual mother who is the Church - the Jerusalem from above - or **Zion**.

Before we look in detail at this birth, let's make sure that we understand that Zion is a reference for the Church, and specifically the Bride of Christ. Then we can compare Zion giving birth in the Old Testament Scriptures with this woman giving birth in Revelation 12.

Who is Zion?

“For the Lord has chosen Zion, He has desired it for His habitation; This is My resting place forever; Here I will dwell, for I have desired it.” (Psalm 132:13,14)

About a dozen different Scriptures directly mention that Zion is God’s “dwelling place” or “habitation.” Since we know that God’s ultimate dwelling place is inside His people or His Church (2 Cor. 6:16), we can safely conclude that Zion, in a general broad sense, is representative of God’s people or Church. Scripture confirms this directly in Hebrews 12:22-23, *“But you have come to Mount **Zion** and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels (messengers), to the general assembly and **church** of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect.”*

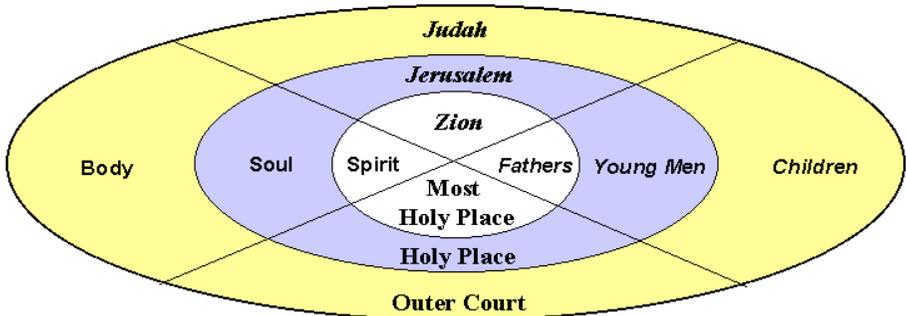
Originally, Zion was a “stronghold,” “high place,” “fortress,” or “castle” within the city of David (Jerusalem) which David took in battle (2Sam 5:7, 1Chr. 11:5). Since the natural reflects the spiritual (1 Cor. 15:46), spiritual Zion is like a stronghold or fortress within the city of God (the Church). So, Zion can correctly be called “the city of the great King” (Ps. 48:2) and refer to the Church at large. However, more specifically Zion refers to a particular part of God’s city - the very heart and strength of it (Ps. 84:7). *“The Lord shall send the rod of your strength out of Zion.”* (Ps. 110:2)

Zion is representative of the more spiritually mature. Everyone starts their walk with the Lord as a child and progressively grows up (1 Cor. 13:11). However, growing up requires that we make certain decisions, because *“many are called, but few are chosen,”* (Matt. 22:14). Although spiritual maturity is available to all who believe, few are willing to pay the price and really lay down their lives in order to be chosen. The Lord alone builds up Zion (Ps. 102:16) by the “way of the Cross,” and chooses all those who “overcome” to be closest to Him. *“And they overcame him (Satan), by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.”* (Rev. 12:11) Zion is a remnant (Joel 2:32, Isa. 37:31,32) chosen by

God to be His Bride who trust in the Lord with all of their life, love Him with all of their hearts, and overcome the world through love.

Psalm 76:1 shows this progression of intimacy with the Lord: *“In Judah God is known; His name is great in Israel. In Jerusalem also is His tabernacle, And His dwelling place in Zion.”* This verse, along with the three steps of spiritual maturity (fathers, young men, children), the three parts of mankind (spirit, soul & body), and Moses’ tabernacle (most holy place, holy place & outer court) gives us a pretty good idea of how the Lord views Zion as very central to His heart.

“The Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.” (Ps. 87:2)



Inside the Most Holy place of Moses’ tabernacle was the Ark of the Covenant, which represented God’s Presence. However, no one was allowed in the Most Holy Place except the high priest, and only once per year with fear and trembling. Some priests did not come out alive if they did not follow the prescriptions of blood sacrifice exactly the way God told Moses, because the way to ultimate intimacy with God was not yet understood (Heb. 9:7,8). This may be why we do not see “Zion” mentioned in the Scriptures at all during the Tabernacle of Moses, because Zion represents the way of abiding intimately with the Lord in the Most Holy Place, and this was not yet known at the time of the tabernacle of Moses (Heb. 9:7-8).

However, we DO find “Zion” first mentioned with King David (2 Sam. 5:7, 1 Kings 8:1). David found amazing intimacy with God, which is

why he was able to bring the Ark of the Covenant right into his backyard and worship the Presence of God whenever he wanted to without dying. Unlike the tremendous rules and regulations found in the tabernacle of Moses, the tabernacle of David was a simple three-sided tent with the Ark of the Covenant right in the midst of it! David was definitely a spiritual pioneer in his generation. To approach at free will the Ark of the Covenant (the Presence of God) was tremendously unorthodox behavior according to the laws of Moses. This is why David’s tabernacle is the only tabernacle or house that God said he was going to restore (Acts 15:16,17), because Abba Father has a desire to be close to us in an intimate way. David’s tabernacle, which was in Zion, represents the way to be intimate with God.

Zion is a set-apart place of spontaneous worship and adoration toward God. Most of the Psalms were recorded by scribes as David sang from inspiration and poured out His heart to God (Ps. 87:7). Although the tabernacles of Moses and Solomon were given specific dimensions and building instructions, the tabernacle of David did NOT have any dimensions or descriptions, because God himself will build Zion. Since Zion is a holy place of worship, how can holiness or worship be measured? There was no veil to separate God’s presence from His people: *“everyone of them appears before God in Zion”* (Ps. 84:7).

Zion is always referred to in the feminine throughout the Scriptures, and several refer to her as a virgin. The next chart has some brief characteristics of Zion who we will see is the Bride of Christ:

Characteristics of Zion Scripture References

God’s dwelling place or habitation	Ps. 9:11, Ps. 76:2, Ps. 132:13, Zech. 8:3,
The ark (presence) of God is here	1 Ki. 19:21, 2 Chr. 5:2, Ps. 102:16, Isa. 4:5
Seat of God’s governmental authority	Ps. 2:6, Isa. 2:3, Ps. 132:17,18, Isa. 24:23
She is God’s people	Heb. 12:22-24, Ps. 74:2, Isa. 10:24; 30:19
She is a virgin	Isa. 62:5, Jer. 31:4, 2 Ki. 19:21, Isa. 37:22

She is a mother of daughters and sons	Ps. 149:2, Isa. 66:8, Jer. 4:31, Mic. 4:10
She is a bride	Isa. 49:18, Isa. 61:10, Isa. 62:5, Rev 21:2,9

Zion is the seat of God's government: "For I have set my king on My Holy Hill of Zion" (Ps. 2:6), "there I will make the government of David grow; I will prepare a lamp for My anointed" (Ps. 132:17,18). "For the Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before His elders gloriously" (Isa. 24:23). From general to specific, Zion is: God's dwelling place - the Church, the overcomers, and His intimate Bride.

*"Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God... Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "**Come I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife.**" And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God."* (Rev. 21:2,3,9,10)

Sarah (the Bride of Christ) Giving Birth

Revelation chapter 12 is the clearest description of the Bride of Christ giving birth to the life of Jesus. Therefore, let's prayerfully read it again in its entirety with this imagery in mind: 1) *the woman* = the **Bride** of Christ; 2) *the man child* = Jesus manifested IN 144,000 **mature sons** of God; and 3) *the dragon* = Satan.

1-2 "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; **a woman** clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

3-4 And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold **a great red dragon**, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon

his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

5 And she brought forth **a man child**, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to His throne.

6-9 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days. And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

10-12 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, *“Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.”* And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them.

12-13 Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.

14-17 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” (King James Version)

Since Satan can only counterfeit what God is doing, we should not be surprised to find another woman in Revelation 17 who also represents a group of people. This woman is “Babylon the harlot” who is also a

mother - *“the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth”* (Rev. 17:5). At the same time that the Bride of Christ is birthing the mature sons of God bringing liberty and life, the Great Harlot will be birthing mature sons of the flesh who will bring bondage and death. Isaiah 60 explains how great glory can cover the earth, while at the same time deep darkness also covers the earth. Jesus compares the time of His Second Coming to a woman in labor by saying that wars, famines, and earthquakes are all the beginning of *“birth pangs”* (Matt 24:8).

Also, Paul explains within the context of Jesus’ return that, *“when they cry, ‘peace and safety,’ then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman”* (2 Thess. 3:8). Therefore, a comparison can be made of these two women:

The Bride of Christ (Rev. 12)	The Great Harlot (Rev 17)
Mother of a child to rule all nations (vs. 5)	Mother of harlots and abominations (vs. 5)
Filled with life by the blood of the Lamb (vs. 11)	Filled with death because they shed innocent blood (vs. 6)
Clothed with the riches of heaven (vs. 1)	Clothed with the riches of the earth (vs. 4)
The dragon and beast oppose this woman (vs. 3,13,17)	The dragon and beast carry this woman (vs. 3,7)
The earth helps this woman (vs. 16)	The earth hates this woman (vs. 16-17)
Compared to the city of Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2,3,9,10)	Compared to the city of Babylon - earthly Jerusalem (vs. 5)
Lay down their lives and end up with life eternal (vs. 11)	Live for the moment and end up in eternal death (vs. 16)
Compared to Sarah birthing Isaac (Gal. 4:21-31)	Compared to Hagar birthing Ishmael (Gal. 4:21-31)

To further explain these births by the Bride of Christ (Spirit) and the Great Harlot (flesh), let’s take a look at Galatians 4:21-31 where Paul compares the sons of promise to Sarah and Isaac, and the sons of the flesh to Hagar and Ishmael:

*“For it is written that Abraham had two sons; the one by a bondwoman (Hagar), the other by a free-woman (Sarah). But he (Ishmael), who was of the bondwoman, was born according to the flesh, and he (Isaac), of the free-woman, through promise; **which things are symbolic.** For these are the two covenants; the one from Mount Sinai which **gives birth** to bondage, which is Hagar - for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children - but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the **mother of us all.**” (Gal 4:21-26)*

Here we can see from Abraham’s life, that our own good ideas (the flesh) will give birth to bondage, and only that which originates from God’s promise (Spirit) results in bringing life. Mount Sinai brings death, but Mount Zion brings life. The next verse continues: *“For it is written; “Rejoice, O barren, You who do not bear! Break forth and shout, You who do not travail! For the desolate has many more children than she who has a husband.” (Gal 4:27, Isa. 54:1)*

Sarah was made barren by God (Gen. 16:2). Therefore, she attempted to bring about God’s promise by acting in the flesh and allowing Abraham to bring forth a son from Hagar which was not God’s perfect will. We, the Church, have done the same thing as Sarah. We have not been patient and willing to accept God’s purpose in keeping us barren for a time, and we’ve acted in the flesh using carnal methods to birth fleshly sons into God’s house. The watered down gospel which says, “come to Jesus and He’ll fix all of your problems” allows sons of the flesh (Ishmael’s) to be birthed. The true message of the Gospel is the Cross, which says, “whoever desires to save his life must lose it.” The Cross is not just a part of the Gospel, the Cross IS the Gospel. True sons of the kingdom will be born out of barrenness because their mother (the Bride of Christ) will have been through the wilderness (Cross) and come to the end of “self”. Sarah was not able in the natural to give birth, because she was over 90 years old and “past the time of child bearing.” Likewise the Bride of Christ in the wilderness will not be able to give birth to God’s mature sons in the natural. It will be (it must be) a work of the Spirit.

Isaiah testifies more about the barrenness of the true Bride of Christ in chapter 54 (where Paul is quoting from): *“Sing, O barren, You who*

have not borne! Break forth into singing, and cry aloud, you who have not travailed with child! For more are the children of the desolate (Great Harlot) than the children of the married woman (Bride of Christ / Sarah). Do not fear, for you will not be ashamed or disgraced; for you will forget the shame of your youth, and will not remember the reproach of your widowhood anymore. For your Maker is your husband. The Lord of Hosts is His name; and our redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; He is called the God of the whole earth. For the Lord has called you like a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, like a youthful wife when you were refused.” (vs. 1,4-6) Isaiah then goes on to encourage her that after her barrenness she will inherit: the promises of an everlasting Covenant of Peace, children who are taught by the Lord, and protection from all harm.

Paul continues in Galatians 4: *“Now we brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. But, as he who was born according to the flesh (Ishmael) then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit (Isaac), even so it is now (the Harlot persecutes the Bride). Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? “Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman.” So then brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.”* (Gal 4:28-31)

Ishmael and Isaac lived together in the same house. Likewise, in the Church there have been both the sons of the flesh and the sons of the Spirit living together in God's house. But, there came a time when Sarah said, *“Cast out this bondwoman and her son (Ishmael); for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son Isaac”* (Gen. 21:10-12), and God told Abraham to listen to Sarah. Likewise, after the Bride of Christ births the child of promise (the mature sons of God), the time is soon when the sons of the flesh will also be cast out.

Any method that we use to try to birth sons into the kingdom that is not God's method is like birthing an Ishmael, who only caused trouble for Sarah, and causes persecution and “ministry burnout” for us too. Whatever is started in the flesh must be maintained in the flesh and makes us weary, but Jesus' yoke is easy and His burden is light when we walk in the Spirit. Isaiah rightly testifies of the fleshly methods which births the wind when he says, *“As a woman with child is in pain*

and cries out in her pangs, when she draws near the time of her delivery, so have we been in Your sight, O Lord. We have been with child, we have been in pain; We have as it were, given birth to wind; We have not accomplished any deliverance in the earth, Nor have the inhabitants of the world fallen.” (Isa. 26:17-18)

Nevertheless, the promise remains that we WILL enter “the rest” of the Lord! *“For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His”* on the seventh day (Heb. 4:10). The exciting part is that we have arrived at the end of the sixth day or 6,000 years of mankind’s history. We are now entering the promised 1,000 year “day of rest” that can be compared to the seven days of creation where God rested on the seventh day from all His creation work. Likewise, we will rest from our striving and labor FOR God and simply BE with Him in fellowship and companionship as He works out His Kingdom on the earth through us for the next 1,000 years!

Zion Giving Birth

Several Scriptures refer to how Zion will give birth. Since we have established that Zion is representative of the Bride of Christ, let’s examine what the Lord’s Bride will be birthing. Passages from the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Micah point this out:

“Hear the word of the Lord, you who tremble at His word: “Your brethren (birthed by the Great Harlot) who hated you, who cast you out for My name’s sake, said, ‘Let the Lord be glorified, that we may see your joy,’ (saying why do you take up your cross?) but they shall be ashamed.” The sound of noise from the city! A voice from the temple! The voice of the Lord, who fully repays His enemies!” (Isa. 66:5-6)

Above, we see that one of the reasons why the Lord is bringing about the birth of His sons is to fully repay His enemies, or to cast out the children and methods of the flesh. The very next verses explain the birth process that the Lord will bring to pass to punish His enemies:

“Before she travailed, she gave birth; before her pain came, she delivered a male child. Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen

such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion (the Bride of Christ) travailed, she gave birth to her children. Shall I bring to the time of birth and not cause delivery? says the Lord. Shall I who cause delivery shut up the womb? says your God.” (Isa 66: 7-10)

The birth of these children of God through the Bride of Christ will be the answer that the Lord gives to vindicate His name and His holy city Jerusalem. Although spiritual Jerusalem (the Bride of Christ) has been redeemed, natural Jerusalem (the city in Israel as well as our physical bodies) still remains in bondage to the children of the flesh (Gal 4:25). But shortly after the birth of these “son’s of Zion,” Isaiah 66:10-13 shows that natural Jerusalem will also be redeemed:

“Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all you who love her; Rejoice for joy with her, all you who mourn for her; That you may feed and be satisfied with the consolation of her bosom, That you may drink deeply and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus says the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, And the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream. Then you shall feed; On her sides shall you be carried, And be dandled on her knees. As one whom his mother comforts, So, I will comfort you; And you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.” The conclusion of Isaiah’s book goes on to explain the judgment of God with fire and the reign of His Kingdom on earth with the headquarters in His holy mountain Jerusalem.

On several different occasions Jeremiah compares Zion or Israel to a woman in labor:

“For I have heard a voice as of a woman in labor, The anguish as of her who brings forth her first child, The voice of the daughter of Zion bewailing herself, who spreads her hands, saying, “Woe is me now, for my soul is weary because of murderers!” (Jer. 4:31)

“Thus says the Lord: “Behold, a people comes from the north country... as men of war set in array against you, O daughter of Zion.” We have heard the report of it; our hands grow feeble. Anguish has taken hold of us, pain as of a woman in labor.” (Jer. 6:22,24)

“Lift up your eyes and see those who come from the north... what will you say when He punishes you? For you have taught them to be chieftains, to be head over you. Will not pangs seize you like a woman in labor?” (Jer. 13:20,21)

Israel was about to be taken captive to Babylon, and her labor, travail, pain and sorrow was prophesied to come as a result of Babylon wreaking havoc in Jerusalem. Likewise, the Great Harlot (Babylon) that was birthed from the flesh, will wreak havoc in spiritual Jerusalem. But at the same time that the Bride of Christ (mature believers) are being persecuted by Babylon, she will begin to intercede and travail to bring about Jesus' life to a dying world. Jeremiah lets us know when this birth will take place: during the “time of Jacob’s trouble” and during the “day of the Lord” which is also the time when Jesus returns: *“Now these are the words that the Lord spoke concerning Israel and Judah. “We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear and not of peace. Ask now, and see, whether a man is ever in labor with child? So why do I see every man with his hands on his loins like a woman in labor, and all faces turned pale? Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it (the Day of the Lord); and it is **the time of Jacobs’s trouble**, but he shall be saved out of it. For it shall come to pass in that day, says the Lord of hosts, that I will break his (Babylon the Great Harlot - false church’s) yoke from your neck, and will burst your bonds; foreigners shall no more enslave them. But they shall serve the Lord their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.” (Jer. 30:4-9)*

Finally, Micah also confirms that the Lord’s reign in Zion will start with a birth: *“In that day (the day of Messiah’s return), says the Lord, I will assemble the lame, I will gather the outcast and those whom I have afflicted. I will make the lame a remnant, and the outcast a strong nation. So the Lord will reign over them in Mount Zion from now on, even forever. And you, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, To you shall it come, even the former dominion shall come, the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem. Now why do you cry aloud? Is there no king in your midst? Has your counselor perished? **For pangs have seized you like a woman in labor. Be in pain, and labor to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, Like a woman in birth pangs.**” (Mic. 4:6-10)*

Micah then goes on to explain that the Messiah will have two Comings, and that he will not return the second time until AFTER the Bride of Christ has "given birth." *"But you Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the one to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth (two comings) have been from of old, from everlasting (they are established). Therefore He (the Messiah) shall give them up (by returning to heaven after his earthly ministry), until the time that she who is in labor (the Bride of Christ) has given birth; Then the remnant of His brethren shall return to the children of Israel. And he (Jesus) shall stand and feed His flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord His God. And they shall abide, For now He shall be great to the ends of the earth; And in this One shall be peace."* (Micah 5:2-5)

Jesus is waiting in heaven to return, but He will not return until the Bride of Christ has given birth to His life and character through mature sons. Only after this birth can we begin to start looking for any rapture or physical return of the man Christ Jesus. Only after this birth will the nation of Israel begin to be provoked to jealousy and saved. Only after this birth can we look for the promise of a restored government of God on the earth. It requires some effort on our part, some pain, some labor, some spiritual travail. Life comes from travail. Jesus travailed, Paul travailed, the Early Church travailed, and the Bride of Christ will also travail to bring forth the "sons of Zion" in our generation.

I have yearned so much just to spend time in the Presence of the Lord and behold His beauty! Yet at the same time, I have desired so much for others to see His grace and love that I must get out and show others His goodness! The tension between these two desires is what has caused a spiritual travail to begin. The pain, travail and labor are not fun. But we have a great hope and joy set before us. Jesus said, *"a woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world"* (John 16:21). Let's be like Jesus, and for the joy that is set before us *"endure the cross."* Then, through the power of the Cross, we can take part in birthing His life and character to be seen by the whole world as a witness and then Jesus will return in glory: *"Christ in you, the hope of glory."* (Col. 1:27)

Who is Being Birthed?

The “man child” being birthed in Revelation chapter 12 is Jesus the Christ - only it is “Christ IN us.” Christ’s Bride is a many membered body. Likewise, the child (or children) whom she births represents a many membered body. The creation eagerly waits for the revealing of these sons of God because they will manifest Jesus Himself. Jesus alone is the only glory that is worth eagerly waiting for. Anything that comes from us is less than worthless; it is dangerous, because the flesh is always in conflict with the Spirit. Even heresy (false doctrine) is listed as a “work of the flesh” which is far from harmless, because it ends up bringing bondage and death.

There are only five direct details given about the “man child” being birthed in Revelation chapter 12. Since ALL of these details can be found in the “144,000 saints” discussed in Revelation 14:1-5, it is not far fetched to conclude that the manchild represents Jesus IN the 144,000 saints. The following chart compares these two:

The “man child”	The 144,000 saints
Will rule all nations with a rod of iron (12:5)	Are found on Mt. Zion with Jesus - Zion is the place of His worldwide government (14:1)
Are caught up to God and to His throne (12:5)	Are before the throne of God (14:3,5)
They (plural) overcame Him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb (12:11)	They are overcomers found without fault and blameless, which only comes from the blood of the Lamb (14:4,5)
They overcame Satan by the word of their testimony (12:11)	They sing a new song that only they can learn (their testimony) (14:4)
They love not their lives unto death (12:11)	They follow the Lamb (sacrificial animal) wherever He goes (Rev. 14:4)
Is a firstborn child (Isa. 54:1)	Are firstfruits to God and to the Lamb (14:4)

The only place that Zion is mentioned in the book of Revelation is in connection with the 144,000 saints who are sealed with the Father's name written on their foreheads (Rev. 7:3, 14:1). We have seen that Zion is representative of the Church and more specifically of the Bride of Christ who is called out from the church. These 144,000 are birthed out from the Bride of Christ and stand with the Lamb who is the head of His body. This is a beautiful picture of unity, because the next verses go on to show that the "*voice of many waters like the voice of loud thunder,*" and "*the sound of harpists playing their harps*" comes from these 144,000 redeemed saints. They are all speaking and singing the same thing spiritually and so it sounds like "many waters" and "loud thunder," because they are one with the Lamb and therefore one with each other. The world will finally see and know that the Father loves them and that He has sent Jesus as His only Son! Not because of our church programs or Christian bumper stickers, but because we will "*be made perfect in one*" as Jesus promised! (John 17:22-23).

These 144,000 are not defiled with other "loves" in this world. They are spiritual virgins, because they have set their sights on loving Jesus as their main goal in life and Him alone. They do not let other cares or distractions take them away from their first love. The 144,000 are emptied of "self-life" and have allowed the life of their savior to flow through them. They are without fault and blameless because their entire self-worth and right-standing relies practically (not just judicially) on the blood of the Lamb. They walk by faith and not by sight where the blood of Jesus cleanses them from all unrighteousness.

The 144,000 found on Mount Zion are called "firstfruits" (Rev. 14:4). Firstfruits are grains or crops that have reached maturity earlier (first), before the general harvest. The 144,000 will be believers who have reached the place of maturity before the rest of the believers. They will have learned, through "the way of the Cross" and the grace of God, to abide (be one) with Jesus and with each other in His body. God's plan is unity in diversity. We are not all to be the same "cookie cutter Christians" looking and acting alike. But we can still be unified together in the spirit, and maintain our individual callings in God. This true unity will bring the perfection that the apostle Paul longed for (Philippians 3:12-16).

12 X 12,000 = 144,000. If you compare the 144,000 saints to the 12 apostles of Jesus, I think you will get a better picture of the role and function of these 144,000 in our generation. They will be chosen by the Lord first to “*be **with Him**,*” and secondly, “*to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses and cast out demons*” (Mark 3:14). These end of the age apostles each have a special individual calling from the Lord. They will not be appointed by man, nor is it a “promotion” in the Kingdom. It is simply a calling to a position in God’s government to fulfill His purposes at His Second Coming similar to what the first twelve apostles had to do during His First Coming.

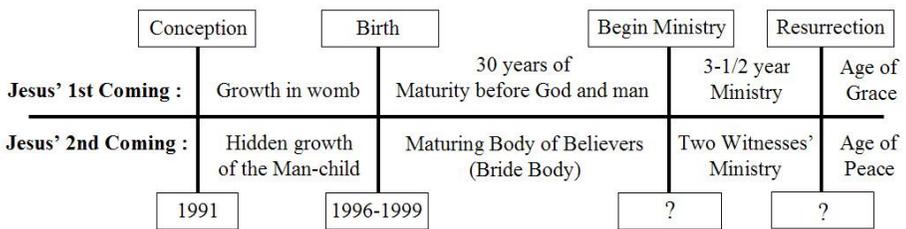
Zechariah saw the final purpose of Zion’s sons: “*For I have bent Judah My bow, Fitted the bow with Ephraim, **and raised up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece, and made you like the sword of a mighty man. Then the Lord will be seen over them, and His arrow will go forth like lightning... The Lord of hosts will defend them; They shall devour and subdue with slingstones; They shall drink and roar as if with wine... For they shall be like the jewels of a crown, lifted like a banner over His land.***” (Zech. 9:13-16) Jesus will bring righteous judgment to the kingdoms of this world through His manchild.

The Timing of This Birth

When Jesus came the first time, there was very little fanfare and public understanding of the significance of His birth. Even among the religious leaders of Jesus’ time, there was no big “birthday party” for the Savior of the world. Only a few faithful shepherds and some far away wise men were **shown by revelation** the glory of what transpired at Jesus’ birth. The world as a whole continued on blissfully ignorant without any earth shaking changes. I expect His second birth will be similar. Jesus was first born in a dirty lowly place like a manger in a stable, and His second birth will also be in a dirty lowly place - the human heart. Oh, what mercy. Even so, Maranatha - “Come Lord Jesus!” (Rev. 22:20).

Update -- It is now September 2004, five years after I first wrote this study on the Birthing of Zion’s Sons. When this writing was first published in July 1999, there was a section here on the “Signs in the

Heavens” which were happening in the stars starting from 1996 and culminating on September 11th 1999 (The Feast of Trumpets). I was eagerly anticipating this September 1999 date as a significant one in the purposes of God concerning the birthing of Zion’s sons. I had no idea at the time that my own second son Stephen Paul would be born (a month earlier than expected) on this very date of September 11th 1999 to prophetically confirm this spiritual birth. The details of Stephen’s birth and the prophetic significance were discussed in chapters 9-11 of this book. It is sufficient enough to say here that this spiritual birthing has already taken place and we are now in the maturing phase:



The chart above gives a rough timeline of where we are in the maturing process of God’s government on the earth. The reason the conception for this birth is placed at 1991 is because a very unique sign in the stars was happening that was very similar to the sign at the first coming of Jesus as well as this 1999 sign. The details of this heavenly sign were shown to Bob Schlenker and written on his Open Scroll website.¹⁵ The next few decades should bring about the maturity of God’s Man-child. It is during this time period that the Lord is sealing His 144,000 apostles for the work of ministry, which will culminate in a 3-1/2 year time of intense ministry and demonstration of the Kingdom of God on earth similar to that of Jesus’ three and one half year ministry.

I do not know the exact dates of the next phases of the Lord's Second Coming, which is why there are question marks in the previous chart. Discussing things like the Manchild, the Sons of God, and the 144,000 is often controversial, but these issues and concepts are in the Bible and we must continually seek the Lord for understanding, and wait patiently for Him to answer. If the Lord is not giving revelation, then we cannot force His Spirit of Revelation. Instead we need to just sit and enjoy the fellowship of His Presence throughout every day life until He does

speak on these difficult topics. I trust that He will give us understanding as these things approach.

Finally, remember that we live in Bible times! It is an AWESOME time to be alive and living for Jesus Christ! He will certainly come IN His people before He comes FOR His people. We now stand poised in the middle of the return of Jesus IN His people to begin establishing His government before He returns physically! Our generation is the transition period before entering into the new age of the Kingdom of God on earth, and the Lord desires ALL of His children to participate in these momentous times of the return of Jesus Christ! Behold Jesus the Messiah, for He **has** certainly come, and **is** coming in His people today, and **will** come in physical glory to rule and reign the earth!

A Prophetic Confirmation

Revelation 1:15 says that the Lord's voice is "*as the sound of many waters.*" This means that when He speaks, there are many voices saying the same thing from a slightly different perspective. There have been many confirmations that what is written in this study is also being said by many others in the Body of Christ in similar ways but from slightly different angles. One such confirmation is from Bill Burns. When I first wrote this article in 1999, Bill published an article called "The Day of the Eagle" within days of my first completing this study. Now in 2004 within the same week that I am updating this study, Bill just happened to re-publish his same 1999 article with some more clarification. Bill's article, which can be read in the endnotes, includes similar information on God's government and the 144,000.²⁶

PART 3

Being Mature Sons

INTERCESSION

Each chapter in this Part 3 contains a burden of intercession for a particular people group in which I was honored to participate. The first two chapters are for my hometown city. The next two chapters are for my state of Alabama. The following two chapters contain intercession for my nation of America. And the final two chapters contain a burden for the nations (chapter 21 is prayer for Africa and Israel, and chapter 22 is intercession to see the spotless Bride Body of Christ come forth, which is made up from all the nations of the earth). The principles of intercession involved in the following chapters can be applied to **any** city or region. Living a life of intercession is a major part of being a mature son of God. Jesus “ever lives to make intercession” (Heb. 7:25) and so do His mature sons. It is a lifestyle, not just a theory, of hearing and obeying God as a first priority in all areas of life.

Chapter 15

Spiritual Map for Huntsville Alabama

The purpose of this writing is to map out the spiritual history of Huntsville Alabama so that my city can better pray with understanding the Lord's purposes for our region today. When we understand the unique destiny to which God has called us as a city it will help us to unify as the ONE Body of Christ while looking to Jesus as our Head for step by step instructions towards citywide revival. Throughout the Scriptures the Lord often addresses cities. In the book of Revelation, He addresses seven churches by geographical location and not by certain giftings or denominations. Each of these seven cities had a different calling and purpose to fulfill in Christ, which is why they were each given a different word of exhortation. Likewise, God has a special plan for Huntsville and it would only be wise to look back at our spiritual heritage and honor what He has already done in our region in order to help us project what God may do in the future.

The Big Spring



Huntsville was founded around “The Big Spring” which is an inexhaustible source of pure water flowing out from a huge rock cliff face. In history, this natural spring was a marvel to both Indian and frontiersman alike, and it is now home to the main central park in downtown Huntsville called “Big Spring Park.” John Hunt, from whom the name Huntsville was first derived, was one of the first settlers in the area and built a cabin right next to this big spring in 1805. This spring was the main source of fresh water for Huntsville’s citizens. For 30 years prior to 1950, revenue from the sale of this spring water was the largest single source of income for the city’s general fund. There is a Huntsville historical

marker at this site which reads: **“A park/picnic ground was developed around the spring in 1898. Before that and for many years afterward, great crowds attended religious baptisms held below the small dam at the spring.”**

So we can see that from the very central point of our city there is a testimony of faith in Jesus Christ through baptisms being performed at The Big Spring, and an official Huntsville Historical Society signpost to declare it. Water in Scripture is often compared to the Word of God. Ephesians 5:26 says, that Christ sanctifies and cleanses His Bride *“with the washing of water by the word.”* So part of God’s purpose for our city has to do with **declaring the Word** of the Lord which is living and active like a flowing spring (not a stagnant pond). John saw *“a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.”* (Rev. 22:1) Ezekiel saw the temple that will be built during the millennial reign of Christ and *“there was water flowing from under the threshold of the temple toward the east.”* This water flowed to become a very deep river reaching the Dead Sea and healing the waters. Likewise, the Big Spring in Huntsville flows all the way to the Tennessee River. Finally, this large rock cliff at Big Spring Park is reminiscent of the rock at Meribah which Moses spoke to and brought forth water for the children of Israel to drink in the desert (Ex. 17:5-7).

God compares Himself to, *“the fountain of living waters,”* in Jeremiah 2:13, and Jesus said in John 7:37 that, *“If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”* My desire for Huntsville is the same as Martin Luther King’s desire for our nation when he quoted from Amos 5:24 saying, *“Let justice flow like a river, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream!”*

The Von Braun Center (VBC)



The biggest landmark downtown is probably the Von Braun Civic Center named after the famous rocket scientist Dr. Werner Von Braun who came to Huntsville in 1950 to pioneer what is now

the United States Space Program. This civic center houses all of the city's major conventions, concerts and sporting events (except for the Huntsville Stars baseball team which has their own stadium). But the most interesting piece of history about the VBC is that it stands on the very property that was owned by the first educational facility for African-Americans in the region, now known as Alabama A&M University. In 1873, legislature approved "a normal school for the education of colored teachers" and ex-slave William Hooper Council was the founder and first president. A Huntsville Historical Society marker located at the VBC states that in 1891 land grants allowed A&M University to move to their present campus north of the city because of their increased growth for training in agricultural and mechanic arts.

Huntsville has always had a strong stand for civil rights. In the 1960's, Huntsville was the first city to override Governor Wallace's attempts at segregation when we allowed Black students freedom to enter our schools. When Alabama Governor George Wallace stood in a schoolhouse door in Tuscaloosa to prevent Blacks from entering the University of Alabama, a Black engineer named Dave McGlathery quietly enrolled at the University of Alabama in Huntsville the next day. This openness to education for all races in Huntsville has allowed a variety of local groups to maintain archives of documents and artifacts on African American history and culture. An entire section of the Huntsville.org web-page is dedicated to these groups which include: the Alabama State Black Archives Research Center and Museum, Oakwood Archives and Museum, and Imhotep Art Gallery just to name a few.

Oakwood college was the Nation's first and only Black Seventh-Day Adventist college founded in 1896 in Huntsville. A man by the name of Dred Scott (original name Sam Blow) used to be a slave on the property that is now owned by Oakwood college. Scott's story of slavery to **freedom** received the attention of the nation as he began a 10 year quest for freedom starting on April 6, 1846. Huntsville was a place where Scott was able to shake the nation's legal system until he was declared a free man in 1857. The Huntsville Visitors bureau website says: *"On the Oakwood campus a plot of ground almost 100 feet square bounded by four granite stones marks a sacred spot on the*

campus where 40 to 50 slaves were buried. It is believed that descendants of Dred Scott were buried there. The last record of slaves living on this land was in the year 1821.” How wonderful it is to see that Oakwood college territory was transformed from a place of slavery into a declaration of freedom! And now the gospel of Jesus Christ is taught from this plot of land every day.

“The Rev. William Harris organized the Huntsville African Baptist Church in the late 1820’s; it is one of the oldest independent churches in Alabama. The church was burned during the war; but after the war, President Ulysses Grant appropriated money to rebuild the church in a nearby location, which was dedicated in 1872. At that time, the name was changed from Huntsville African Baptist Church to Saint Bartley Primitive Baptist Church in respect for their pastor Bartley Harris who was said to have baptized some 3,000 people in his lifetime. The history of Saint Bartley Church is closely related to the “Big Spring Baptism” events that occurred annually beginning in the 1800’s.”

This quote from the www.Huntsville.org website shows that African-Americans have held a large role in the spiritual map of Huntsville. We can expect that any future citywide revival will include this sector of the community, and may very well start out from the African American community.

Alabama’s First State Capital



In 1819 the city of Huntsville became the birthplace of the state of Alabama and Constitution Hall, pictured here on the left, which is still standing today. The historic district in downtown Huntsville has an “Alabama Constitution Village” to commemorate these historic events when Alabama first entered the Union. An entire section of the Alabama constitution was devoted to education saying that, “*education shall forever be encouraged in this state,*” once again showing the call of our city to be one of **education**. A historical marker outside of the

original spot where the constitution was drafted states, “*It was one of the most democratic constitutions on the frontier. The constitution included the right to vote on amendments, making Alabama one of the first states in the young country to give its people direct participation in constitutional lawmaking.*” It was drafted by a very diverse group of people including farmers, teachers, ministers and businessmen showing a spirit of **unity** in diversity among different people allowing for freedom of expression and freedom from oppression. Currently, over 10% of Huntsville’s population was born in another country and over 100 different languages and dialects are spoken in our community of approximately 250,000 people.²⁷

There is a red bridge in Big Spring Park that was donated by the Japanese Defense forces to honor the American bicentennial in 1776 and give thanks for Huntsville’s help in their Missile Programs. I think it shows a great deal of **reconciliation** and goodwill for America and Huntsville to help a nation such as Japan with their missile programs when we were at war with them only 30 years earlier!

The Eternal Flame



Another monument that stands out rather boldly in Big Spring Park is this large rock with a bronze replica of the Declaration of Independence signed in Congress on July 4th 1776. This is located in what is called “Freedom Plaza.” Above this rock, and above the complete wording of the Unanimous Declaration of the 13 United States of America, is a large torch that contains real **fire** that stays burning all the time from a gas line. What an awesome statement about **freedom** to declare from the center of town!

How characteristic of Huntsville whose history is so full of examples of men and women standing for unity amongst diversity and against oppression and tyranny.

There were many wealthy businessmen in Huntsville who remained loyal to the Union during the Civil War, which is why the town was spared the destruction by occupying armies. Once again showing that Huntsville has been wise in knowing when to rebel against tyranny and oppression (i.e. this declaration of independence replica, and the civil rights support), yet we have also been wise enough to know when to stand for union during a time of national strife. This reminds me of Phinehas who was a man in the Scriptures that was given a Covenant of Peace because he was zealous for God and judged oppression and tyranny ruthlessly. Yet Phinehas had a discerning heart not to judge by outward appearances and was able to get to the heart of a matter so as not to create unneeded harm. The details on Phinehas were discussed in chapter 5 of this book.

The Eternal Flame torch is reminiscent of Huntsville's calling to be a "Lampstand" of the Spirit of Knowledge, which will also be discussed in the next chapter. There are seven spirits that burn before the throne of God (Rev. 1:12), and Isaiah 11:2 spells out each of these seven spirits as: 1) the Spirit of the Lord (love) 2) the Spirit of Wisdom (truth) 3) the Spirit of Understanding (revelation) 4) the Spirit of Counsel (remembrance/restoration) 5) The Spirit of Might (power) 6) **the Spirit of Knowledge** (publishing), and 7) the Spirit of the Fear of the Lord (grace). This Spirit of Knowledge is the spirit the scribes in the Bible were anointed with to publish the knowledge and truth of God's Word. The Spirit of Knowledge entails much more than just writing, but also **DECLARING** the Word of the Lord.



Two other historical landmarks that are found in Big Spring Park include a Norwegian Light Beacon and a Fog Bell that were given to Huntsville by Norway in 1973. The ancient Light beacon was one of the old oil burning type lights that served as a guiding light in the Marina. The fog bell was used to

warn slower sailing ships in the fog. I think many obvious parallels could be drawn between these landmarks and the calling of Huntsville to be a Lampstand or a light set on a hill like Jesus told us in Matthew 5:14-16: *“You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”*

Summary

The declarations that are made from the central point of a city are very important to the spiritual mapping of a region. It is very refreshing to see that the declarations being made from the birthplace of our city make room for the doors of heaven to open on behalf of the residents in Madison County. It is our privilege, as intercessors, to come into agreement with these decrees that have been put in place by our city’s spiritual fathers and mothers. Their labor in the Lord was not in vain, and it has prepared the way for much of what God will do in Huntsville’s future. Let’s agree with the great cloud of witnesses in heaven for revival and revolution to begin in our community of Huntsville!

Chapter 16

The Calling of Huntsville Alabama

This brief history of my beloved city will outline the **Past**, the **Present** and then the **Future** of a region that I have been a part of since I graduated college in 1991. It was first written in 1998 and then updated in 2004 when I wrote the previous chapter on *The Spiritual Map of Huntsville*. So there is some overlap.

The Past

“The Sky is not the limit” is the slogan of Huntsville, because from the very beginning Huntsville has had a **pioneering** spirit. In 1805, John Hunt and his family started the very **first** English settlement within the territory that is now Alabama. Huntsville had the region’s **first** cotton mill and cotton gin. Also, Alabama’s **first** capital was in Huntsville where the **first** Alabama governor and legislature convened. They were also the **first** in the area to lay the foundation for a newspaper, a school, a bank and a library. Huntsville soon became the largest city in the Tennessee Valley.

During the 1940’s and World War II, the US Army established the Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville to store and build conventional munitions and artillery shells, which brought the high technology and scientific endeavors which now characterize Huntsville. In 1950, Dr. Wernher von Braun and 100 other German scientists pioneered the United States space program right here in Huntsville Alabama.

During the civil rights movements of the 1960’s, Huntsville led the way in Alabama by allowing African-American students to enroll in our schools defying Alabama Governor George Wallace’s attempts at

segregation. Also during this time, Optimist Park was opened at Oakwood Road and Meridian Street where games by the Birmingham Black Barons and other Negro League teams played. This was one of the few baseball parks in the Nation open to all races that served as a practice field for Jackie Robinson, Willie Mays and other African American baseball legends. The space and missile efforts in Huntsville have always been engineered by a multitude of racial and ethnic backgrounds. In order to build something as complex as the Space Shuttle or the Space Lab it takes not only excellent technical knowledge, but a great deal of **unity** and openness to other fields of expertise which are often found in countries outside of the USA.

The Present



Huntsville (also called the Rocket City) is currently a medium sized community of about 250,000 people (including the surrounding Madison county) and is known internationally as the “Space Capital of America” because of our “US Space & Rocket Center Museum” and “Space Camp” for kids. The Space museum is a memorial to the US and world space exploration, containing the world’s most comprehensive collection of rocketry. It is the world’s largest space attraction and Alabama’s largest tourist stop. Displayed outside, as

you pass the museum on Interstate 565, is an actual Space Shuttle with fuel booster, a large sky-scraping Saturn 5 rocket, and a SR-71 Black Bird airplane (A-12 Oxcart) that flew over mach 3 speed from New York to London in less than 2 hours.

Space Camp, which is connected with the museum, is where kids come from all over the world for weeks at a time to learn in a fun hands-on way about science, math and space technology.



Due to the geographical location in the Tennessee Valley as well as being a high technology based town, the communication lines, satellite connections, and energy services (Tennessee Valley Authority- TVA) are some of the best in the country around the Huntsville region. In 1992, South Central Bell made Huntsville the first major metropolitan area in the US to have 100% digital network switching and transmission facilities, allowing information to be transmitted faster, clearer and more economically. Huntsville has also been the first site for five other major telecommunication projects for South Central Bell, one of which was the first **networking** by way of ISDN technology. It also has many other large telecommunication companies such as Boeing, Adtran & SCI. The Supercomputer Network Services at Boeing, which has headquarters in Huntsville, made Alabama the first state to initiate the unifying of a network for use by both the academic world and industries.²⁸

Huntsville has the second largest Research Park in the world (Cummings Research Park) which does **research** for many of the US defense and NASA contracts. It is home of the US government's Space and Missile Defense Center (SMDC) & Redstone Arsenal, where the Patriot missile, which was used in the 1991 Gulf War, was partially developed. Some of Huntsville's scientists work on the Space Station **Freedom**, which is an observatory, laboratory, and manufacturing facility in space. The main civic center and several public schools in Huntsville are named after people or things that relate to the Space and Missile industry. Because of all the high technology work done in Huntsville, it boasts one of the highest per capita incomes in the nation, but also has the highest spies per capita as well. Therefore, we have a high concentration of extremely intelligent rocket scientists in Huntsville, as well as top level security.

The Future



In 1998, Huntsville acquired an indoor soccer team called the Huntsville **Fire**. Please pray for the Fire of God to ignite in Huntsville! Jeremiah 20:9 says that *“His word was in my heart like a burning fire shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back and could not.”* The Lord desires Huntsville to be a Lampstand shining as Jesus the light of the world. In particular a Lampstand of the “Spirit of Knowledge” (Isaiah 11:2). Just as

Revelation chapters 2 and 3 describes different cities with different callings, Huntsville is called to publish the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. *“For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea”* (Habakkuk 2:14). Oakwood college, UAH, and Research Park are just a few of the examples of higher learning that God has established in this city. *“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.”* (Hosea 6:3) *“You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.”* (John 8:32)

Kjell Sjoberg, a prophet from Sweden, came to Huntsville in 1994 and declared: **“Huntsville is The City of New Beginnings!”** Huntsville will be one of the first cities to help pioneer the next major move of God and become a city of light and refuge. Huntsville is called to help lay the foundation for the Second Coming of Jesus and the ushering in of His 1,000 year reign. During this soon coming millennium, Huntsville will become a museum of the knowledge of The Creator. True science, math and astronomy will always lead to an appreciation for the Creator and realization that *“the heavens declare the glory of God!”* (Ps. 19). However, Huntsville needs the grace to understand that *“the sum of Thy Word is truth”* (Psalm 119:160), so as not to be puffed up in pride with this knowledge, but rather walk in love. *“Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.”* (1 Cor. 8:1)

In order to lay this foundation and make God’s knowledge known, the Tennessee Valley will need to be exalted - *“Every valley shall be exalted”* (Isa. 40:4). However, the **unity** among the believers must be

supernaturally high in order to maintain humility and accountability. Huntsville's "Christ Our Passover Unity Banquet" is one such yearly endeavor that is helping to bring this unity among the various Christian denominations. We are also praying towards a greater city wide Pentecost. Please pray for the Fire of God to fall on Huntsville and burn away the self-centeredness that hampers unity. May God give the people of Huntsville His glory so that we can be unified! (John 17:22)

Huntsville is called to be the Lord's Lampstand of *"the Spirit of Knowledge"* (Rev. 1:20, Isa. 11:2). To search the deep meaning of God's living Word (John 1:1,14) and give an appreciation for every jot and tittle of God's logos. Having an appreciation for the past will result in understanding the future. If we will learn to walk in the Spirit and love one another, Huntsville will be able to *"declare the end from the beginning"* (Isa. 46:10) and prepare for the soon coming King Jesus. *"For we know in part and we prophecy in part, but when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away."* (1 Cor. 13:10)

The Spirit of God desires to rest upon this town and provide protection (Ps. 91) and freedom (2 Cor. 3:17) during the coming storm, because Huntsville has a destiny to fulfill in *"restoring the foundations and repairing the breach"* of the Lord, and declaring to all people the true knowledge and government of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob! As a City of Refuge, *"Those from among you (Huntsville) shall build up the old waste places; You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In."* (Isaiah 58:12)

Chapter 17

Alabama Blesses Israel

In 1943, five years before Israel became a nation, the state of Alabama passed a resolution unanimously calling for the creation of the state of Israel. Back then, Alabama led the Nation in supporting Israel, and we are doing it again now in 2002. On April 4th 2002 the Alabama Governor signed Resolution 85 (enrolled as Act 2002-258), which passed UNANIMOUSLY in both the Alabama state House and Senate. This resolution was modeled after the 1943 resolution and calls for the unequivocal support of the state of Israel. It also includes Alabama governor Don Siegelman's "Good Friday and Passover Proclamation Day of Remembrance" on March 29th 2002 in response to the "Passover Massacre" that killed 28 people in Israel this Passover 2002.

My friend Robert Somerville and I attended an "Israel Now" rally in Birmingham on Tuesday April 23 2002, which celebrated this proclamation that the state of Alabama is making and sending to Washington.²⁹ About 2,000 Jews and Christians attended this event which was sponsored by the Birmingham Jewish Federation, and was held at Samford University which is a Christian campus in Birmingham Alabama. When we as Christians begin to understand our role as "protector and friend" of Israel (Isa. 40:1-2), then Messiah will be revealed to the Jew through our actions and our love. God is love, and the Jew provides an "acid test" to see if we are living the real gospel or if we are just playing church games.

It may be easy to write off this event as just another solidarity gathering, but we must understand the times and seasons in which we live. I believe that this natural coming together of Jew and Christian is preparation for the spiritual "grafting in" where the Israeli nation receives their Messiah: *"For if the Jew's being cast away is the reconciling of the world (saving of the Gentile nations), what will their acceptance (of Messiah) be **but life from the dead?**"* (Rom 11:15). Paul called it a "mystery" (Eph. 3:3) and says that God has created

“one new man” (Eph. 2:15) from both the Jew and Gentile. Alabama is participating in the “wisdom of the ages” as the “Heart of Dixie,” which was birthed out of the civil war rebellion, is being redeemed to become the “Heart of the Father” bringing forth true **unity** in Christ.



Another recent example of true unity on a regional basis occurred in my hometown of Huntsville Alabama on March 26th 2002 when many Christians of different fellowships in this area gathered at the Christ our Passover Unity Banquet.³⁰ This was the largest trans-denominational Passover event ever held with over 1,200 Christians gathered under the banner “*Let there be no strife... for we are brethren*” (Gen 13:8). The focus of the gathering was the body and blood of Jesus because this is what Passover is all about. It was at the last supper when the Lord told His disciples, “*By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, by the love you have one to another*” (John 13:35). This event was not a false unity based on setting aside our differences, but it was based on our agreement that the blood of Jesus is our **ONLY** access to the Father.

Why should Christians bless Israel? – This is an important question to answer because it is obvious that many of the actions of the modern day nation of Israel do not represent the character of Yahoshua (Jesus). However, Israel **DOES** have a prophetic role based on the Covenants that God has made with Israel’s forefathers and our spiritual fathers.

The “Kingdom of God” was indeed taken from national Israel when their nation rejected the Messiah Yahoshua (Jesus) and it was given to the Gentiles who believed. However, Israel’s standing as a chosen nation “*for the sake of the fathers*” (Romans 11:28, 15:8) is still in progress now at the end of the age. This is because God’s Covenants are irrevocable. Technically, the Kingdom of God does not have a certain ethnic makeup of either Jew or Gentile because God does not see race. He does, however, recognize and deal with nations. So, while there has always been a small remnant of Jews who **do** believe in their Messiah, the Israeli nation as a whole rejected Jesus. Therefore, generally speaking, the “Kingdom” was taken from national Israel.

However, their identity of “Israel” (where Israel is defined as people who are the natural offspring of Jacob) has not been taken away.

The important thing that we are “blessing” in the nation of Israel is God’s Covenant promises with our spiritual forefathers, and not necessarily every decision that the modern day nation of Israel makes. This is especially important now, because the times of the Gentiles having the corner on the Kingdom of God are coming to an end. God has indeed extended a time of favor on the Gentiles for the past 2,000 years, and simultaneously a time of chastening on the Jewish people as they have been scattered all over the earth. But now the roles are being reversed. We are entering into a time of favor upon the Jewish people as many of them **are** receiving their Messiah. At the same time, the Gentile nations are now entering into a time of judgment based on how they have treated Israel. Ultimately, those nations who come against Israel will suffer greatly. Many of Israel’s prophets saw this time of judgment on the nations saying, *“it is the day of the Lord’s vengeance, the year of recompense for the controversy of Zion”* (Isaiah 34:8). According to Joel 3:1-2, God will enter into judgment on the nations in the Valley of Jehoshaphat because *“they have divided up My land.”* This Valley just happens to be in East Jerusalem, which the modern day Palestinians claim as theirs, and the United Nations plans to divide.

The Jewish people have paid the price of being a “chosen” nation as they have been some of the most persecuted people through the ages. The greatest modern day geo-political miracle is the re-gathering of the Jewish nation, and the greatest spiritual miracle will be when the nation of Israel accepts Yahoshua (Jesus) as her Messiah. Our prayer should be that the Jewish people and the nation of Israel would be grafted back into their original “Kingdom” by accepting their Messiah Yahoshua!

Jesus told Nicodemus, *“unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God”* (John 3:3). Whether we are a Jew or a Gentile (which includes all other nationalities), there is no other name given under heaven by which men can be saved except the name of Jesus. We should bless the Jews because their fathers represent our spiritual heritage through whom Jesus came. Jesus is everything, and all believing Jews and Gentiles will be combined in Him (Messiah Yahoshua) who is God in the flesh.

Chapter 18

Alabama Ten Commandments Monument



On August 27, 2003, a Ten Commandments monument in the Montgomery Alabama courthouse was forcefully removed. The former Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore, and many other Christian supporters gathered together from all around the nation to pray and make a strong stand against this action. Alabama is my home

turf, and so for over two months I made this a very serious matter of personal intercession. First, I will write a personal testimony regarding the spiritual warfare behind the removal of this Ten Commandment monument, because there is so much more going on in the Spirit behind this issue than just politics and opinions. Then I will answer some common questions regarding being put “under the law.”

On July 22, 2003, over a month before Judge Roy Moore’s National stand, I participated in a statewide Christian prayer gathering here in Decatur Alabama where Dutch Sheets, Chuck Pierce and many local equipping ministers were present to hear Judge Roy Moore speak and then pray for him.³¹ My region of the country has a destiny for birthing unity and standing up for civil rights. Therefore, the Spirit of God is present in a powerful way here to intercede for JUSTICE and RAIN (an outpouring of the Holy Spirit) to flow from Alabama and go to the rest of America. I believe God is indeed about to judge that which does not line up with Him and His word.

It was not a coincidence that at the very same time the Ten Commandment monument was removed that the planet Mars was at its closest approach to earth that has yet to date happened in history (this too was national news). Mars represents Michael the archangel who is the warring angel, hence WARFARE was the key message. In many ways it seems like the Church of America has positioned herself in a warfare stance against God's word.

It was also not a coincidence that the day after they removed Roy Moore's ten commandment monument (Aug 28th in the evening) began the 40 day Jewish season of Teshuvah - a time of introspection / repentance / and returning to God before the high holy days in the fall. Teshuvah means "to return" in Hebrew. These 40 days include the Hebrew month of Elul (30 days), plus the 10 "days of Awe" which starts at the Feast of Trumpets and goes through the Day of Atonement. The message is that we need to repent and "return" to God's word.

These Jewish Feast days are part of God's order for Christians to worship Him in truth. While this may sound pretty strange now, within the next few decades and centuries it will become more and more commonplace for Christians. Weekly small group meetings, larger monthly "tribal" meetings, and three yearly city wide meetings (Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles) will soon become staple celebrations in the Church in replacement of the way we currently celebrate Christmas and Easter. Chapter 2 in this book contains a chart of this type of apostolic Church order.

In Chapter 2 we saw how much of the pattern (or matrix) for church assembly is found in the Old Testament, which is the wrapper for containing the New Testament life in Christ Jesus. You **MUST** have the life before you use the pattern otherwise you will just have dead religious works. Nevertheless, we have neglected for far too long the correct pattern for having church out of fear of "legalism" or being "under the law."

This brings us back to part of the warfare involved in the removing of the Ten Commandment monument. For the most part, the Church is removing the structure on how to assemble in "Church" by relegating the Old Testament to a secondary role in relevance to Church

government. The foundation of the entire Scriptures is Jesus Christ, and the Word of God is neither old nor new, it is eternal. If we remove the Old Covenant from New Covenant Church practice we will pay the price of setting ourselves against God's pattern and be at war with His word. His word is a sword of JUSTICE and it is being drawn for sure, but we want to be on the right end of that sword!

My friend Louise Switzer had some similar insights in regards to the warfare behind this issue regarding the Ten Commandment monument here in Alabama. Louise writes:

Although I am against the removal of anything that acknowledges God, I find it a bit ironic that Christians are making such a fuss over the removal of monuments bearing the inscription of the Ten Commandments when the Church long ago removed the Law from its life claiming it had been abolished at the cross. In the light of this, why is it important to get a "strong message" to the media and politicians of our society when we do not even acknowledge the place of God's Law in our own lives? Is this not just the same demanding of "rights" on the part of Christians as the world makes for what it considers its rights?

The best way to fight the removal of the Ten Commandments from the fabric of our nation is to embrace those Law's on an individual level. What we need to be protesting is the fact that the government of the traditional church has not acknowledged the New Covenant promise of God to put His Law in our minds and write them on our hearts. It is ultimately the organized church's removal of the Law that has allowed our political leaders and religious dissidents to attempt erasure of any public symbol bearing the imprint of God's influence! The injustice here is the one of blaming unregenerate mankind, who does not know God, instead of pointing the finger of fault at Christians who have not exercised the power of God's Law to influence the unsaved by obeying the Law themselves.

It is God who is allowing the removal of these treasured symbols in answer to our having already removed our

obedience to them. This is no different than His allowing the Ark of the Covenant that carried the Ten Commandments to be taken away from Israel by her enemies. And it is another in a long line of warnings to those claiming to know God that judgment is to soon descend on our nation just as it did on Israel for the same reasons: disregard for the Law of God. And the responsibility for this rests squarely on the shoulders of the church.³²

May the church arise and fulfill its call to disciple the nations and see the Lord glorified in His people! - *“Thus speaks the Lord of hosts, saying: This people says, ‘The time has not come, the time that the Lord’s house should be built.’ Then the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying, ‘Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins? Now, therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, ‘Consider your ways! You have sown much, and bring in little, you eat but do not have enough; you drink, but you are not filled with drink; you clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; and he who earns wages, earns wages to put into a bag with holes.’ Thus says the Lord of hosts, ‘Consider your ways! Go up to the mountains and bring wood and build the temple, that I may take pleasure in it and be glorified. You looked for much, but indeed it came to little; and when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why?’ says the Lord of hosts. ‘Because of My house that is in ruins, while every one of you runs to his own house.’”* (Haggai 1:2-9)

Exactly two years after this Ten Commandment monument was removed, hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans as well as my home state of Alabama (August 28, 2005). When you sow to the wind, you will reap the whirlwind. It is a spiritual law that works just as sure as gravity or any other law of nature. I don’t think it was a coincidence that the planet Mars made its second closest encounter with earth on the same day that hurricane Katrina was at its strongest point the day before making landfall. The only recorded closer approach of the planet Mars was at the same time this Alabama Ten Commandment monument was being removed two years earlier to the day.

Another interesting example of reaping and sowing is the parallel between this hurricane Katrina and the nation of Israel’s recent

“disengagement.” The nation of Israel is the Lord’s prophetic timepiece. Nations will be dealt with in judgment based on their treatment of Israel (Genesis 12:3). America sowed seeds of pressure on Israel for the “disengagement” of Israel’s God given land in Gaza and Judea and we have therefore reaped our own “disengagement” with this hurricane. Israel was forced to tearfully bus 8,500 Israeli people out of their Gaza homes during the month of August 2005. One week later, Hurricane Katrina caused 850,000 Americans to be sadly bused out of their homes in the South East. On the same day over 800 people in Iran were killed in one of their religious holy days when they stampeded each other due to a suicide bomber threat. America and Islam are reaping what they have sown in their treatment of Israel, and these judgments are only going to get more pronounced in the days to come. This is only because God loves mankind and desires us to repent:

“For thus says the Lord of hosts; “He sent me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you (Israel) touches the apple of His eye. For surely I will shake My hand against them, and they shall become spoil for their servants. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent Me. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst,” says the Lord. “Many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and they shall become My people. And I will dwell in your midst. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent Me to you. And the Lord will take possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem. Be silent all flesh before the Lord, for He is aroused from His holy habitation!” (Zechariah 2:8-13)

As imperfect as the modern day nation of Israel may be, God has still chosen Israel for the sake of the nations to represent His Covenants that he has made with our spiritual fathers such as Abraham, Moses and David. The Ten Commandments that He gave to us through Moses is a major sign of the Covenant of Law given to Moses. When nations reject Israel, and the signs of God’s Covenants such as the Ten Commandments, then we are rejecting Him and setting ourselves against Him. I can recommend to any serious student of the Word a

book by Robert Somerville called “The God Contracts” which details the seven major Covenants that God has made with mankind.⁴

May the Lord give us His grace to see that His Law is a good thing and something that He desires both individuals and nations to obey from a free will heart: *“Teach me, O Lord, the way of Your statutes, And I shall keep it to the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep Your law; Indeed, I shall observe it with my whole heart. Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, For I delight in it, For Your judgments are good.”* (Psalms 119: 33-35,39) *“For we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully.”* (1 Timothy 1:8)

Are you putting me under the law?

Because the Lord’s law has been given such a negative connotation in most Christian circles today, I would like to take some time to explain why loving the Lord’s law is not a bad thing. A better translation of the word “law” or “torah” is “instruction.” Once people come into God’s Kingdom there must be some kind of instruction or teaching in the ways of God. God’s law is **instruction**, and not some legalistic mumbo jumbo that people must follow. Once you have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit you WANT to follow God’s instruction not because you have to, but because you want to love Him who first loved you. The problem is that our generation of “church” has been so removed from her Jewish roots that when instruction is given and it sounds “Jewish” (such as celebrating the Feast days) then people reject it as legalistic. However, in reality this order will bring us into liberty when we follow it after the Spirit.

In reality every family, church group, company, organization and even nation ALREADY HAS some type of instruction that they already conform to. It may be unwritten and undefined, but a group of people cannot function together without some type of common understanding of laws and rules. Just consider any type of organized sporting activity. If there were no rules or guidelines and penalties for breaking them, then there would be no game! The question is: Are we going to organize according to God’s instruction, or make up our own rules?

According to Galations 3:29: *“If ye are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”* True Christians are New Testament spiritual Jews. The natural Jews were given the correct order for God’s kingdom, but their leadership did not have the right heart attitude, so God looked to the Gentiles (see Rom 9-11). The true Church since Jesus (spiritual Jews) have been given the right Spirit (heart attitude) but we totally lack the proper order. This is due mostly because the early Church severed herself from her Jewish roots in order to compromise with the pagan traditions and bring in more “converts.”

Because I celebrate the Lord’s Feast days, people have accused me of being led by rituals and wasting my time. But rituals in themselves are not bad. Rather it is when we start putting our trust in the rituals that it becomes sin. Any time we meet together on a larger scale with other believers, there will have to be some kind of structure (ritual) as to how you will share and worship. Why not follow the order for meeting that the Scriptures give? The Jews were given the divine order of worship, not Constantine and the Catholic church from which most of the modern day church derives its order of worship. We celebrate birthday’s and the 4th of July and Thanksgiving, and there is nothing wrong with this. So, how much more should we celebrate and honor days that are special to God? Far from a waste of time, it is the best way to honor God with our time. One day soon, the whole earth will be celebrating these days. Why not get a head start on everyone!

When Israel became a nation in 1948 the Church had to re-think her “replacement theology” where she said the Gentile church had totally replaced the natural Jewish people as God’s chosen. Paul in Romans 11:1 says that God has not cast away the Jewish people. Since 1967 when Jerusalem was captured by Israel, there have been thousands of Jewish people who have come to know Yahoshua (Jesus) as the Messiah. These Jewish believers are being led by the Holy Spirit to still keep the Feasts as part of their faith in Jesus. They have a definite contribution to make to the Bride of Christ before Jesus returns, but who is listening?

The “Jewish questions” are not going to go away, and they will be a stumbling block for many believers in our generation, just like allowing the Gentiles to come into the Church in the first century was a

stumbling block for their generation. It is unfortunate that there are many people in the “Messianic Jewish” and “Hebrew Roots” movements that take these truths to extremes and put an overemphasis on the order (Feasts) instead of the content (Jesus). But it has always been a tactic of the enemy to discredit truth by pushing it to an overemphasis. People who do not have first things first (a relationship with Jesus) will be out of balance in one form or another anyway. Following God’s order is never a burden or a distraction when we do it in the Spirit, and we need to start talking about these issues because having a proper understanding of the law and the Feast days are a big part of God restoring ORDER to His body. I certainly don’t claim to have the total revelation on this issue. It is going to take a company of revelation from the Lord to bring further light on this subject.

Ephesians 2:14-16 says that Jesus broke down the wall of division between Jew and Gentile and we are now ONE NEW MAN reconciled to God through the cross. So, Jesus is not coming back for a Jewish bride and a Gentile bride. He is coming back for ONE Bride. Therefore, we can’t just say, “well, let the Jews do their feasts, and I’ll do whatever I want.” There is a biblical order that these “appointed times” bring to our worship and we must find the proper balance.

Common “Jewish Questions”

There are many good questions as to why we should still honor God’s law and celebrate His Feast days. I will try to address some of the more common questions that I have received over the years:

Question: Why would we go backward under the law and follow the Jewish laws instead of forward toward grace and freedom?

Answer: Jesus came “*full of grace AND TRUTH.*” GRACE and Freedom can only be founded upon the TRUTH of God’s eternal law. Without the foundation of law, you would never have known grace. You cannot throw out the foundation once you have found something better. They build on each other. We need both. Liberty is the goal of our democracy in America, but it is our legal system that preserves that liberty. Rom 3:31 says, “*Do we then make void the law through faith?*”

God forbid; yea, we establish the law.” Here is an example: You have a set of train tracks which represent the LAW, and a locomotive train which represents GRACE. Taking away the train tracks (law) will not help establish grace, it will render it helpless! Romans 7:12,14 confirms, “Therefore the law is holy and the commandment holy and just and good... for we know that the law is spiritual.”

Question: Paul said to make no day holier than the next. If we celebrate the feasts and the Jewish roots aren't we putting ourselves back under the law?

Answer: Even God Himself abides by certain immutable (unchangeable) laws (see Heb 6:17-18). The Ten Commandments are “Jewish” but most of the Church receives them as instruction. Why not the Feasts too? In regards to God's divine unchangeable law, the Church should have never left these Jewish roots. The dark ages are a result, in part, of the Church leaving her Jewish roots (see Rom 11:18). A return to Judaic principles (God's divine law) is part of the RESTORATION that God is doing in our generation. This return to the Judaic-Christian order does not make anyone righteous and it has no bearing on one's salvation. The law was never intended to make people righteous or to bring salvation. We are saved by grace through faith in Jesus PERIOD. The key, is to remember that celebrating the Feasts is a matter of order and maturity, and not right standing with God or a measure of your salvation.

As for honoring certain days, Paul was writing to the Romans (ch. 14) not to JUDGE one another (see vs. 10) in regards to celebrating certain days (and he happened to be referring to Pagan festivals). To this I say, Amen! We cannot judge one's right standing with God based on who celebrates the Feast days and who does not. But Paul also wrote, “*Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us, THEREFORE LET US KEEP THE FEAST*” (1 Cor. 5:8). Paul, the great champion of grace, encourages us to keep the Feasts, because it is God's order and pattern for instruction in worship. Paul was “determined” and “in a hurry” to celebrate Pentecost (Acts 20:16). This does not put us under the law, but rather is a fulfillment of the law. God has written His law on our hearts, and He desires for His law to “*be fulfilled IN US who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit*” (Rom 8:4).

Scripture gives us freedom to celebrate any day as special (Rom. 14:6). So, why should we NOT celebrate the biblical Feast days?

Question: If we are going to celebrate the feasts then is it not hypocritical to not accept the rest of the law? What about circumcision? The Bible says that he who goes and becomes circumcised of flesh now is rejecting grace?

Answer: The reason that the first century Jews were rebuked by Paul in regards to circumcision is because they were trusting in this good work as a sign of their right standing with God, instead of simply finding their righteousness by being found IN Christ. By doing this they rejected grace. I can't emphasize enough the need to distinguish SALVATION (right standing with God) from God's worship ORDER and discipleship training found in His eternal law (instruction).

The key to differentiating the "*fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation*" (Heb. 9:10) and God's eternal law is to WALK IN THE SPIRIT. "*The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set us free from the law of SIN and death,*" but not free from the eternal laws of God (Rom 8:2). The eternal laws of God operate much like the natural laws of creation such as gravity (Rom. 1:20), and they are for our BENEFIT.

The New Covenant was a CHANGE in the law (Heb. 7:12), not a blotting out of the law (our sin is what was blotted out). Jesus came as a reformer, and therefore the MANIFESTATIONS of the law changed. One example is the sacrifices. We still offer sacrifices, only under the New Covenant we offer the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving and our bodies as living sacrifices, instead of the animal sacrifices. So the eternal law of sacrifice is still alive, except the way that it is activated has changed. The manifestation of God's eternal law changes, so we don't live by the letter of the law, but rather the Spirit leading us.

Question: If Jewish laws and customs will be a stumbling block to cause people to turn away from Christ, then let's drop the observances so that we might win those offended brothers back as Romans 14:21 says?

Answer: Just because something is a stumbling block does not make it wrong to observe. Jesus Himself was a stumbling block to His own people, but I don't think we would disagree that He did the PERFECT will of the father. Whenever God moves in a different way from the established tradition, it will cause people to stumble because we are more accustomed to the order (outside actions) than we are to the living moving reality of the Holy Spirit.

Celebrating the Feasts will be a progressive change and transition in the order of worship just like the temple change (from stones to people) was progressive when Jesus came the first time. I don't celebrate Feasts to gain acceptance or fulfill any kind of requirements before God. I do it because I love God and it honors HIS order. God is full of mercy and He will teach His people who have hearts to love Him HOW to worship Him more in TRUTH.

We are at the dawning of a new age. The devil has stolen the term "new age" and uses it to describe those who practice divination, but the truth is that the 6,000 years that God allotted to mankind is expired, and we are in a transition into God's REST (The third day - millennial reign of Jesus). If God has determined to change the order of how we do/know/understand "church," then that is His prerogative and He will do it whether we join in on the action or not.

I am NOT trying to "push" or create a "need" for anyone to celebrate the Feasts. Jesus Himself is the ultimate reality and having a relationship with Him is the first and utmost priority. The Feasts will point to this reality without usurping this all important focus **IF** we walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh. If God wants his people to celebrate His Feasts, then it is going to happen. If it is just an idea of man's, then it will ultimately fail. Just keep your eyes on Jesus and these things will come into perspective.

Question: What should I do to honor the Feasts of the Lord?

Answer: REMEMBER THEM. The Sabbath, and the Feasts are meant to be memorials of God's goodness. The fourth commandment says, "*REMEMBER My Sabbath day to keep it holy.*" If all that you do is voice a simple, "Thank you Lord for your day of rest" on Saturday, it

will be a good remembrance of His appointed Sabbath. Then BE LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT. Whatever you do, make it enjoyable, because the Sabbath is a joyous occasion. When it becomes a burden, then you've left walking in the Spirit.

I don't get caught up into a lot of do's and don'ts. The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. I enjoy it. If necessary, I will do some work, but I generally try to spend time with my family. My children look forward to the Sabbath because we do fun things together as a family. The Sabbath is for the purpose of reminding us that we need to REST in God. Yes, we should be Resting in God EVERY day, but God knows that we need reminders, and so He has established certain days very specifically to be celebrated "forever" as reminders of certain truths (Lev 23: 14,21).

I am not advocating that we celebrate the Feasts the same way that they did under the Old Covenant. We have a New Covenant and Jesus came as a reformer (Heb. 9:10) to "change" the law (Heb. 7:12), but not abolish it. We operate under "*the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*" so that "*the law might be fulfilled IN US who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit*" (Rom 8:2-4).

I believe it is time for another reformation. God is calling His Church to His order, where the Sabbath and the seven main Feasts of the Lord are part of His worship plan. They should never be used to measure right standing with God or judge one another by who does or doesn't do something, but they can be used to remind us and instruct us about the goodness of God. I have observed that those with a fearful and negative view of God's Law are usually the most legalistic in religion; but those with a positive understanding of His Law are always seeking after God's amazing grace.

Chapter 19

“The Call” Kansas City Intercession for America

On New Year’s Eve 2002, my three-year-old son Stephen and I attended a prayer gathering in Kansas City called “The Call.” It took place during the middle of a four day “young adult” conference at the downtown Kansas City Bartle Hall Convention Center. “The Call” lasted from 12 noon until after 12 midnight and the focus was prayer and fasting for revival in America. I was very encouraged at how God spoke and moved during this youth conference.

The prayer focus for this particular gathering was from Revelation 5:8, about “filling the bowls of intercession” through intimate Bridal worship, Nazarite fasting, and prophetic proclamation. We asked God for forgiveness and reconciliation from racism and slavery in our nation. An African-American brother named Will Ford brought a large iron kettle that was handed down to him from four generations in his family. His ancestors used to prostrate themselves on the ground and pray into this kettle so that their oppressive slave owners would not hear them. During the meeting, the leaders “poured out” this huge kettle on stage as a prophetic sign of Revelation 5:8 which speaks of the “bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.” On the same day of this prayer and worship gathering, the “USA Today” newspaper headlines read “The Bowls Runneth Over” (referring to the football bowls). This was just a confirmation of what God was already speaking and doing.

After asking the Lord to forgive us for our sins and the sins of our forefathers, we raised our hands together towards the north, south, east and then west and cried out to the Lord to send revival to our lands. The 20,000 people who were in attendance prayed from the geographical center of America that God would have mercy on us and pour out His Holy Spirit like He did at Pentecost. A seven year old boy

shared from the stage a dream that he experienced on Christmas Eve. In the dream, he saw that all of the small puddles of revival that have sprung up recently in the USA will turn into a mighty flood of revival as the prayers of the saints run over the bowls of intercession on this day of December 31st 2002.

It was a powerful time of worship too. Several different worship teams played throughout the day and the many people who were dancing, and celebrating really energized the place. Over ten years ago, before I knew the Lord, I remember going to an AC/DC (hard rock) concert and thought at the time it was the most exciting event I had ever attended. I can honestly say, that the worship at “the Call” was much more exciting. But more importantly, I believe angels were mobilized to do the work of the Father for revival in America as we danced and worshiped our King.

In the mid 1990’s I attended conferences in Charlotte, North Carolina with Rick Joyner’s ministry MorningStar. The musical worship was the best I had ever experienced, and there was a handful of us who would feel the freedom to dance and whirl before the Lord in adoration of our Bridegroom. However, at The Call in KC there were THOUSANDS of people who were totally liberated to dance and sing and shout to the Lord! It was a healing experience for me personally because of the personal trials I had been going through for several years. I wept a lot because of the freedom I felt in this place where loving on Jesus our Bridegroom was the main focus of worship, and intercession for others was the natural overflow of loving on Jesus. Everywhere I went in this auditorium there were people willing to lend a listening ear and pray for each other. I felt tremendous love from the Lord when a young man put his hand on my shoulder for about five minutes and prayed for me.

My three-year-old son was also thrilled to participate in the dancing and received a healing from the spirit of fear. The previous summer, my son Stephen had a terrible experience in the hospital when his heart stopped for seven minutes and he was tormented by nightmares afterwards. But within two days of returning home from this conference, he began sleeping in his own room by himself for the first time in months! Even at the tender age of three, I could see that the

Spirit of God impacted Stephen during this special worship and intercession time. As the Scriptures say, "*perfect love casts out fear,*" and we both felt such love in this place that a great healing took place inside of us.

I was encouraged by the way the leaders on stage flowed with one another so well and complemented each other in their gifting instead of competing or promoting themselves. They each knew their specific area of expertise in equipping the Lord's people and they stuck to it instead of trying to be super heroes. Mike Bickle ministered in prayers of intimacy with the Bridegroom; Lou Engle with Elijah type power prayers; Dutch Sheets specialized in prayers for governments; and Che Ahn ministered concerning the great commission and church planting.

Paul Cain talked about an open vision he had over 10 years ago of this exact Hall where we were meeting. Paul said he saw tens of thousands of youth in this place through whom God would release a new kind of music because of their sincere passionate love for Him. He also said that 10 years ago in that very conference center an Islamic meeting had taken place with plans to flood America with violence and bloodshed. But what I witnessed in Bartle Hall on December 31st 2002 was the antithesis of radical Islam. Instead of people wanting to blow themselves up to kill others, I saw young adults who were so radically in love with Jesus that they were willing to become martyrs for the sake of saving other people's lives. Someone from the stage asked, "who here feels like they are called to die as a martyr for the sake of the gospel of Jesus Christ?" Many hands went up throughout the stadium.

I was reminded of Luke 10:17-24 where Jesus "*greatly rejoiced in the spirit*" because He saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I know I certainly was greatly rejoicing in the spirit because of this passionate group of Jesus lovers. I can honestly see that radical Islam does not stand a chance against this type of radical Christianity. The truth is that radical Islam is falling rapidly and so their followers are getting desperate and showing their true colors of murder and hatred on the world scene. Nevertheless, when groups of radical Christian's like I witnessed at "the Call" pour out their unhindered affection towards Jesus and declare His Word, I know that Satan trembles and God's Kingdom becomes more and more established in the earth.

This conference reminded me of the radical youth in the 1960's in many ways, and the youth seem to dress similar to the 1960's too. There will be a sexual revolution and a musical revolution, but this time it will be different. The music will glorify Jesus and sexual purity with chastity will be the cry. They said that even Newsweek prophesied that a coming sexual revolution is coming where abstinence until marriage will be the norm. Everyone at this conference was given a sober opportunity to commit their lives to Jesus by walking under a "chupah" which is the Jewish canopy where couples get married. Bridal intimacy with Jesus will bring forth a Warrior Bride who works with Jesus without getting ministry FOR Him in front of simple devotion TO Him.

Jim Goll prayed for the peace of Jerusalem, and a lady from Iran came to the stage impromptu to represent the Arab people. She prayed one of the most powerful prayers for reconciliation between Jew and Arab as she testified that her mother was Israeli and her father was from Iran. Cindy Jacobs also prayed powerful Esther type prayers of intercession and the Holy Spirit intensity was contagious! There were many young adults who prayed powerful prayers of intercession too, but the extravagant worship at this gathering was the thing that set this place on fire! This type of devotion and heartfelt worship is what moves the hand of God into action. It was a set apart holy time.

I'm sure that the bowl of intercession in Kansas City was just one of the many bowls that were filled up throughout our country and around the world as God's people worshiped Him into the new year. However, I do believe that He used this particular gathering as a prophetic sign of something that is occurring in the heavens and on the earth. In Revelation 5:8, once the bowls of intercession were poured out in heaven a "new song" was released and then justice was meted out by the breaking of the seals and trumpets. I expect that in the years to come, we will see some of that "new song" and righteous judgment in the earth.

I distinctly remember singing a song at this meeting about dancing upon "injustice" so that peace and joy and righteousness can be released. The biggest cry of my heart at this gathering was for Jesus to return IN His people in a powerful way so that true justice is done in

His Church and in the governments of this world. Because the governments of this world will one day become the governments of our Lord and of His Christ and He shall reign forever and ever! Amen.

Also, there was a "One Thing" conference running concurrent with "the Call" in this Kansas City auditorium. The theme for the "One Thing" conference came from Psalms 27:4 - *"One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. To behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple."* This has always been one of my favorite verses in all of Scripture. This Kansas City "Call" gathering was the middle of seven planned stadium events. The three previous fasting and prayer gatherings of "The Call" were in Washington DC, Boston, and New York. The three Call gatherings after this Kansas City meeting include: Dallas, Los Angeles, and San Francisco.

Chapter 20

The Shot Heard Around the World on 07/07/07



THE CALL was a gathering that took place in the Nashville Tennessee Titan's Stadium (LP Field) on July 7th 2007 (07-07-07) as shown pictured here.

It was a powerful time of worship to the Lord Jesus Christ as well as fasting and prayer for our nation of America. Over 70,000 people filled this football stadium between 10:00 am until 10:00 pm on this unique 7/7/7 date. Mostly young adults filled the area on the field since this event seemed geared towards the young-adult generation around ages 16-25. From the stage, both older and younger adults offered testimonies and prayers of repentance for the sins of their generations. The main topics of repentance included abortion, sex outside of marriage, and homosexuality.

The greatest part about this event was the intensity of the people worshipping through music, which kept the place very energized. It was tremendous to have tens of thousands of people with uplifted hands in worship and jumping and dancing for king Jesus! Several different groups of musicians with many different music styles were sharing the platform to lead this dynamic worship all day long. There were also 3 different couples who were actually married right there in the stadium! This unique date of July 7, 2007 saw the most marriages of any day in history. Marriage is about true covenant, and people were encouraged to renew their covenant vows with the Lord Jesus during this time. Also, the number seven actually means "covenant" in Hebrew.



My oldest son, Joshua David, and I attended this event together by traveling from Harvest Alabama. Joshua and I signed up before the event to be 2 of the 300 men that reenacted Gideon's army to blow shofars (trumpets) together. We are pictured here with our shofars, which are ram's horns that act like trumpets. The two young men, pictured with us, are from Colorado. They stopped us as we were going onto the field because they had never seen a shofar before and wanted a picture of it. Abraham, in the bible, was the first to use a

shofar as a trumpet of victory and thanksgiving towards God! It is a symbol of Jesus the sacrificial lamb.

Those of us representing Gideon's army were given specific timing instructions and red bandannas to wear. Around sundown, the 300 of us marched towards the platform with our shofars raised. It was a very memorable moment that my son and I will never forget. At the appropriate time we all trumpeted our shofars together, and everyone else in the stadium shouted loudly to the Lord. My ears were ringing it was so loud! I believe it was a release of praise in the spirit that does warfare similar to the armies of Gideon and Jehoshaphat in the Bible. This sounding of the trumpets caused confusion in the enemy's camp where the Lord won battles without even firing a shot! The 7th book in the bible, Judges 7:7 says: *"Then the Lord said to Gideon, "By the 300 men who lapped I will save you, and deliver the Midianites into your hand. Let all the other people go, every man to his place."*

The battle lines were obvious, such as the sins of abortion (Molech), witchcraft (drugs), and sexual perversion (Moab). The Lord uses this type of spiritual warfare and intercession to win these battles over such evil principalities. How this happens may only be seen from the perspective of eternity, but I believe a change has taken place in the

heavenlies that will soon manifest on the earth. God is marching forward, where idols and sin will not be tolerated in His camp. This picture from The Call shows tens of thousands of young adults standing silently before the Lord in intercession for the unborn. The word “LIFE” was written on stickers and given to all who would intercede for this cause. Adoption was promoted as an alternative to abortion and booths were set up in the stadium to minister forgiveness to those who have had abortions.



The Call in Nashville happened exactly 40 years after the rebellion of the 1967 “hippie movement” where tens of thousands of young adults went to San Francisco for the “summer of love.” It was even discovered that the Beatles “All you need is love” song hit the charts as the number one song exactly 40 years ago to the day on 07-07-67. One lady who repented for premarital sex on stage said that it was on 07-07-67 when she lost her virginity during the misguided “sexual revolution” days. This, in many ways, represents the failures of the church at large



to keep faithful to the Lord Jesus as our husband. But thanks to God there is forgiveness in Jesus when we repent and His blood is appropriated! Starting the day after Pentecost on May 28th 2007, there was a call to fast for 40 days before this event in Nashville, and many people did some type of fasting during these 40 days. Also, tens of thousands participated in a prayer walk on 07/07/07 that marched from a local park into the Titan’s stadium. Pictured here, is part of The Call crowd that marched early in the morning for 2.7 miles

on a peaceful prayer walk. They crossed over I-40 (40 being the number of testing) while walking down Church Street in Nashville Tennessee to enter into worship at LP stadium and begin this history-changing intercession event. God is indeed “crossing over” many of His people at this critical time period into His Bride Body.

The entire day from dawn until dusk was spent worshipping, praying, repenting, and appealing to the Great “Judge of all men” for His mercy on His people. I believe now, after 40 years of trials and testings, God is allowing His Bride Body to enter into His promise of rest! (Heb. 4) Several people at this gathering emphasized the positive generational landmark where we find ourselves. It was 40 years ago in the summer of 1967 when Israel retook Jerusalem during the six-day war. Today, 40 years later, the destiny of the true church is now shifting to combine with the destiny of the nation of Israel as we transition into the Kingdom Age. There were many prayers offered at this gathering for the peace of Jerusalem. Chapter 22 in this book will explain more about the “one new man” that Christ is now forming with both Jew and Gentile (Eph. 2:15).

The 300 men blowing shofars at this gathering is what can be compared to the “shot heard around the world” that started the Revolutionary War in America. This shot was not random, but was the result of years of built up tensions. Likewise, the spiritual tension between the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of God has reached a breaking point, and a spiritual revolution is beginning. The main purpose for this Nashville gathering was to pray that God would bring revival and revolution to America and the nations.

Miles Albright, who was the organizer for the Gideon’s 300 men who blew shofars at this event, sent out an email which said: “Bob Jones prophesied while in Houston, Texas in 1993 that the Houston Oilers would move to Nashville & build God a stadium in which would be fired *“the shot heard ‘round the world.”* Bob Jones told me on September 30th, (the 273rd day of this year), that the sounding of the shofars on 07-07-07 was that “shot!””³³

Chapter 21

Highway of Holiness Intercession for the Nations

During August of 2001, I was privileged to be a part of a sovereign time of intercession just outside of the Chicago/Milwaukee area. I saw some old friends and met some new ones as a group of 12 musicians gathered together in a literal “upper room” in Martin and Robyn Green’s new condo which they had just moved into the weekend prior. This loft room just happened to have two sky lights in the ceiling. I thought this was interesting because Robyn is the author of a book entitled, “The Open Door,” which is a wonderful explanation of how Psalmists enter the open doors in heaven through spontaneous praise and worship.

What impressed me the most about this particular time of intercession, was that we had both the clear direction and the authority from the Lord to accomplish HIS will and purposes in intercession with such a small group. It is one thing to get a revelation of spiritual strongholds in a particular area and quite another thing to have the Lord’s authority and direction to battle them. The Scriptures say we “**cast out** devils and demons,” but we “**wrestle**” with principalities. Ephesians 6:12 - “*For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*” By ourselves we have no authority over these wicked spirits, but Scripture is clear that Jesus DOES have authority over them, and when we are operating with HIS direction and authority then we have authority over them too. Col. 2:15 says that Jesus, “*...disarmed/spoiled principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them.*”

We did this intercession through the medium of spontaneously played music, or “free flow” worship, or Psalming. The command and direction that the Lord gave us was to OPEN UP THE SPIRITUAL

GATES over Africa and pave a “Highway of Holiness” from Cape Town South Africa through Cairo Egypt and on to Jerusalem Israel. It was a mission impossible in the natural, but we have a supernatural God! This was the first time I had been a part of such a music group where we corporately played what the Spirit of God was speaking. We were one in the Spirit and executed His will musically. This is what the arts were created for... to worship God! I cannot say that I understand all of the spiritual aspects of what we were doing or accomplishing, but I do know that Scripture clearly talks about spiritual **gates** or **doors** of entry that are access points in the earth for either good or evil.

Psalms 24:7 says, *“Lift up your heads, O you **gates!** and be lifted up, you everlasting **doors!** And the King of glory shall come in!”* We need to know where these spiritual gateways are, and how to activate and operate in them so that God’s purposes (and not the enemy’s) can be fulfilled! The state of Florida during the year 2000 presidential election was an example of a spiritual gateway. There was much warfare being waged at this “access point” into the USA. Florida intercessors waged a great spiritual battle at this time, and I also participated in personal and corporate prayer for God’s will to be done in my nation of America. The endnotes contain an internet link to some of the history and “spiritual warfare” information gathered by Florida intercessors during this “gate opening.”³⁴

We all gathered on Saturday, August 4th, 2001, in a small schoolhouse/coffeehouse church to record our musical intercession before the Lord. With this “gate opening” understanding from the Lord in mind, we waited upon our KING to give us direction upon our instruments. There were three different keyboardists, two drummers, one of whom was a percussion specialist, a flute player, a bass guitar player, myself on the guitar, and several singers and intercessors. A brother named Brett Cooksey started us off on the keyboards because he is from South Africa and has some real connection or functional authority with the land where we started our intercession. Also, Steve and Heather Lincoln who played on the drums and assorted percussion instruments are missionaries in Africa and have a real heart for the people of this land. Steve and Heather, who are originally from the UK, travel on a full time basis in Africa and abroad teaching on “free flow” worship, releasing creativity and spiritual mapping intercession.

One person told me on the way to the studio with tears in his eyes that the Lord had given him a revelation of what was about to be accomplished in the Spirit. He was deeply saddened because he knew there was about to be “a line drawn in the sand” between good and evil. He knew that God’s judgments were just and true because HE only uses them to try to persuade people to repent and turn to Him as any loving father would discipline his children. He was shown that our “Selah session” was like a petition before a courtroom in heaven and that we were given an audience before the throne of God this day. It was only after this worship session that I was shown this same thing about the broken heart of God, and it broke me to tears also for all of the children and people who will never know the loving embrace of our Heavenly Father because they have rejected His Son. God’s loving kindness and mercy really is everlasting, yet there comes a time when sin must be judged and justice meted out.

Not that our petition (proclamation) was any weightier than the thousands and millions of others who have prayed for Africa and Israel and the nations, but it was simply the SET TIME for these particular bowls of prayers in heaven to be poured out upon the earth. It is sort of like the last straw that broke the camels back... The last petition in the bowl which fills it up before God pours out HIS judgment in an effort to draw HIS creation back to HIM. We were given Psalm 102:13-17, some of which says, *“You will arise and have mercy on Zion; for the SET TIME, to favor her, Yes, the set time, has come... For the Lord shall build up Zion; He shall appear in His glory, He shall REGARD THE PRAYER OF THE DESPERATE, and shall not despise their prayer.”* The Lord hears the cries of His people for justice and righteousness and at the set time He will answer.

“If My people who are called by my name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”

(2 Chron. 7:14)

The Lord used many confirmations to show me that what occurred at this intercession meeting was indeed the will and word of the Lord.

Listed below are 7 things the Lord used to give further understanding of what He was doing:

1. When I returned to Huntsville Alabama, I was asked to share about this intercession trip at a local fellowship. As I was standing up sharing about this intercession time, I looked at the back of the wall and there were four flags each standing for missions that this church was doing in other countries. There were two on one side of the door and two on the other side. Two of them standing side by side happened to be South Africa and Israel, which just confirmed to me what the Lord was showing us about the connection between these two countries.

2. There was an intercessor at another local fellowship (Kyoko Sears) who did not even know about this intercession time, yet the Lord gave her the EXACT Scripture (Psalm 146) that we were psalming to the Lord at the exact same time of the day. Kyoko e-mailed me saying:

“I appreciate you sending the report about the intercessory praise you encountered last week. When I read your report my mind immediately took me to the intercessory prayer I had encountered on August 4, 2001. Last Saturday evening around 10:30p.m., I was giving a praise offering to God by reading aloud Psalm 146 for He has been so merciful and faithful to me by preserving my health and giving me a new life in Christ Jesus. First, I was full of joy praising Him, but as I continue to read aloud His word, I was overcome with the Spirit of sorrow for those who were hurting and desperate. Then Psalm 146 jumped out (I thought it was literally going to come out from the Bible) and it was beaming with the golden glow. I have never experienced something like that in my life. I had to set aside the Bible next to me for His word was clear. Here I AM. I AM the WORD, the WORD you see is I. Cling on to my WORD and walk with me. Then I will preserve you and restore you. My WORD is LIFE. Share the message tomorrow with my people.... I was

groaning for those who were hurting that I could not stop weeping from 10:30p.m. to 2:30a.m. I finally fell asleep around 5:00a.m. with a cold press on my eyes. I have never experienced such a strong intercessory prayer like that before. I shared the encouragement from the Lord with the congregation next day. I was very nervous for I am not a public speaker, but got across the bottom line, praise the Lord! I believe the Lord will literally build His highway that will lead to Zion and those redeemed will travel on it to worship Him there... I will turn all my mountains into a road, my highways will be raised up. There they come, some from far away, some from the north, some from the west, and some from the land of Sinim. Sing heaven! Rejoice, earth! Break out in song, you mountains! For ADONAI is comforting his people, having mercy on his own who have suffered. (Isaiah 49:11 - 13)
Shabbat Shalom! Kyoko”

3. I’ve read many articles about the spiritual connection between South Africa and Israel, but on the day that I left for this intercession trip I just happened to receive in my mailbox the “MOAZ Israel” August 2001 report. It talked about how the UN is preparing a World Conference against racism in South Africa on August 30, 2001. But this is really a façade, which is nothing more than racists covering up their own sin of racism by equating “Zionism” as “Racist” so that they can hate the Jews. The enemy is trying to fight for this spiritual gate in South Africa, and we must not let him take it back!

4. Just as I was leaving Milwaukee, I found out that there was some kind of a “World Africa Conference” in the downtown Milwaukee area. Sometimes, what is happening in the natural is a reflection of what is happening in the Spirit.

5. This week in Jerusalem a line had been crossed in the relations between the Israeli and the Palestinian governments, as a suicide bomber exploded himself in a Jerusalem pizza restaurant killing 15 and wounding over 130 people. In response, the Israeli government

took over the Palestinian headquarters in Jerusalem (the Orient House). God loves the Palestinian people, but He hates the way that they train up their children to hate and kill and destroy others. I cannot think of any worse deception than to think if you strap a bomb to yourself and become a suicide bomber in order to kill innocent men women and children then you are a “freedom fighter” and a “martyr” for God. This is very anti-christ, and the exact opposite of the type of death that Christ has called us to. Jesus gave up His life every day so that others might live, and if we want to bring forth HIS life into this earth then we must die to SELF, not die to kill others. While Islam’s god requires you to sacrifice your sons to secure your eternal life, Christianity offers a God who sacrificed His son so that you might live!

6. Bob Jones, a well known prophet, had just re-released a prophecy given to him back in 1996 (Shepherds Rod 1996) which I read after returning from this intercession time. A quote from it says, “The Lord is promising to reveal His thoughts and His ways, which are much higher than ours. His is a “higher way” of holiness. It is to this place that we are being beckoned.”

7. June 2005 - It has been four years since this time of intercession for Africa and Israel and I just saw another confirmation which ties this time of intercession to a worldwide Pentecost. It is called “The Global Day of Prayer” which is a national prayer movement that was birthed out of Africa at the exact time that we were doing this “highway of Holiness” intercession worship! I just came to know about the Global Day of Prayer this year when it came to my city in Huntsville for the first time. Apparently it was birthed out of Cape Town South Africa in 2001 (which is the same time and place for which we started interceding) and then each year spread to all the nations in Africa where they packed out stadiums to “pray towards another Pentecost” on Pentecost Sunday each year. What really caught my attention was one of their promotional videos where they pictured a map of Africa and drew a line from Cape Town northward (to Egypt) and called it a “**Highway of Intercession!**”³⁵

In closing, I would like to try to convey the sense of destiny that I felt at this small gathering of intercessors. It really was not about us, but all

about Jesus and what HE desires to do in this earth. He is looking for a people who are dead to self so that HIS life can live in them and accomplish HIS purposes in the earth. Opening the spiritual gates so that the KING can come through really is a serious matter, and it can make the difference between life and death for multitudes who do not know about the love of their Heavenly Father. He desires that ALL people repent and come to the knowledge of HIM, but when there are spiritual strongholds that hinder the salvation of souls, it becomes a serious matter to deal with them according to HIS direction and HIS authority. This type of spiritual warfare can be compared to the Air Force which goes in before the ground troops. The air warfare takes out the main hindrances (strongholds and principalities) so that more salvation and ministry can be accomplished on the ground towards those whom Jesus loves.

Isaiah 42:10-13 - *“Sing to the Lord a new song, and His praise from the ends of the earth, You who go down to the sea, and all that is in it, You coastlands and you inhabitants of them! Let the wilderness and its cities lift up their voice, The villages that Kedar inhabits. Let the inhabitants of Sela sing, Let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory to the LORD, and declare His praise in the coastlands. YAHWEH SHALL GO FORTH LIKE A MIGHTY MAN; HE SHALL STIR UP HIS ZEAL LIKE A MAN OF WAR. HE SHALL CRY OUT, YES, SHOUT ALOUD; HE SHALL PREVAIL AGAINST HIS ENEMIES.”*

Chapter 22

The Bride of Christ

Three specific times of intercession were conducted at the Lord's direction to help bring forth the Bride of Christ in the earth in our generation. These meetings were held on the Day of Atonement 2004 in New York, on Passover 2005 in Kansas, and on the Feast of Trumpets 2005 again in New York. I realize the Lord has used other meetings to help pray and intercede to bring forth the Bride in our generation, but these are the three in which I was privileged to participate. Here is my testimony and witness of these three meetings:

Day of Atonement 2004 – September 24-26; meetings at West Point Military Academy, in New York

The Day of Atonement is the holiest most solemn day of the Judeo-Christian calendar. It is a time of repentance and self-inspection on things and relationships that need to be reconciled and restored back to purity. Cleansing and covering for sin is the theme of this particular biblical holiday, and also a focus for this particular gathering in New York. The Lord gave direction to Ken and Mary Stevenson to hold this Convocation in the Thayer hotel at the West Point Military Academy, which is the headquarters for training and educating U.S. military officers.

We learned during the course of the meetings that one of the reasons the Lord brought us to the Military Academy was to battle in the spirit realm against the principality called "Leviathan." This principality is a spirit that operates through *control* and *manipulation*. Historically, this spirit is one that has always had a stronghold with *military mentalities* whereas people will obey orders to their deaths. Therefore, we had to go right into a place where Leviathan was strong, and overcome that

dictatorship mentality, because the Bride of Christ must not operate according to a *taskmaster overlord* attitude.

In Scripture, Ephesians 6:12 reveals an order for the demonic realm, and “principalities” are listed as the highest level. Two of the highest levels of demonic principality are Leviathan and Python. Leviathan was the main evil spirit the Lord came against at this Convocation. While Python was the main principality the Lord uncovered at the Feast of Trumpets 2005 Convocation, which will be discussed later in this chapter. Likewise, two main angels of God who war with these high level principalities are Michael and Gabriel. Michael who is known as the “warring angel” often battles against Leviathan, while Gabriel who is known as the “messenger angel” often battles the lying deceiving tactics of Python. Leviathan manifests with the fist of power and tries to manipulate through brute force or having people abuse their positions of authority. Python manifests as an angel of light and tries to control through false religion, lies and subtle manipulation.

The spirit of Leviathan produces unrighteous selfish kings, and Python produces self-righteous unholy priests. The book of Revelation chapter 13 describes the full maturity of both Leviathan and Python: The “beast from the sea” is the Leviathan stronghold working itself out from among the political kings of the earth. The “beast from the earth” is the Python mentality working itself out from among the religions and philosophies of Man. Daniel also prophesied of these opposing principalities (Dan. 10:13-11:45) when he spoke about the warring kings of the north (mostly controlled by Leviathan) and the kings of the south (mostly controlled by Python) whose conflict spanned generations. For further study on the principalities of Python and Leviathan see the internet links in the Endnotes.³⁶

These two strongholds of Leviathan and Python have been able to sidetrack every move of God to date. Nevertheless, the Bride of Christ will NOT be hindered by these wrong mindsets (strongholds) that kill steal and destroy. Certainly, they may pop up their ugly heads once in a while throughout the ranks of the Bride Body of Christ, but they will not be able to stop the Bride of Christ from moving and doing the Lord’s will in the earth. Neither will they be able to prevent the Bride

from doing her part in causing the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Roy and Faith Sauzek from Kansas were also in attendance at this convocation. They helped to discern and bring forth the understanding that we needed to intercede deeply for America. There was much weeping and strong prayer for God to have mercy on America and to cleanse our nation. The fourth major hurricane of the year (Hurricane Jeanne) hit Florida during the time of this Convocation, and it sent a clear message that God is indeed cleansing. Water is always poured out during the Fall Festivals of the Lord and it is very symbolic to the cleansing of the Bride of Christ so that she can be “*without spot or wrinkle... holy and without blemish*” (Ephesians 5:27).

Passover 2005 – April 23-24; meetings at A Barn in Wellington Kansas

Many Christians have been celebrating the Lord’s Passover ever since He had the last supper with the original twelve apostles just before His Crucifixion. However, in our generation the LORD is revealing a transition from the Lord’s Supper on the Passover date to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb that Scripture shows will be celebrated throughout the coming Millennium. Just as Jesus transitioned or **upgraded** Moses’ Passover to the Lord’s Supper at His First Coming, He is now transitioning it again to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb during His Second Coming (Rev. 19:7). This Passover meeting that we participated in was also celebrating the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. Roy and Faith Sauzek were stirred up in their spirits to hold their first Marriage Supper of the Lamb celebration in the barn where their group normally meets in Wellington, Kansas.

Roy’s ministry focus since the early 1990’s has been teaching and writing concerning the spotless Bride of Christ.³⁷ It is not hard or difficult to understand how to become a part of the Bride of Christ, but it does take obedience to what God asks from us in His Word and walking by His Spirit. ALL people are welcome to become a part of the Bride of Christ, but not everyone is willing to pay the price of obedience to remain in this Bride Body. The Bride of Christ is a living,

breathing organism sustained by God and not a man made institution where you can become a member by association.

There were only twelve of us at this Marriage Supper of the Lamb. Ken and Mary Stevenson from New York participated and brought forth a Word from the book of Revelation 15:3-4 which is the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb, saying, *“Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints! Who shall not fear You, O Lord and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You. For Your judgments have been manifested.”*

One thing that happened during this time of worship was the release of some of the land that the Lord has been promising this group in Kansas to build a center for teaching information on the Bride of Christ. It is located on the hill called “The Place.” For over eighteen years this group has been receiving prophetic words and signs for “The Place” and this convocation seemed to really release some things in the natural to help this vision come to pass.



I believe the Lord has also given me some understanding regarding the purpose of “The Place” ministry center in Kansas and this illustration above depicts that understanding. “Hills” in the Bible are symbolic of *governments, authority, and ruler ship*. The hill in this illustration represents **TRUTH** and **JUSTICE**, which is why it has a flame on top. The hill in this illustration also doubles as an army helmet because “the hill called the place” will be a command center for many parts of the Lord’s Army.

The bride in the illustration is of course the Bride of Christ. The Bride represents the **MERCY** and **GRACE** of Christ which is why she has a heart on her because she is taking the Lord's mercy and grace to a world who needs His love. The phrase "The Place" is wedding language referenced in the Bible and also in Jewish wedding traditions where the groom would prepare "a place" for his soon-to-be bride. Jesus says, *"If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am there you may be also"* (John 14:3).

Finally, in the middle, and between the two symbols of JUSTICE (the hill) and MERCY (the bride), is **THE CROSS**. The only place where the Lord's Fire of Justice and His Heart of Mercy can meet is at the Cross of Christ. Psalm 85:10 states, *"Mercy and truth have met together; Righteousness and Peace have kissed."*

The Cross of Christ is what is so very central to the work being established at the Hill called The Place. It is the only thing that will be able to BALANCE out the Army-like Command Center and the Bride-like compassion for the world that Jesus gave His life to save. Previous moves of God have always gravitated to one of these two extremes (justice or compassion), but only the Cross (death to self) is able to keep us on the right track. The Wisdom of the Cross is the very Power of God, and the Cross is the prevalent theme throughout all of the writings in this book.

Feast of Trumpets 2005 – October 3-5; meetings at The Castle in Wappingers Falls, New York

The Feast of Trumpets is one of the seven major feasts of the Lord, and it is the biblical time of the year when kings begin their official reign (regardless of the time during the year when they actually started ruling). Hence, the reason for the trumpets is to announce the coming of the king! Also, trumpets are always symbolic for a message. Anytime there is a trumpet in the book of Revelation it is because God is speaking a message. Similarly, there was a very clear trumpeted message the Lord spoke at this time, which was:

“HERE COMES THE BRIDE!”

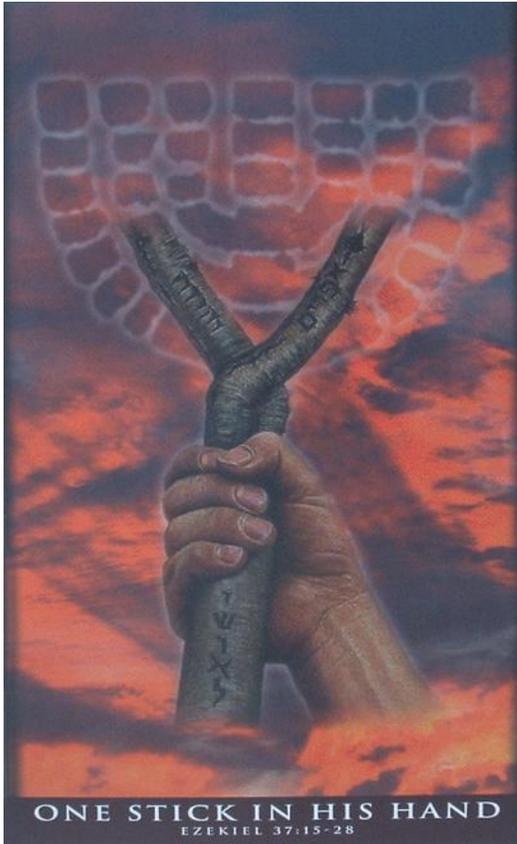
Roy and Faith Sauzek from Kansas also attended this Convocation. Roy explained to us how he had not been released by the Lord to talk publicly about our recent celebration of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb until this Trumpets Convocation. In similar experience, today (October 13th 2005 - the Day of Atonement) is the first time the Lord has given me direction to write publicly about these three Convocations. Ken and Mary Stevenson hosted this third Convocation in the building where their Everlasting Covenant fellowship currently meets called “The Castle.” Prophetic intercession surrounding this Convocation revealed Ken has a calling similar to that of king David in the Bible. Likewise, Roy has a calling similar to that of Moses who was a priest. God is calling forth the kings and priests in our day, and this Convocation prophetically announced the coming forth of the kings and priests in the Bride of Christ.

The Lord symbolically demonstrated this message by having Ken represent the Jew and Roy represent the Gentile. Ken, who teaches on the Jewish feasts and who may even have Jewish lineage, had the Israeli flag draped over his shoulders, while Roy had the American flag draped upon his shoulders. During worship and prayer, Fran Beauchamps was shown in the Spirit that I was to have the Christian flag draped upon my shoulders while standing between Ken and Roy. My stance between the *king* and the *priest* represented **intercession** to bring about the “one new man” which is the Bride of Christ made up of both Jew and Gentile. As I stood between them, I read from Ephesians 2:11-18 part of which says, “*He Himself (Christ) is our peace, who has made both (Jew and Gentile) one... so as to create in Himself ONE NEW MAN from the two, thus making peace.*”

Ezekiel chapter 37 speaks about the two sticks of Judah (Jews) and Ephraim (Christians) becoming one stick in the Lord’s hand. This was another Word brought forth by the Spirit of the Lord through several independent sources at this Convocation:

On the first day of the Convocation, Ken’s entire message revolved around Ezekiel chapter 37. Two days later, Jane Greenstein first arrived without knowledge of the Ezekiel 37 words that had already

been shared. The Lord had directed her to give us four stakes to plant around the “The Castle” property to claim it back for the Kingdom of God. These stakes were Chinese chopsticks that were stuck together creating a tangible imagery of the two sticks being made one, and she had written Ezekiel 37 on each stick prior to attending!



Another very exciting confirmation was two Ezekiel 37 posters (shown here),³⁸ which I had purchased about seven years ago. The Lord had directed me to give one poster to Ken prior to the Convocation and then to mail the other poster, already framed, to Roy after the Convocation. Ken and Roy each represented one of the sticks depicted in Ezekiel 37 (priests and kings) that the Lord was bringing together as ONE during this prophetic 2005 Feast of Trumpets Convocation.

Another confirmation came even after this gathering through a married couple named Jon and Jolene Hamill. They actually lived

out the truth of Ezekiel 37 within the context of their marriage several years ago. However, they experienced a time of intercession a week prior to this gathering over the *two sticks* that they held as memorials for their marriage. They had lost these two sticks and were interceding to see them restored. I read about their story only days after this convocation.³⁹

Other signs and wonders occurred on the same date of this Convocation that served as confirmations of what the Spirit was saying and doing.

For example, there was an earthquake in Israel that shook the fault line on the Mount of Olives.⁴⁰ Also, there was an annular solar eclipse over the entire Middle East on the same day as this earthquake (October 3rd 2005).⁴¹ With such an important message as the Bride of Christ coming forth, there was no doubt that many signs would follow.⁴²

Historically, this Feast of Trumpets 2005 date was exactly 38.8 years (2,000 weeks or 14,000 days) from the capture of Jerusalem in 1967 when the Jews won the Temple Mount in battle but in unbelief gave it back to the Muslims. This is significant because the two other most important generations of unbelief were also 14,000 days in length:

- 1) There were exactly 14,000 days that the Israelites wandered in unbelief in the desert after receiving the Law before entering the Promised Land.
- 2) There were exactly 14,000 days from Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem until Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans in AD 70.

Presently, the years from 1967 to 2005 mark the third generation 14,000 day time period of unbelief wilderness wanderings experienced by God's modern day people! But the exciting part is that **NOW IS THE TIME** to enter into the "Promised Land" for those who will only believe like Joshua and Caleb!

It is now time for the Bride of Christ to enter into the promises of God. Now is also the time to trump the message that the Bride of Christ does exist in the earth and that God is now bringing His Bride together according to His timing, at His command and with His direction. This will not be another denomination or organization, but will begin to come forth in each city and nation as the Lord directs and connects those who are a part of His Bride Body through divine relationship.

NEW BEGINNINGS is part of the message of the Feast of Trumpets, and a definite part of what the Lord was saying at this Convocation. The Lord is trumpeting the return of His Son Jesus Christ to begin ruling the earth! However, Jesus is first returning through and to His Bride. Ready or not, **HERE COMES THE BRIDE!**

In His own hometown on a certain day, Jesus stood up in the local synagogue and read from Isaiah 61:1-2 which says, "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.*" Then He closed the book and said, "*today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.*" The religious people were so angry at Jesus for proclaiming this Scripture as applicable to Himself, that they tried to "*throw him down over the cliff.*" (Luke 4:18-30)

Likewise today, through the vessel of His Bride Body, the Lord is opening up that same chapter of Isaiah 61, where He left off two thousand years ago in the middle of verse two, and He is finishing it! This unread passage distinguishes the fact that He is now coming for Judgment. It explains that He is now fulfilling "*the day of vengeance of our God.*" It says that His servants and priests and kings will now be honored and "*eat the riches of the Gentiles*" instead of being shamed and having to hide from the unrighteous authorities in the earth. No doubt this truth will cause the religious people of our day to want to "throw us down over the cliff" as they did to Jesus. However, they were not successful then and they will not be successful now. May the Bride of Christ come forth and fulfill her destiny in our generation!

HERE COMES THE BRIDE!

Conclusion

A Time Capsule

This book has shown a “big picture” apostolic vision to help us understand the times in which we live. I don’t expect this father & son vision of Church order to happen overnight or even in the next few years. It will take time, but we must start heading towards this new type of Church order. Jesus was only able to really father (disciple) 12 men during a three and a half year period, and we must do likewise. The institutional church was never God’s original intention and it will not be able to hold the coming harvest of souls into the Kingdom in our generation. We **MUST** start raising spiritual sons to maturity through the power of the Cross. We must start laying down our lives for each other instead of using and abusing each other for the sake of building our own kingdoms. Only a genuine ongoing Pentecost will keep us in this place of humility.

I have heard that other nations like China and Africa are already experiencing a measure of a Pentecost outpouring. It has certainly yet to hit America, but after the Lord cleanses my nation, we will be ready for a Pentecost that will endure and not die out. This modern day Pentecost will reveal mankind’s hearts and motives of both the good and the evil. It will bring the kingdoms of this world to their knees either in adoration of our King or in anguish because of the judgments that are coming upon the world systems. These judgments will serve to bring a cleansing to the Bride of Christ as well as to the kingdoms of this world. All of God’s judgments are good and righteous and for the purpose of helping mankind in the long run. Now at the end of the age, everything that has been planted is about to be harvested including both the good and the evil. One thing is for sure, God will protect His Bride Body people like any good husband protects his wife.

Every purpose of God has a proper season, and the revelation contained in this book is like a “time capsule” being planted in due season. Most of this book has been written over the past seven years from October

1998 through October 2005. These seven years have been the first seven-year time period since the Jubilee birth of the modern day nation of Israel from 1948 to 1998 (50 years) according to Leviticus chapter 25. These past seven years have been a crucial transition period for those in the Bride Body of Christ. The chapters in this book have been continually updated and refined during the last seven years. But NOW is the time to start LIVING out the revelation that many of us have been given during this birthing period of the Lord's return.

“Understanding the times and seasons” is the place where this book will contribute towards the upcoming modern day Pentecost. *“The children of Issachar were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do”* (1 Chron. 12:32). Therefore, I am lifting up my voice like a trumpet and declaring what the Lord has shown me. In the Lord's timing, the revelation contained in this “time capsule” will come up out of the ground like an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile in a silo and be delivered around the world to help reap the coming harvest of souls. Other large-scale vision “missiles” of truth will also be launched in the Lord's timing from other apostles in the Bride of Christ.

It is often hard to share a big scale vision with people, because most can't receive it until they first see it in action. This is understandable and I don't blame them, but the vision written in this book is as real to me as if it has already happened. And it will happen because it is from the Lord and not from my own hot ideas. It will come to pass because the Lord is faithful to fulfill His Word with or without me personally. We can either be a part of what He is doing or fight against it, but it will be fulfilled either way.

God is love and it is great to have times of basking in the presence of the Lord's love. But who is willing to share in His sufferings? Remember, the Scripture verse on the first page of this book from Hebrews 2:10 says that “sufferings” are what bring about mature sons. Who is willing to intercede and fight and war against those things that break the Father's heart? Those things that kill, steal and destroy His people? One thing is for sure; we will only be able to embrace our Cross to the degree that we know and embrace His love. We will have all of eternity to take in and learn about the Lord's love. Yet now at the

Sons To Glory

end of the age, the Lord is looking for a few good warriors who will stand in the gap and share in His sufferings so that many mature sons can come to glory and defeat the enemy of our souls.

“For in bringing many sons to glory, it was only fitting that God, the Creator and Preserver of everything, should bring the Author of their salvation to this goal through sufferings.” (Hebrews 2:10)

Jesus is the Author of our salvation, and God’s goal of bringing many sons to glory will be accomplished through Christ’s sufferings. Will we share in those sufferings like Peter and Paul?
(1 Pet. 4:12-14, 2 Cor. 1:4-7)

Sharing in the Lord’s sufferings is not a sadistic wish for pain and heartache, but it is a willingness to go the distance regardless of the cost it will require from us. Maturity as a Son who glorifies God is an individual walk. There are no roadways or paths to follow to spiritual maturity. You must blaze your own trail while walking hand in hand with our Father God. Yes, you can glean certain principles from other peoples’ experiences along your walk, but what is a “cross” to one person, may be “easy street” to another person. Obedience to the Lord is what counts whether it is easy or challenging. On the surface nobody may ever know whether you are being obedient or disobedient, because ultimately it is between you and the Lord. Do not put your trust in man, but rather be a seeker of the Creator and Preserver of everything.

To know and walk with Jesus has been the greatest adventure I have ever experienced! Even daily routine tasks are exciting when the king of the universe is by your side. So, in conclusion I would like to quote one of my favorite Bible verses and pray this simple prayer: **Lord let it rain. Let it rain!** -- *“So let us press on to know the Lord. His coming forth is as certain as the dawn, and He will come to us like the rain. Like the spring and fall rains watering the earth.” (Hosea 6:3)*

Paul Jablonowski
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Endnotes

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²⁹ For further information on the "Israel Now" event please refer to an article from the Temple B'nai Sholom local Jewish synagogue: www.sonstoglory.com/israel.htm

³⁰ To read more about the annual Christ Our Passover events in Huntsville AL from the years 2002-2005 visit: www.sonstoglory.com/Passover.htm

³¹ This event was held at Calvary Assembly in Decatur. For more details on this prayer event and some of Alabama's natural and spiritual history visit: www.sonstoglory.com/RoyMoore.htm

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- 1) On October 2nd 2005 tens of thousands of Christians from around the world participated in the first annual “Day to Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem” which is to be held every year the first Sunday in October. www.sonstoglory.com/pray.htm
- 2) On October 3rd 2005 a National Pro Life Memorial Day was founded by the American Life League to be celebrated annually starting in this year 2005: www.prolifememorialday.com

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