

The Journey of Israel

*A Study of the Spiritual Journey
of Believers from Salvation to
Maturity and Glory in Christ*

Dr. Brian J. Bailey

“The Journey of Israel”

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Dedicated

*To our Beloved Lord Jesus Christ,
who as the pillar of fire by night and the cloud by day,
leads His people out of Egypt and
into the Promised Land.*

*And to my dear wife, Audrey,
who was such a faithful pilgrim partner
to me along our own particular
spiritual journey to Zion.*

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PREFACE

Vision, direction, guidance, and good leadership have always been necessary for a healthy church. This is especially true today as the dispensation of the Church Age draws to a close. In *The Journey of Israel*, the author offers all the above as he opens up in a new way God's plan for the Church in these last days.

The journey of the children of Israel was a literal, historical event. The descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob left the land of Egypt in which they had been held captive for 430 years. God liberated them through the prophet Moses, who then guided them under the Lord's protection from Egypt to the plains of Moab—for a period of time lasting over 40 years.

After the death of Moses, they were given a new leader—Joshua, who took them over the River Jordan and into the Promised Land. However, they did not conquer the whole land and come into rest until many years later when God raised up King David. David subjugated all the enemies in the land, and brought the children of Israel to their final resting place—Zion, the holy hill of the Lord.

This journey undertaken thousands of years ago is a type of our spiritual journey as believers from earth to heaven, and from newborn babes in Christ to mature fathers and mothers in the faith. Unlocking the secrets of the children of Israel's journey from Egypt to Zion, the author shows the reader a

road map for his own life. It shows us where we have come from, where we are now, and where we are going.

In *The Journey of Israel*, three main themes will be considered: (1) A step by step account of the journey of the children of Israel; (2) the preparation that goes into the life of a leader whom God uses to lead His people on in their journey from the life of Moses; (3) and lastly, the seven feasts of the Lord, which are woven into the journey, and their relevance for the Church of Jesus Christ today.

This book is presented with the prayer that the same Lord who brought the children of Israel from the land of Egypt to Zion, will likewise bring you, dear reader, from spiritual Egypt to Zion—the mountain of His abiding presence.

Dr. Brian J. Bailey

INTRODUCTION

The journey of the children of Israel (which took the Israelites from Egypt to their eventual destination, Mount Zion) was in the words of the Apostle Paul, “*written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the [age] are come*” (1 Cor. 10:1-11).

We may confidently state that this historical journey is an *allegory* depicting the spiritual journey of a soul from salvation to maturity, until he comes “*unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ*” (Eph. 4:13).

In order for a person to arrive at spiritual Mount Zion, he must first pass through many other experiences. After he leaves Egypt (salvation experience), he must then pass through the Red Sea (water baptism). Then he must move on to Mount Sinai, which typifies the baptism of the Holy Spirit. After that he must endure the great and terrible wilderness experience, cross the River Jordan (experience circumcision of heart) and enter the Promised Land. From there, as he conquers the enemies within and without, he will finally enter into the true rest of God, which is equated in the Word of God with ascending spiritual Mount Zion. God says of Zion in Psalm 132:14, “*This is my rest forever: here will I dwell.*”

It is eternally rewarding for us to contemplate the journey of the children of Israel from both a historical and an eternal perspective. Certainly the journey had been conceived (and not simply foreknown) in the mind and heart of God before the foundation of the world. Hebrews 4:3 clearly states that “*the works were finished before the foundation of the world.*”

Thus, we should briefly consider God's plan for the ages from Adam to Abraham in order to grasp the background of the journey of the children of Israel. Abraham is the father, not only of the children of Israel, but also of all those who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

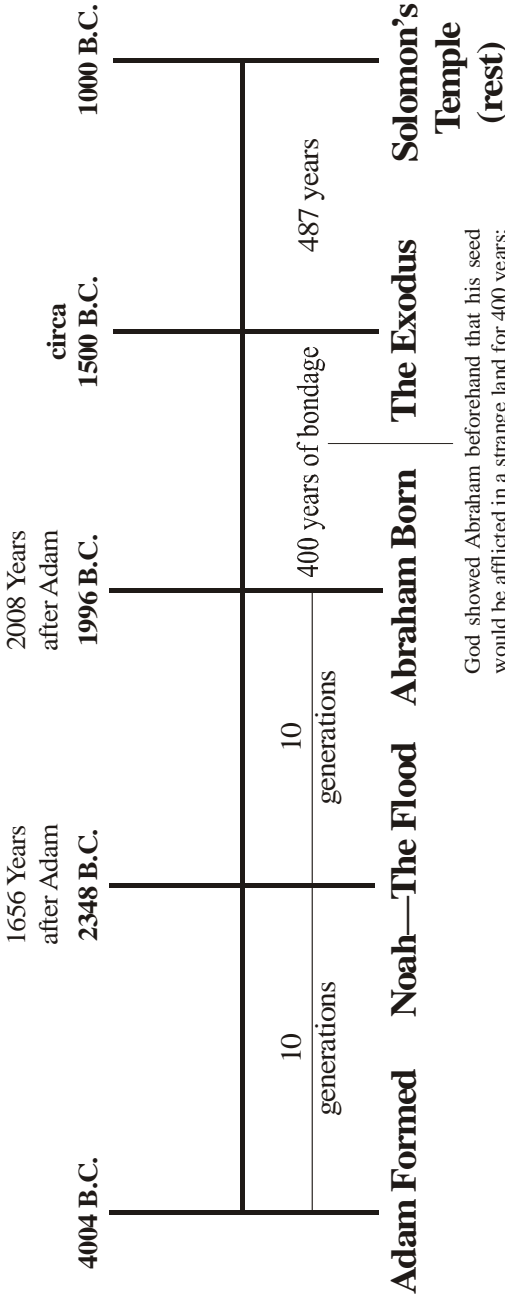
The First Ten Generations

The first dispensation of ten generations, covering the period of time from Adam to Noah and the Flood, lasted approximately 1,656 years. However, only nine chapters of Genesis are devoted to this period. It was a time of longevity of life. During this time in man's history, there was a tremendous prophetic flow, and nearly all future truths were revealed.

This time period contained the creation story, the fall of man, the promise of salvation, the first murder, the introduction of polygamy, and the division of mankind into two lines—the sons of God and the sons of man (the good and the evil). Enoch, a man who walked closely with God, prophesied of the Second Coming of Christ and its ensuing judgments (Jude 1:14-15). The first rapture took place when Enoch was caught up to heaven.

Then came the crossing of the godly and ungodly lines through intermarriages, which produced a wicked offspring and oppressions that in turn brought the first worldwide judgment in the form of a flood. The flood was a solemn note of warning for the redeemed who did not live in the light, yet God also provided the ark to preserve the righteous (1 Pet. 3:19-20).

Adam to Solomon's Temple



God showed Abraham beforehand that his seed would be afflicted in a strange land for 400 years; but afterwards God would judge that nation and bring them out with great spoil (Gen. 15:13-16).

The Next Ten Generations

The second dispensation, from *Noah to Abraham*, again ten generations in duration, comprised about 300 years. This period was marked by the divisions of the nations into three branches. From Noah came *Shem*, the promised seed, *Ham*, the cursed seed, and *Japheth*, who was given a promise that he would dwell under the protection of Shem. From these three men came forth all of the races of the world.

Even after God had destroyed all the previous inhabitants of the earth for their rebellion, preserving only Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives, the new generation, descendants of the godly Noah, quickly degenerated again. Ham produced a wicked seed; his grandson Nimrod was the founder of Babel (Gen. 10:6-10). Evil came to its head in this city; it became the source of all false religions. The inhabitants of Babel rose up against the Lord and built a tower to magnify and glorify mankind. As a result of this outright rebellion against the Lord, God's judgment once again came upon the earth. God divided the nations at this time and confused their languages.

From this state of chaos, mixture, and wickedness, God called Abraham of Ur of the Chaldees. The Lord spoke to Abraham and told him to leave his hometown and go to a land that He would show him—the land of Canaan, which would later become his inheritance and the inheritance of his seed.

The Covenant of Abraham

God made a covenant with Abraham (Gen. 15), and promised him that his seed (through his son Isaac) would inherit the land of Canaan from the river of Egypt unto the great river Euphrates, the land inhabited by the ten nations of Cush. The land of Canaan refers to what we know today as Palestine. Palestine is God's land, and He has given it to Israel, not to the Palestinians (or as they are known scripturally, the Philistines).

In order to make a covenant, there are usually conditions to be met by each party concerned. It was customary in those days to seal covenants by dividing an animal and then walking between the divided parts of the animal. However, this covenant was sealed in a most unusual manner. Instead of the two participants (God and Abraham) walking through the divided animals, someone else walked through it.

We read in Genesis 15:12, *“And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.”* In my own experience of this phenomenon, I had the feeling of utter helplessness, a complete and desperate inability to accomplish anything. This is exactly what God desires us to experience before He makes a very significant promise to us or before we enter a new stage of our Christian walk.

Such was the case with Abraham, who was standing upon the threshold of a new experience that would impact countless

lives. God was making a promise to him that was going to affect not only the future of millions of his own seed, but the whole of mankind. In actuality, the promise of Canaan land was in no way dependent upon Abraham or his seed, because it was the Father and the Son who agreed together to give them the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession.

Abraham was in this deep sleep when a horror of great darkness fell upon him. While he was in this deep sleep, two other parties passed between the divided parts. *“And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates”* (Gen. 15:17-18).

The Smoking Furnace is a symbol of God the Father, of whom it is said, *“Our God is a consuming fire”* (Heb. 12:29). The Burning Lamp is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, who declared, *“I am the Light of the World”* (Jn. 8:12; 9:5). Abraham never passed between the divided animals. Thus the covenant is immutable and cannot be broken, for it was made between the Father and the Son.

Many years before Abraham had a son, God foretold the children of Israel’s sojourn in Egypt by saying they would be strangers in a land that was not promised to them, and be subjected to slavery and bondage while they were there (Gen. 15:13). However, this sojourn in Egypt was not God’s

ultimate plan for them. They would only be there about 400 years, for God promised that they would come out of Egypt.

The Lord also spoke of the ten plagues that Moses would execute upon the Egyptians, as judgment upon the nation that kept them in bondage. The Lord then spoke of the future journey out of Egypt that the children of Abraham's grandson, Jacob (Israel) would take (Gen. 15:14). Thus, we see that God orchestrated Israel's journey from Egypt to Zion before the foundation of the world (Heb. 4:3). In fact, He engineered the whole destiny of Israel.

From Abraham to Moses

After the death of Abraham, his son Isaac dwelt in the land of Canaan with his own son Jacob. Jacob, whose name was later changed to "Israel," had twelve sons, from whom came the twelve tribes of Israel. Jacob's favourite son, Joseph, was sold into slavery by his brothers, and later was imprisoned in Egypt. From the despair of the Egyptian prison cell, God triumphantly raised up Joseph to be the Prime Minister of Egypt, second only to Pharaoh.

In order to accomplish His word to Abraham, the Lord sent Joseph to Egypt to prepare a place for his brethren and to bring deliverance (Gen. 45:5-8). After establishing Joseph in Egypt, God sent a famine to prompt the sons of Jacob to come down to Egypt, where they were reunited with Joseph. In God's perfect timing, Jacob and his household, numbering 70 people, moved to Egypt.

There is a law of Biblical interpretation called *the law of first mention*. The first mention of something in the Bible very often contains the key to its spiritual interpretation. In Genesis 46:27, there were 70 people in Jacob's company. Therefore, the number "seventy" in Scripture represents *eldership*, for there were 70 elders of the children of Israel (Num. 11:16, 24-25). It is worthy of note that there were both men and women in Jacob's company of 70. This is so important, because it shows that Scripture clearly validates female ministers and leaders.

Continuing in our overview of God's dealings from the time of Abraham until the time of Moses, we see that God had prepared the way for Jacob to go to Egypt. Psalm 105:17-24 says, "*He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant: Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron: Until the time that his word came: the word of the LORD tried him. The king sent and loosed him; even the ruler of the people, and let him go free. He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance: To bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom. Israel also came into Egypt; and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham. And he increased his people greatly; and made them stronger than their enemies.*"

There is a definite progression in God's plan. After God spoke to Abraham that He would send His seed to Egypt, Joseph was taken to Egypt as a slave. God then elevated Joseph to be the highest ruler of Egypt under Pharaoh. This enabled Jacob and his sons to move to Egypt, where Joseph cared for them.

The children of Israel multiplied and flourished in Egypt, a situation which produced jealousy in the hearts of the Egyptians. Later, another Pharaoh (who did not know Joseph) arose and made the Israelites slaves. God turned the hearts of the Egyptians “*to hate his people, to deal subtly with his servants*” (Ps. 105:25). Remember, God never hardens hearts that are good; He only hardens hearts that are evil.

The Life of Moses the Deliverer

God set everything in place to bring to pass His perfect plan. The Israelites were in desperate need of a redeemer. This prepared the way for Moses to come as their deliverer (Ps. 105:26). The Lord chose Moses to set His people free from Egyptian oppression and slavery.

For each phase of His plan of redemption, God endowed certain vessels with great grace and wisdom. These divinely appointed leaders appeared at specific epochs in history to accomplish God’s ordained purposes and to bring His people into the specific phase of the inheritance that has been determined for their generation. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, the prophets, and the Lord Jesus Christ all appeared in God’s appointed time on the canvas of history to fulfil God’s great plan for the ages.

In the New Testament era, God used the apostles to lay the foundation of the Church. The Apostle Paul was specifically anointed and commissioned to preach to the Gentiles. It was Paul who established the major doctrines and tenets of our

faith upon which the Church is founded. Later in church history, we had men of God like Wycliffe, Luther, and Wesley to bring the Church out of the Dark Ages and to lead it out of the abysmal decadence into which it had fallen. This book, however, concentrates mainly on the life of Moses.

In order to glean some very important truths, we must study the life of Moses in detail because he is the deliverer, the man whom God raised up to lead his generation out of Egyptian bondage. The life of Moses falls into three distinct periods:

1. *Called*—from birth until he fled Egypt (40 years)
2. *Chosen*—in the desert wilderness of Arabia (40 years)
3. *Faithful*—to the ministry entrusted to him (40 years)

The reason we have used these three headings is that Moses, as a faithful leader, is an example for us to follow. Many who read these words have been called to be leaders in various levels. Revelation 17:14 says, “*They that are with [the Lamb] are called, and chosen, and faithful.*”

God has placed a specific calling and ministry upon each and every one of us. However, it is not enough to be called of God; we must also be chosen of God. Jesus clearly stated in Matthew 22:14, “*Many are called, but few are chosen.*”

In considering the difference between being *called* and being *chosen*, it would be very beneficial to look at the life of David, whose life clearly depicted these three stages.

The call of God was given to David when he was about 17 years old. The prophet Samuel, a native of Bethlehem, came and anointed David with oil. This was the first of David's three anointings. At this anointing, he was *called* to be the king of Israel. He received his second anointing at Hebron, when he was chosen as king over Judah at the age of 30. When David received the second anointing, he was placed in his ministry. Being *chosen* by God is the act of being placed or installed by God into our ministry or calling.

The third step in our Christian life is to be *found faithful* in the ministry or position that God gives us. Moses was not only called and chosen, but he was found faithful, as we read in Hebrews 3:5, "*Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after.*" In order to show ourselves faithful, we must do exactly what God has given us to do without veering off His path for our lives.

Another important aspect of this truth is that it is progressive. There are progressive steps in the ministry. We see this clearly illustrated in the life of David. At the age of 17, David was called and anointed in Bethlehem. Then he was chosen by God and installed as the king of Judah for seven-and-a-half years (2 Sam. 5:5). However, David's original calling was to be king over all Israel, not just king of Judah. God first puts us into one level of ministry and tests us there. After David proved himself faithful as the king of Judah, he was anointed a third time and entered into the fullness of his ministry as the king over all Israel.

Often there is a long period of time between being called by God and being chosen by God, as we see in the account of David's life. When God initially places us into our calling or ministry, He usually places us in a lower level of ministry. After we have proven ourselves faithful at that level, we enter into the fullness of what He has ordained for us. Thus we see that there are levels of ministry. In your life, you may find that God perhaps will place you as an assistant pastor, then as a pastor, maybe of a smaller church. Once you have proven yourself faithful in these appointments, He will promote you to the fullness of what He has purposed for your life.

Overview of the Journey

This journey began in the land of Egypt.

The Three Main Divisions of the Journey

1. From Egypt to the Jordan River (under Moses).
2. The crossing over into Canaan (under Joshua).
3. Full possession of Canaan and Mount Zion (under David).

The Three Main Leaders of the Journey

1. Moses led Israel from Egypt to the Jordan River.
2. Joshua led Israel from the Jordan River into the Promised Land.
3. David led Israel into their full inheritance, unto Mount Zion.

Moses brought the children of Israel out of Egypt and led them to the Jordan River, to the border of their inheritance. Joshua led the children of Israel into the Promised Land, but did not bring them into full rest (Heb. 4:8). The people were slack and left many enemies in the land (Josh. 13:1; 18:2-3).

Several generations later, David captured the stronghold of Zion, which became God's resting place (Ps. 132:13-18). Israel did not complete their journey from Egypt to Zion until the seventh year of the reign of David (2 Sam. 5:1-7). After David was anointed for the third time, at the age of 37, he captured Zion and placed the Ark of the Covenant there. Jerusalem and Mount Zion were the last strongholds in Israel. Thus, David obtained the full inheritance God had for Israel.

The journey took a total of 443 years to reach the ultimate goal of Mount Zion. It was begun 480 years before the construction of the Temple of Solomon (1 Ki. 6:1), which began in the fourth year of Solomon's reign. Mount Zion was conquered in the seventh year of David's reign when he was anointed king of Israel. David reigned for a total of 40 years (2 Sam. 5:4).

To arrive at this conclusion mathematically we must look at the following: 480 years minus the first 4 years of Solomon's reign equals 476 years; 476 minus the 33 years of David's reign after he captured Mount Zion equals 443 years. Therefore, the complete journey of Israel from the Exodus until they reached Mount Zion took approximately 443 years (see chart on next page). Today, God's Spirit will enable His Church to complete this entire journey within our generation.

The Seven Feasts of Israel

These feasts were fulfilled during the journey of Israel from Egypt to Zion, either literally or in type. The Church, the Israel of God (Gal. 6:16), will also spiritually experience all seven feasts.

1. Moses

- (1) Feast of Passover (in Egypt)
- (2) Feast of Unleavened Bread (in Egypt)
- (3) Feast of Firstfruits (across the Red Sea, in type)
- (4) Feast of Pentecost (at Sinai)
- (5) Feast of Trumpets (in the plains of Moab, in type)

2. Joshua

- (6) Feast of Atonement (across the Jordan River at Gilgal, in type)

3. David

- (7) Feast of Tabernacles (in Jerusalem under Solomon after David took Zion)

The Significance of the Feasts

1. Passover—represents salvation. Israel was saved by the blood of the lamb in Egypt. In the same way, we are saved by the blood of the Lamb of God.

2. Unleavened Bread—represents feeding on the pure Word of God. Israel began eating unleavened bread as soon as they

were redeemed by the blood of the Passover lamb. We must continually feast upon the pure Word of God after we are saved by our Lord.

3. Firstfruits—represents water baptism and resurrection life. When Israel crossed the Red Sea, it severed them from the past and destroyed the evil powers trying to pull them back to Egypt. When we are water baptised, many bondages are broken in our lives.

4. Pentecost—represents the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Israel came to Mount Sinai in the third month, the month of the Feast of Pentecost. At Sinai, there were all the signs that accompany the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Israelites saw the fire of God, heard the voice of God, had provision, miracles, healing, and were conscious of God's presence.

5. Trumpets—represents a new call to move on. God was speaking to His people to move on from the wilderness, to go on into the Promised Land, and on to Zion.

6. Atonement—represents the afflicting of the soul, a deeper cleansing, and circumcision of heart. After Israel crossed the Jordan River, they were circumcised at Gilgal, and then began to deal with all of the enemies in the land, including the 31 kings.

7. Tabernacles—represents the glory and power of God. Years later, King David captured Mount Zion, the final stronghold in the land, and placed the Ark of the Covenant

on top of Mount Zion in the tent he had prepared for it. Zion was God's special dwelling place. Solomon, David's son, then took the Ark of the Covenant from Zion's summit and placed it in the Temple, and the glory of God extended to the nations of the world.

Passover – commenced the Age of the Law, from Moses to Christ.

Pentecost – commenced the Church Age, ending with Christ's Second Coming.

Tabernacles – commences the Millennial Age, when Jesus Christ comes again.

Summary of the Journey of Israel

GENESIS: The journey of Israel was conceived by God before the world began (Heb. 4:3). Not long after the flood, God made a covenant with Abraham and his seed, promising them all the land of Canaan (Gen. 15:18-21). In Canaan was Mount Zion, the place of His habitation. The Lord also made it very clear to Abraham that *before* his descendants inherited the land, they would *first* be strangers in a foreign land (Egypt) and be afflicted 400 years. Afterwards, God would judge that nation and bring Israel out with great substance (Gen. 15:13-14).

Clearly God had engineered the whole journey long before it took place. The Lord sent Joseph into Egypt. Then a famine forced Jacob and his family to relocate to Egypt. They remained in Egypt for several hundred years, growing

into a nation of about three million people. Following the life of Joseph, another Pharaoh ascended to the throne and imposed slavery upon Abraham's descendants.

EXODUS TO DEUTERONOMY: In due time Moses was born, seven generations after Abraham. The Lord instituted the Passover and offered salvation from death by the blood of a sacrificed lamb. Moses executed the judgments of God upon Pharaoh and Egypt. Then he brought the children of Israel out of their bondage and directed them toward the Promised Land. Thus, the journey began.

Their destination was not merely the Promised Land, but unto Mount Zion which was in the Promised Land. Mount Zion is the Lord's dwelling place (Ex. 15:17). The call of God is never just to a ministry or to an inheritance, but to a *Person*—the Lord Jesus Christ. From Egypt, they crossed the Red Sea. Then they came to Mount Sinai in the third month, the time of the Feast of Pentecost. However, they were not called to camp around this mountain, which was in the wilderness, but were called to a greater mountain—Mount Zion.

When the Israelites failed all ten tests in the wilderness, God pronounced at Kadesh-Barnea that the present generation would never enter into His rest. Rest was across the Jordan in the Promised Land, and ultimately at Mount Zion. Thus the children of Israel wandered aimlessly in the wilderness for another 38 years until that generation died.

JOSHUA: Joshua led the children of that judged generation across Jordan into the Land of Promise. The crossing of the Jordan River represents “being dead to sin.” Their hearts were different after they crossed the Jordan River. Israel no longer desired to return to Egypt. They experienced circumcision at Gilgal, and their flesh was dealt with. Joshua proceeded to lead them in battle against 31 kings, who represent the ruling lords of the inner life. Every area of the self-life must be dissected piece by piece by the Word of God.

JUDGES: Joshua had declared to the children of Israel, “*How long are ye slack to possess the land, which the LORD God of your fathers hath given you?*” (Josh. 18:3). We see that the Lord had spoken to Joshua, “*There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed*” (Josh. 13:1). Joshua never brought the children of Israel into full rest (Heb. 4:8). The book of Judges records how Israel settled for compromise and co-existence with their enemies after Joshua’s death. They ignored and evaded areas which should have been dealt with by the sword. Many territories were still controlled by their enemies, including Zion, which was held by the Jebusites.

1-2 SAMUEL: Several generations later, David, a man after God’s own heart, became king. At age 37, he captured the fortress of Zion and placed the Ark of the Covenant in a tent on top of Mount Zion. Zion became known as the holy mountain. The glory, power, worship, and intimacy at Zion was far greater than it had been anywhere else along

their journey. Finally, 443 years after Israel started their journey from Egypt, they reached their destination, Zion.

1-2 KINGS and 1-2 CHRONICLES: David's son, Solomon, built the temple and brought the ark of the covenant down from Zion and placed it in the temple. The glory of God was so great in the temple of Solomon that the priests could not even stand up (1 Ki. 8:1-11). Nations came to hear the wisdom of God and to see the glory of God that was manifested in this temple. Thus the goal of every believer is to finish *his* own spiritual journey from Egypt to Zion, to come to glory, and then to bring this glory to the nations.

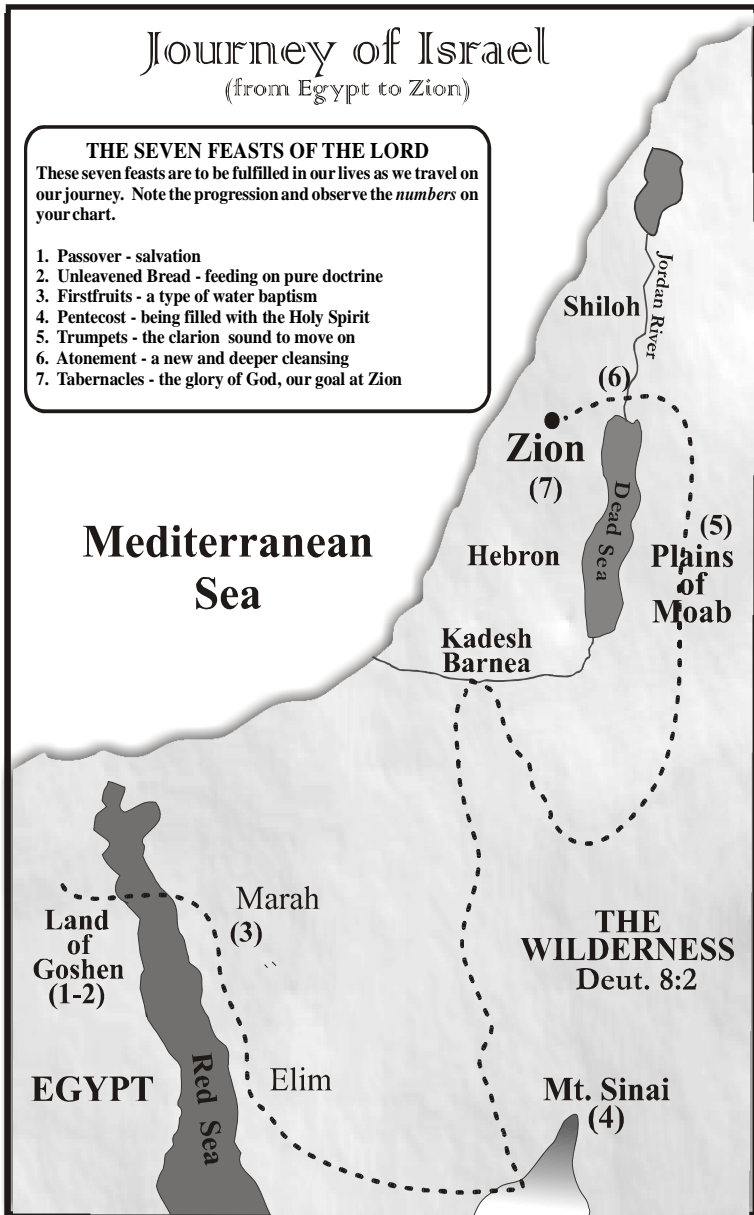
Journey of Israel

(from Egypt to Zion)

THE SEVEN FEASTS OF THE LORD

These seven feasts are to be fulfilled in our lives as we travel on our journey. Note the progression and observe the *numbers* on your chart.

1. Passover - salvation
2. Unleavened Bread - feeding on pure doctrine
3. Firstfruits - a type of water baptism
4. Pentecost - being filled with the Holy Spirit
5. Trumpets - the clarion sound to move on
6. Atonement - a new and deeper cleansing
7. Tabernacles - the glory of God, our goal at Zion



Part One
The Life of Moses
From Egypt to the
Jordan River

CHAPTER 1

His Early Life

We will be looking at the early life of the prophet Moses. This covers the first 40 years of his life. We are introduced to Moses' parents in Exodus 2:1-2: "*And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi. And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months.*" Thus we see Moses' father, Amram, was from the tribe of Levi. Exodus 6:20 gives us the names of Moses' parents, "*And Amram took him Jochebed his father's sister to wife; and she bare him Aaron and Moses: and the years of the life of Amram were an hundred and thirty and seven years.*"

1. His Genealogy

Genealogy is very important in the sense that we are the product of our grandparents and parents. Thus, in order to truly appreciate Moses, we need to know the background and character traits of his family.

The Tribe of Levi

It is important for us to have an understanding of our personal genealogy to know what characteristics have been passed on to us from our ancestors. Moses was from the tribe of Levi, and concerning this tribe, we read God's

testimony in Malachi 2:4-7, “*And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the LORD of hosts. My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. For the priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.*” The Lord made a covenant of life and peace with Levi because he and his descendants feared the Lord. God makes covenants with those who fear Him (Ps. 25:14).

Spiritual Development

I want to consider for a moment the lives of Moses’ parents, Amram and Jochebed. Exodus 6:16-18 tells us that Amram was a descendant of Levi through Kohath. Thus, Amram was the grandson of Levi, which makes Moses the great-grandson of Levi.

We read in Exodus 6:20, “*And Amram took him Jochebed his father’s sister to wife; and she bare him Aaron and Moses: and the years of the life of Amram were an hundred and thirty and seven years.*” Amram married his Aunt Jochebed, and they had three children together: Miriam, Aaron, and Moses (Num. 26:59).

There is a passage in Malachi that we need to look at to better understand the importance God places upon marriage, “*And*

did not he make one [in marriage]? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away” (Mal. 2:15-16). The purpose is clearly revealed—*That He might seek a godly seed*. The Lord desires holy marriages that bring forth holy children. Broken homes and homes of strife produce tremendous problems in the children.

Amram and Jochebed’s children illustrate spiritual development, for there was an evident progression in the anointing and blessing upon them. Miriam and Aaron were born before Moses. Miriam was a *prophetess*; Aaron was a *prophet* and a *high priest*; Moses, born last, was the greatest one of all. He became “as God” to Pharaoh because he spoke on God’s behalf (Ex. 7:1).

The truth I want to bring out is that the spiritual state of parents at the time of the conception of the child determines the spiritual condition of the child. As parents progress and mature in their spiritual lives, their children benefit. We can see that as Amram and Jochebed progressed in their spiritual lives, their children progressed as well.

Producing Like Kind

Everything in nature and from God’s creation brings forth after its kind. Genesis 1:12 makes this very clear: “*And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his*

kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.”

An apple tree will only produce apples. Even with all the good intentions in the world, an apple tree will never produce a pear. That is an irrevocable law of creation. Also, apple trees produce different types of apples depending on the strain of apple.

Many years ago, my wife and I lived in the state of Washington, where the *Golden Delicious* apple was produced. It took scientists many years to develop and perfect the *Golden Delicious* apple that is now produced throughout the world. Fruit depends on its stock. This is not only true of the vegetable and animal kingdoms, but also of humans. We reproduce in our children what we are.

It is a well-known fact that children take on the nature of their parents. I remember well the story of a minister who complained bitterly to the Lord about the nature of his children. The Lord replied to him, “They took on your nature when you conceived them.” That brought repentance!

This principle of taking on the nature of our parents applies positively for Moses, but for others it applies in a negative sense. There is no inherited sin or bondage that we cannot overcome by the grace of God through prayer. Paul said in Romans 5:20-21, “...*But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal*

life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” Where sin abounds in our life or genealogy, grace can much more abound! Grace can reign in our lives as we walk in righteousness.

Many people have all kinds of problems because of the lives of their forefathers. These inherited sins and bondages cannot be ignored. When we counsel people, we must never forget that there is a reason people act the way they do. Often their behaviour can be traced back to their parents and their family line. The lives of the parents and grandparents not only determine the nature of the children, but also their spiritual problems or blessings.

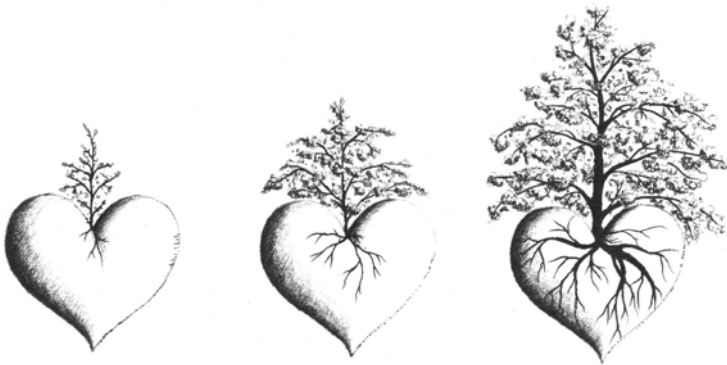
There is a mantle that is passed on from generation to generation. There is a covenant that God can make with a parent, and because of that covenant, the mantle is passed on.

Both blessings and curses can be passed on from one generation to the next. Years ago, I met a minister who had cancer. I was prompted by the Holy Spirit to ask him, “Did your parents and grandparents have this problem?” He responded, “Yes, for many generations everyone in my family has died of cancer reasonably young.” The spirit of cancer had been passed on from generation to generation. We prayed that the spirit of cancer would be bound and broken so that it would not be passed on to his children.

It is essential to realise that not only is a nature passed on from parents and grandparents, but also blessings and curses. Blessings and curses continue in a family line until they are

stopped. Knowing people's genealogy is very important when you counsel them because it can give you insight into their problems. This applies to us, too.

The Lord gave me a vision when I was speaking at a Women's Aglow meeting in New Zealand a number of years ago. The whole audience was female, except for the advisors who were male pastors. In this vision, I saw the hearts of three generations: a grandmother, a mother, and a daughter. The grandmother had a little weed in her heart, which the Lord told me represented a specific bondage in her life. She passed that weed on to her daughter, and in her daughter, it became a very strong bush. Her daughter, in turn, passed that bondage on to her own daughter. However, by this time, it was no longer a weed or a bush, but a full-grown tree in the heart of her daughter. Thus the problem that the grandmother had was passed on to her daughter and from her daughter to her granddaughter, all because neither the grandmother nor the mother allowed God to deal with it. This is illustrated in the picture below:



We must realise that unless issues are dealt with in our hearts, we pass them on to our children, and these issues become even more powerful in their lives.

Parents have an awesome responsibility to allow God to purify their hearts and deal with the areas of sin so they do not pass on anything ungodly to their children. We will reproduce ourselves in others for good or bad. Let us pray that we only pass on the blessings and nature of God to our natural and spiritual children.

New Creation in Christ

To a large extent, our genealogy determines what kind of person we are. However, I must qualify this last statement. Many people think that they do not have a chance of succeeding in life because they have ungodly parents. This is absolutely false! It is true that our parents pass on to us our nature, but when we come to Christ, we become new creatures in Him.

Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:17, *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”* We have to nurture the new creation and new nature within us, which is renewed with true knowledge. In this truth lies the hope of total victory.

By the grace of God, we can be different from our parents. Consider King Josiah for a moment. His father, Amon, and grandfather, Manasseh, were two of the most wicked kings

of Judah who ever lived. Yet Josiah made a decision in his heart that he was going to be different. He was crowned king when he was 8 years old, and he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all the days of his life (2 Chr. 34:1-2).

We find another example with Jeroboam I. Jeroboam I was the founder of the Northern Kingdom of Israel who set up golden calves and led the Israelites into pagan worship. In His infinite wisdom, the Lord graciously took the son of Jeroboam I because of his good heart toward the Lord (1 Ki. 14:13).

Sow a New Crop

Many years ago, a friend of ours was concerned about her children. She and her husband had their children long before they experienced new birth and were filled with the Spirit. Thus, by this time, their children were less than good. She said to the Lord in despair: “Dear Lord, I can see in my boys everything that is wrong in me. What have I produced?” The Lord said to her, “Begin to sow a new crop.” In other words, God was saying, “You are reaping what you have sown, but now start sowing a different seed in them.”

She hearkened to the word of the Lord and began to train her children in the right way. She began to firmly, but gently discipline them. She started planting within them the truths of God’s Word and those good seeds gradually overcame the bad seeds she had sown in their lives. As a result, they both became wonderful Christian men and graduated from

university at the top of their class. The key to the turnaround in the lives of these two young men was their mother's determination to stop sowing in them the wrong seeds and to begin sowing the right seeds.

If you have children who are rebellious or have gone astray because of things you have done, do not be discouraged. Put your hope in God. Begin to sow the right seeds in them and try to uproot the wrong seeds that you sowed in their lives. If you sow the right seed, you will reap the fruit of it. **Remember, it is never too late to start sowing good seeds.**

Spiritual Reproduction

As we have understood in the previous paragraph, we impart our spiritual nature to our children and grandchildren. The basic goal of Christianity is twofold: First, to know God and become like Him; and second, to make disciples of our children and impart to them the knowledge and character of Christ.

Jesus said in Matthew 28:19, *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”* (NIV). God's desire for us is that we make many disciples, but He wants us to impart the right things to them.

The importance of what we pass on to our spiritual children was illustrated to me many years ago in a church service. The pastor asked me to open the service because he was going to

arrive a little late. The worship service was moving along very well, and then there was a time of worship in the Spirit. As I was meditating upon the Lord, suddenly, I felt the floor quiver, and I wondered what was happening. When I opened my eyes, I saw someone jumping up and down. This man became red in the face and then prophesied so fast that no one could understand what he had said. His prophecy may have been from God, but it was not a blessing to anyone because of the manner in which he delivered it.

Shortly afterwards, the floor shook again and someone else gave a message in tongues in the same way that this man had prophesied. Then someone else gave the interpretation, using exactly the same gestures and tone of voice. After all this, I thought it was high time I should say something, but before I could say anything, the pastor arrived. He no sooner reached the pulpit when he started to prophesy like a house afire in the exact same manner as the members of his church.

I realised that this pastor had reproduced in his congregation his manner of operating in the spiritual gifts. However, it was not proper because it distracted from the message that the Lord wanted to deliver to the church. In this case, it was not a matter of correcting the church members. I had to first talk to the pastor.

The whole point of this story is that the pastor reproduced himself in his congregation. They even prophesied and spoke in other tongues like he did. It is a maxim of life that we produce like kind. Hosea 4:9 says, *“like people,*

like priest.” The congregation follows their pastor’s example. They will imitate the very way the pastor speaks and acts.

In reality, most people do not see Jesus; they see the pastor. They assume that their pastor is like Jesus. If the pastor shouts, his congregation usually shouts. If the pastor is quiet, his congregation is usually quiet.

A number of years ago, my wife and I oversaw a Bible school in Switzerland. One day my wife went to visit some friends of ours, the principal of the Bible school and his family. While my wife was visiting them, she noticed their little four-year-old boy walking back and forth with his hands behind his back as he talked. His parents asked him, “David, what are you doing?” He replied, “I am acting like Brother Bailey.” Apparently, I was in the habit of holding my hands behind my back when I preached. This was a habit of which I was totally oblivious, but in the mind of that little child, that was preaching. We must realise that we reproduce ourselves in others. Therefore, it is vital for us to be good role models. We must have good habits because we will reproduce ourselves in our spiritual children.

2. His Birth

Before considering Moses’ birth, we should first consider the background and events that led up to his birth. We read in Exodus 1:6-8, “*And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation. And the children of*

Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them. Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.”

This Pharaoh was very wicked, and he afflicted the children of Israel, as seen in Exodus 1:9-11, “*And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we: Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land. Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses.”* Thus, there was *great* affliction.

Born Under Slavery

Pharaoh’s cruelty to the children of Israel is recorded in Exodus 1:13-14, “*And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour: And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigour.”* These words clearly reveal that it was not a very nice situation—*affliction, rigour, bitter, and bondage*. This was the environment in which Moses was born.

Many people believe that a bad environment corrupts a person’s character. Some assert that if a child is raised in

the ideal, tranquil social conditions, he will be a good child. However, when we study the Word of God, we find that some of the greatest men of God were born and raised in terrible environments.

Moses was born into a nation of slaves. In Egypt, there was affliction, murmuring, bitterness, and everything that was *not* conducive to a child's upbringing. We can also think of a more famous child—the Lord Jesus Christ, who grew up in Nazareth. Nazareth had such a terrible reputation that when it was announced that the Messiah had been found, Nathaniel said, “*Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?*” (Jn. 1:46). It was a terrible place, yet that was the place God had chosen for His Son, Jesus, to be raised. God *can* and *does* preserve us in such situations.

Children dwell under the spiritual covering of their parents. Through faith and prayer, they can be preserved even in the most difficult environments. We read in Isaiah 53:2 concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, “*For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground.*” Jesus was a tender plant in a dry ground. The nation of Israel (and especially Nazareth) was in a terrible spiritual condition when He came. Yet He triumphed over His situation and fulfilled God's will for His life; and therefore, so can each one of us. **Faith can overcome every adversity.**

**Some of the
greatest men of
God were born and
raised in terrible
environments.**

Many people are called by God to raise their children on the foreign field or in one of the ghettos of this country. They might think, "What will our child become?" Remember Moses and the Lord Jesus Christ. Your children can become "a tender plant out of a dry ground."

In summation, Moses was born in a time of affliction, grief, and bondage, when the Israelites were governed by a hostile king. They were serving hard taskmasters. Society was anything but congenial. Also, Pharaoh, who was stirred up by Satan, commanded that all the Hebrew male children were to be killed (Ex. 1:15-16). This was the first of three genocides that occur in Scripture. The second time was at the birth of the Lord Jesus, when Herod gave a similar commandment (Mt. 2:16). The third time will be when Satan seeks to destroy the newly born man-child in the End Times (Rev. 12:2-4).

Hidden by Faith, Not Fear

The birth of Moses is recorded in Exodus 2:1-2, "*And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi. And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months.*"

Moses' very life was preserved by the faith of his parents. This is developed in Hebrews 11:23, "*By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.*"

Our faith can overcome every adversity that our children may experience. It is especially important for pastors to be filled with faith, because if they are, their faith will be transmitted to the parents in our churches, and our children will be protected.

The faith of Moses' parents was passed on to him. In Hebrews 11:24-29 we read that Moses' life was a life of faith, just like his parents' lives. We can only pass on to others what we have. If someone needs \$100 and you only have \$10, you cannot meet his need. You can only give what you have.

Moses' parents are numbered in Hebrews chapter 11 with the heroes of faith. If you are a parent, seek to be like Moses' parents and impart faith to your children. As parents, it is very important to have what the Lord wants in our lives because we have the ability to transmit everything, naturally and spiritually, to our children. We have the responsibility of waiting upon the Lord and seeing that our own hearts and lives are clean in His sight. The key lies in parents being spiritually mature so that they impart what is right to their children.

Rescued by Pharaoh's Daughter

The saviour of Israel, Moses, was saved and nourished by the daughter of Pharaoh, Israel's enemy (Ex. 2:5-10). The daughter of Pharaoh was nourishing the one who would become the principal adversary of the Egyptians.

Ecclesiastes 2:26 illustrates a divine principle, “*For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God...*” God ultimately uses the wicked, including Satan, to nourish, serve, and bless the righteous.

Also, Pharaoh’s daughter paid Jochebed, Moses’ mother, to take care of him: “*And Pharaoh’s daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it*” (Ex. 2:9). Because Moses’ mother acted in faith, God orchestrated circumstances so that she was paid by the Egyptian court to take care of her own son. What a beautiful turnaround! The king’s evil commandment was turned around by one of his own family. This was a classic example of the saints of God being looked after by the sinners.

3. Upbringing in Pharaoh’s Court

Moses was raised in Pharaoh’s court as the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, “*And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh’s daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water*” (Ex. 2:10). God preordained Moses to be raised in Pharaoh’s court so that he would receive the training necessary to later become the leader of the nation of Israel. He was placed in the finest secular school of that day.

Wisdom

Acts 7:22 records that during this time something was happening in the life of Moses: *“Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.”* The prime prerequisite for leadership is *wisdom*, for wisdom comprises all other learning skills. David taught Solomon the value of wisdom in Proverbs 4:7, *“Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.”*

In Daniel 1:4, those who were chosen from among the children of Israel to stand before the king of Babylon were required to have the following qualifications: *“Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king’s palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.”* Wisdom is vital for leadership positions, and for being in the presence of a king.

There are three essential areas in life: time, finances, and people. Each of these areas requires much godly wisdom. As believers and especially as leaders, we must watch those time commodities very carefully and treasure them, for there are tremendous demands upon our time. You will never see a real leader frittering his time away. Moses prayed in Psalm 90:12, *“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.”* A wise man has the ability to manage time well, making the most of it (Eph. 5:16, Col. 4:5).

In the area of finances, leaders must have financial integrity and good judgment. Moreover, they must be able to appreciate and care for the people God has given them. Sometimes God grants all three essentialities to a person, but the unwise will squander them all. He will fritter away his time, finances, and drive people away by his attitude.

A Right Attitude Toward Secular Training

Another important fact concerning the rearing of Moses was his attitude toward his secular training. We must have a right attitude toward our secular training and occupation, especially in a time of revival.

My wife and I had the privilege of being involved in a mighty revival in New Zealand a number of years ago and the Lord taught us many things from that experience. In revival, God pours out His Spirit and multitudes get saved and start attending church. However, some people have a wrong attitude about secular employment.

One of the pitfalls of revival is that people, especially those in their late teens and early twenties, who have been touched by God, assume that the only thing that counts in life is preaching or witnessing for God. Their mentality is that they will give up their training, their secular jobs, and just live by faith. What they do not realise, though, is that faith itself comes from God alone. God does not give faith for that which is *not* His will; He only gives us faith to accomplish His will. He has preordained our secular employment for a purpose.

I am not saying that God does not call some people to quit their secular employment to serve Him. As soon as Jesus called Peter, Andrew, James and John, they immediately left their fishing nets and followed the Lord (Mt. 4:18-22). Levi quit his job as a tax collector the moment Jesus called him to the ministry (Mk. 2:14). We must walk in the will of God and stay in our secular employment until God tells us to enter the ministry full-time.

Isaiah 28:23-26 speaks of the fact that God gives skills in the secular realm as well as in the spiritual realm, and they are both very important. God was speaking to the farmer: *“Give ye ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech. Doth the plowman plow all day to sow? doth he open and break the clods of his ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the rie in their place? For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him.”*

In verse 27 and 28 of this chapter, we see further aspects of farming but it is Isaiah 28:29 which states my point, *“This also cometh forth from the LORD of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.”*

It is God who gives the farmer the necessary and appropriate wisdom to raise his crops, and teaches him how to sow seed and harvest, and which instruments to use. Wisdom for farming does not sound very spiritual, but it is very necessary for life.

Think for a moment of all the people in Scripture who were renowned for wisdom. Moses, Solomon, and Daniel are just a few examples. Moses' training was in a secular court in Egypt. Daniel's training was in a secular court as well, in Babylon. Solomon did not have that advantage, and he failed in life. Thus, I am stressing the importance of secular training, and we are to pray through with our young people until they secure the occupations God has appointed for them. We should pray for everything in life, particularly for our employment.

How can we determine what occupation God has ordained for a person? Often the key lies in one's *desire*. It is God who places the desire for a certain occupation in a person's heart, and He will also give the person the *skills* and the *temperament* to perform it. These three things are a very good rule of thumb for determining which occupation God has ordained for a person.

Many years ago, there was a young lady in Switzerland who told my wife and me that she wanted to be a pastor. We replied, "Why don't you pray to see if God has called you to that ministry?" In prayer, God gave her an interesting Scripture. It was Hebrews 5:4, which says, "*No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.*" God spoke very clearly to her that He had not called her to be a pastor, and that she could not have that honour because God had not given it to her. As she was somewhat downcast, we tried to encourage her by saying, "Let's pray and ask God what He has called you to do."

After we prayed, she said, “I really feel God wants me to be a medical doctor.” We prayed and felt the witness that it was true.

At that time, there were so many people who wanted to be medical doctors in Switzerland that the government created a very difficult Greek examination in order to select the best students. This young lady was concerned because she did not know Greek. We said to her, “If God has called you to be a medical doctor and the Swiss government has put this mountain in your way, God is able to take you over this mountain.” God did just that! He gave her the ability to learn Greek and she scored a very high grade in her examination.

Today, she is a physician and is also married to a man of that profession. She has a lovely family and is a blessing to her church. In addition to this, she is very happy and blessed by God because she is in God’s ordained vocation for her life.

It is very important to understand that in revival the attitude of so many is to minimise the importance of their secular occupation. However, in the Word of God, it is clear that our secular life is very important because God uses it to develop characteristics and abilities within us that will be used eternally.

Not everyone will preach in heaven. There are many other skills that are used in heaven. Heaven is a huge kingdom! One of the things that amazes anyone who sees heaven is its

similitude to earth. There are buildings, houses, books, rivers, lakes, and much more. A whole kingdom must be run. In His wisdom, God governs this earth and He equips people to run it. Therefore, every believer has an important role.

May we have the right attitude toward secular occupation so that we receive all of the blessings God has ordained for our lives. Remember, your God-ordained occupation will equip you for your eternal ministry.

4. Refusal of Egyptian Sonship

We will now look at the next 40 years of Moses' life from his refusal of Egyptian sonship to his stay in the Arabian Desert. We read in Hebrews 11:24-26, *“By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.”*

Moses was an amazing man! He refused the honours and privileges of Egypt, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God. While he was growing up in Pharaoh's court, surrounded by people who served pagan gods, the Lord revealed his call to him. From a very early age, Moses nurtured that call in his heart, and made a commitment to the will and call of God for his life. This is what is so important—*the call* and *the commitment*.

This is one of the difficulties we experience in leadership. There are so very few people who make an all-out commitment to the call of God on their lives. They will acknowledge that God has called them, and they are willing to follow the call of God but they are not willing to endure all the reproaches, difficulties, and hardships the call of God brings upon their lives. Our commitment to the Lord's call for our lives is very important.

Not only had Moses recognised and acknowledged the call of God, but he had also committed to God's will such that he refused the pleasures of Egypt and chose to suffer affliction with the children of Israel. The result of that decision can be seen in the narrative of Scripture—he became one of the greatest men who ever lived.

5. Defense of His People

We read in Acts 7:23-25 concerning Moses' defense of his people: *“And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not”* (see Exodus 2:11-12).

Not only did Moses know the call of God upon his life long before he was 40 years old, but others must also have had knowledge of Moses' call. Acts 7:25 says that Moses

“supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand, would deliver them.” This phrase leads us to believe that there must have been a general knowledge of the call of Moses among the children of Israel. When God has called a person, He confirms it to other people as well. For example, it must have been known by many throughout all Israel that David was anointed by Samuel to be king.

6. Flight from Egypt by Faith, Not Fear

I would like to consider now an interesting situation recorded two different ways in Scripture. We read in Exodus 2:14b-15, *“And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known. Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian.”* Depending on how you read this, it would seem as if Moses fled just to escape from Pharaoh.

However, observe the way God recorded it in another portion of Scripture in Hebrews 11:27, *“By faith [Moses] forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.”* God’s record of Moses’ flight from Egypt is quite different from Moses’ record of the same incident.

Man often looks at an action and hastily concludes, “Oh, that’s a failure.” Many have assumed that Moses fled to get away from the king, but God looked into the heart of Moses and records that he fled from Egypt *“by faith.”* God always

sees the real reason behind a person's actions. He looks at our response to what He speaks to us. In heaven, we will be shown the record of our lives, and I am sure it will be quite different from what people think of us upon earth.

People may think, "Oh, he failed in this situation or that situation." God often records it quite differently.

Remember, God often records situations quite differently than man does.

One of the privileges and responsibilities of leadership is to care for others. Leaders and pastors who counsel others must see them through God's eyes and understand their motives. Pastors should ask the Lord: "Lord, why did they do that? Please allow me to see this person as You do." When you understand why a person does the things he does, then you can accurately address his actions, as well as the *source* of the actions. If a tree produces bad fruit, it is not enough to deal with the bad fruit. You must deal with the source of the bad fruit.

CHAPTER 2

Sojourn in the Arabian Desert

1. Help for Jethro's Daughters

After he slew the Egyptian, Moses thought that the Israelites would embrace him as their leader, but instead they rejected him. Moses must have been very despondent and discouraged after he was rejected by his own people and had to flee Egypt for fear of his life. He had inwardly presumed that he would be elevated into the position and ministry that God had for him. Instead of finding success, Moses found everything had fallen apart. Often when we think it is time for elevation, we may find ourselves in a wilderness situation.

However, in his moment of despondency where all of his aspirations had been crushed, he still stood for righteousness in this desert situation. In Exodus 2:15-17 we read, *“Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian: and he sat down by a well. Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters: and they came and drew water, and filled the troughs to water their father’s flock. And the shepherds came and drove them away: but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock.”*

Moses defended Jethro's seven daughters, who were complete strangers to him, and watered their flocks. This became the very key that opened the door into the house of Jethro, and this was how he met his wife.

2. Marriage to Zipporah

Jethro (or Reuel) gave Moses his daughter, Zipporah, and welcomed him into his family (Ex. 2:18-22). Moses spent the next 40 years shepherding Jethro's flocks (Ex. 3:1). This act of righteousness opened the door of hope for him and enabled him to be cared for, for the next 40 years of his life. It released God's provision for his life. Our actions and attitudes, even in the valley of despair, are very important.

We also need to consider the fact that God sends people to look after us when we go through trials. He has holy comforters who succour us in these wilderness experiences. We have the example of the prophet Elijah who was helped by a widow whom God appointed (1 Ki. 17:9). At the same time, we have to be very much in tune with God, because He may cause people who are in wilderness experiences to come across our path so that we may help and care for them in these difficult times.

3. Purpose of the Wilderness

Why did God cause a man like Moses to spend 40 years of his life in the backside of the desert? Moses was a brilliant

man! Why did God give Moses this seemingly insignificant task for 40 long years? There are a few definite reasons:

1. God wanted to teach Moses how to be a gentle shepherd. We read in Exodus 3:1, “*Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.*” Moses spent 40 years in the wilderness as a shepherd of Jethro’s flocks. This time of shepherding was to help Moses understand sheep. We know that God likens His people to sheep, as we read in Isaiah 53:6, “*All we like sheep have gone astray.*”

David also learned to lead people by first caring for a flock: “*He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds: From following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance. So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands*” (Ps. 78:70-72).

2. God wanted Moses to know what it was like to be a stranger. Moses had two sons in the wilderness. The name of his firstborn son was Gershom, which means “stranger.” We read in Exodus 2:22, “*And she bare him a son, and he called his name Gershom: for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land.*”

Moses knew what it was like to be a stranger. It involves experiencing a different culture, a different language, different

customs and food, loneliness, and a need for friendship and understanding. It can be very frightening indeed. Moses had to know the heart of a stranger in order to take the children of Israel out of Egypt into another strange land.

The Lord gave very specific instructions to the Israelites regarding the treatment of strangers (Ex. 22:21, Lev. 19:10; 23:22, Deut. 10:18-19; 24:20-21; 26:12-13). Not only could they not oppress strangers, but they were also commanded to love them as themselves: *“And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God”* (Lev. 19:33-34).

We need to understand what it is like to live in a foreign country; for this is the only way we can help strangers. I was a stranger in a strange land when I first started off in the ministry in France. Even though I had studied French for many years, I had great difficulty in understanding what the little children were talking about. The academic French I had learned in England was quite different from the French they were speaking. It was a very difficult experience. You feel so alone—so very, very alone.

Even when you know a foreign language, it is often hard to completely grasp it because every language has its own spirit and unique thought pattern. We had this problem in one of the islands of the South Pacific. A former student of ours from France pastored a church

in New Caledonia, and we had a Canadian missionary going to the island.

In French, the pastor said to the Canadian missionary, “Je vais en conge” which meant “I am going on vacation.” The Canadian missionary did not understand the French word “conge,” so he looked it up in a French dictionary. (There is nothing more frustrating than having a dictionary of a foreign language because you do not just get one definition, but a whole host of definitions, and you have to choose one that you think might apply.) He picked the wrong word (“retirement”) and concluded the pastor had said that he was retiring.

So while the pastor was on vacation, this missionary asked a friend of his to take the place of this pastor, and you can imagine how this misunderstanding complicated everything! We arrived just after the pastor had returned from vacation. This former student said to us, “You understand us. You would have known exactly what I meant.” Thus, it is important to understand the spirit of people in order to truly comprehend their language.

Ministering or being a missionary in a foreign nation is very difficult. Even if you speak the same language, they simply do not have the same way of doing things. We, at Zion Fellowship International, have to care for our many missionaries all around the world, and we find that their loneliness is very great at times. They have no friends. Real rapport is often difficult between a missionary and a native because they have different ways of thinking, and different standards. Your heart just goes out to them. Loneliness is

something every leader, pastor, and missionary must overcome by the grace of God.

Moses had to learn how to overcome loneliness; hence we see the reason he named his firstborn Gershom. God placed this in His Word so that we could glean these truths and see the preparation that is necessary.

3. God wanted Moses to become acquainted with the wilderness. It was vital for Moses to be familiar with the land through which he would later lead God's redeemed people en route to the Promised Land.

Spiritually, it is necessary that we ourselves have been led by God in that path so that we are well acquainted with it. Otherwise, we will not know how to lead, guide, and bring people safely through; we will not know the obstacles along the way; and we will not know how to react when problems arise.

The wilderness is a formation period. Therefore, the experiences of a leader during his formation period are directly calculated by God in order to give him the ability to understand the natural reactions of the people he will be leading later on. This understanding is a prerequisite for a good leader. The reactions of people when they are going through trials are usually less godly than those of a highly sanctified saint. They are not able to simply say "praise the Lord" during these times. We need to be able to provide them with comfort and understanding, and to point them in

a new direction. When we, as leaders, have experienced a similar trial, we will not criticise or misjudge our congregation and say they have left the grace of God.

4. God wanted to develop humility in Moses' life.

Humility involves depending wholly upon God in every situation. In reality, it is the Lord who must guide His people through the leader. The leader must not move in his own wisdom.

God sent Moses into the wilderness for 40 years to develop humility in his life. This is one of the main purposes of the wilderness for every believer, as described in Deuteronomy 8:16, *“Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end.”*

4. Being Chosen by God

As we mentioned earlier in chapter one, the three principal steps in the Christian life are (Rev. 17:14):

1. Being called by God
2. Being chosen by God
3. Being found faithful by God

In Chapter 1, we considered the call of God upon Moses' life. The next step after being called is to be chosen of God. Where are we chosen by God? We are chosen in the “furnace

of affliction,” as seen in Isaiah 48:10: “*Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.*”

Our attitudes in the wilderness and during times of affliction determine whether or not we are chosen by God. Consider David who passed through his own terrible wilderness period when he was being chased by Saul (1 Sam. 22). He experienced the lowest depths of despair at Ziklag. Yet, even in this time he turned his heart to God and encouraged himself in Him.

After David responded correctly, God mercifully allowed him to retrieve everything he had lost (1 Sam. 30). Then he was brought to the place of his second anointing where he *was chosen of God* and ordained as king of Judah. All our preparation (in the “wilderness” and “furnace of affliction,” i.e. our difficult circumstances which are allowed and orchestrated by God) is of no avail unless we, too, experience the next step in life as David and Moses and did, *being chosen* and *commissioned* by God. Also, may we remember that we are chosen in “*the furnace of affliction.*”

CHAPTER 3

Return to Egypt

1. Burning Bush

In the third chapter of Exodus, we see that the Lord met with Moses at the burning bush. Exodus 3:1-2 states, “*Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.*” Moses had a fresh meeting with the Lord and was commissioned by Him to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt.

After every wilderness experience, we need to meet with the Lord afresh and receive a fresh charge or commission from Him. The commissioning takes place after a wilderness experience or a time of affliction.

The first step in our Christian life is to be called, but then we must be commissioned by God. The Lord may have called us to a specific ministry, but we have to wait until God commissions and anoints us to begin the ministry. No one can go unless they are sent (Isa. 6:8). This is clearly brought out in Romans 10:15: “*And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of*

them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!”

The Fire of God

Why did we see the burning bush? The fact that it was not consumed by the fire is a great phenomenon. Fire is characteristic of several things in God’s Word:

1. The Old Testament sacrifices were burned and consumed by fire (Lev. 2:3; 5:12).
2. The Spirit of burning purifies our carnal nature (Isa. 4:4).
3. The New Testament baptism of the Holy Spirit includes being baptised in the fire of the Lord. The Lord Jesus will also burn up the dross or chaff with unquenchable fire (Acts 2:4, Mt. 3:12).
4. Fire is a type of the presence of God (Ezek. 1:27, Ex. 13:21; 24:17). Hebrews 12:29 says, *“For our God is a consuming fire.”*

When God commissions us, the fire of God comes into us to purify and seal us to fulfil the purposes of God.

Holy Ground

There is an amazing truth seen in Moses’ response to the burning bush. We read in Exodus 3:3-4, *“And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and*

said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I.” Everything depended on Moses’ turning aside at that moment. When God saw that he turned aside, He called Moses out of the midst of the bush, even though Moses was not expecting God to speak that day.

God does not speak to us only when we are in church, Bible class, or during prayer time. God often speaks to us at the most unexpected times, in our daily routine, when we sweep and mop the floors, etc. This is why we must be very open to hear God’s voice.

God told Moses in Exodus 3:5 that he was standing on holy ground: *“And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”* What made the ground holy? It was not different from any other piece of ground. It was the presence of God. God alone is holy! It is the presence of God that makes a piece of ground, a building, or a person holy.

Shoes collect dirt. Thus, God commanded Moses to take off his shoes because nothing unclean can stand before His holiness. **Holiness has that joint connotation of being separated from the world (sin) and joined unto God.**

The story continues in Exodus 3:6, *“Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.”* By telling Moses that He was the God of his father, God was acknowledging the faith

of Moses' father, Amram. As we have noted before, in Hebrews 11:23 the parents of Moses are included in the list of the heroes of faith. It is clear that the faith of Amram was transferred to Moses.

Many children from Christian families go astray, often because they have not developed their own personal relationship with the Lord. When God draws them back again, they meet the God of their father and mother. What a wonderful thought!

In his letter to Timothy, the Apostle Paul acknowledged the faith of Timothy's mother, and also the faith of his grandmother. "*When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also*" (2 Tim. 1:5). Here we have an illustration of the deposited faith being transferred from one generation to another to another.

God's Concern for His People

In Exodus 3:7-10, God opened His heart to Moses and expressed His deep concern for His people: "*And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the*

Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.”

There are seven points that I would like to bring out very briefly from God’s message to Moses in this portion of Scripture from Exodus chapter 3:

1. “I have surely seen their affliction” (v. 7).
2. “I have heard their cry” (v. 7).
3. “I know their sorrows” (v. 7).
4. “I have also seen the oppression of the Egyptians” (v. 9).
5. “I am come down to deliver them” (v. 8).
6. “I am come down to bring them up out of the land of the Egyptians, unto a good land, a land flowing with milk and honey” (v. 8).
7. “I will send thee unto Pharaoh that thou mayest bring forth my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt” (v. 10).

Points 1-4 show that God saw the afflictions of the children of Israel. God is very aware of what is happening in our own lives. These points are a great comfort to all of us when we are going through some form of affliction or sorrow. Points 5-7 show God’s reaction to the cries of His people (Isa. 63:9).

Promise of Israel's Deliverance

God's promise to deliver Israel in Exodus 3:8 reveals a very important truth: *“And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.”*

The Lord said that He would bring the Israelites **out**, and would bring them **unto** a land flowing with milk and honey. When God says He will deliver us from a situation, He will then place or direct us into another situation. He will not just deliver us and leave us dangling! It is essential that we grasp this truth for our own lives.

This truth can be illustrated by the transplantation of a tree. A tree is never transplanted until a hole has first been dug for it in another place. We must not leave a situation until God has indicated where we are to go. If we remember this truth, it will help us in our own lives, and in our counselling with others. I have seen so many people praying to be delivered. Sometimes, they deliver themselves, but then they end up wandering around aimlessly. For example, if a family is moving house, they never pack all their furniture and sell their house until another house is ready.

I have counselled many people who have told me that God was delivering them out of their current situation;

but when I asked them what they were going to do next, they did not have any idea. The proof for knowing when God is moving them on is *if they know where they are going*. We must not leave our current place or situation until God releases us.

God's commission to Moses is found in Exodus 3:10, "*And I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.*" God did not stop there! As we said earlier, God did not just bring them *out*, He led them *unto* another land, the Promised Land. God never moves without first having a clearly defined plan; neither should we!

The Response of Moses

Moses meekly responded to the Lord's commission by saying, "*Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?*" (Ex. 3:11). This is the same Moses that had sought to deliver the children of Israel by his own strength 40 years before.

Now, after 40 years of being in the wilderness, meekness had been worked out in the heart of Moses. When you think of it, there was none better qualified for the task than Moses. Yet he said to the Lord, "*Who am I that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?*" This is the response of a true leader. The Lord wants us to have this same humble attitude and sense of unworthiness.

Three Main Reasons Favouring the Leadership of Moses

In reality, Moses was the most qualified man to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. The three main reasons are:

1. Moses had been raised in Pharaoh's court. Thus, he was well able to stand in the presence of a king because he had been taught. The Lord could not send someone to Pharaoh who did not know how to act in the presence of a king. A king has a certain decorum. We know Daniel and his three friends were chosen on the basis of their *ability to stand in the king's palace* (Dan. 1:4); they had training.

When I was a child, my father had a private audience with King George VI of England. He took me with him to Buckingham Palace. It is an experience that I will never forget. Before we were permitted to see the king, we were instructed on how to act in his presence. Moses' preparation in the court of Pharaoh uniquely prepared him to be the deliverer of Israel.

2. Moses had been trained for authority and leadership. As the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, he would have been prepared for leadership and authority. When my wife and I went to Africa for the first time, a veteran missionary to Africa told me that the three qualities necessary to minister in Africa are *authority, ability, and forgiveness*. I believe the same principle applies to ministry in any nation. As a leader, whether you are going to the mission field or anywhere else, you need

authority. We cannot command authority—authority has to be God-given!

Leaders also must have the ability to minister. In Africa, if you are a missionary, they feel that there is no question about the Word of God that you cannot answer.

The first time I ministered in Africa, I taught on the book of Deuteronomy to a very primitive tribe. However, these pastors knew their Bibles very well and they asked me difficult questions from obscure Bible verses. I would go through the chapters with them, and I would skip certain verses I thought were not pertinent. At the end of each chapter, I always asked if there were any questions. Sure enough, they brought out the most obscure verses and wanted to know what they meant; and some of those abstruse verses were very important.

When I taught on Deuteronomy 23, I bypassed verse 18 because I thought it was irrelevant for that Bible class, but the senior minister wanted to know what it meant. Deuteronomy 23:18 says, *“Thou shalt not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog, into the house of the LORD thy God for any vow: for even both these are abomination unto the LORD thy God.”* I told him that it simply meant that churches cannot accept the offering of a prostitute.

There was dead silence in the classroom, and I realised I had touched on a very sensitive subject. I asked them what they had been doing. To my shock, I was informed that the richest people in those villages were the village prostitutes. The

pastors had been accepting the offerings because they needed the money to sustain the churches.

They were confronted by the Spirit of God with a very difficult decision. Being extremely poor, they depended on the offerings of the prostitutes, but what they were doing was contrary to the Word of God. I found it to be a very difficult situation, as I knew the majority of the pastors did not even have shoes because they were so poor. Those who did have shoes only had them because the missionary could afford to supply some for those under his care. I asked them to bow their heads and pray with me.

As we were praying, the Lord gave me a word of wisdom. I said to the pastors, “How many of you are getting enough money?” No one raised his hand. I continued by saying: “Perhaps this sin is the reason for your financial difficulties. Let us ask the Lord to give you grace to go back to your pulpits next Sunday and declare that you will not accept the prostitute’s money.”

It took about half an hour of prayer for these pastors to consecrate themselves and make the commitment to do the right thing. Eventually, one by one, these pastors said, “Yes, Lord, I will be faithful to Your Word.” Then we prayed that God would honour their consecration.

We visited that town a few months later and I noticed that all of the faces of the pastors were shining as God had blessed them tremendously for their obedience. They were even able

to put roofs on their homes and churches. As we can see from this example, as ministers, we must have the ability to answer all their questions on the Word of God. They expect us to!

The third quality essential for leadership is forgiveness. A leader must have the grace to forgive and forget. We cannot nurture offenses or hurts in our hearts or have a habitually combative or hostile attitude toward others. Regardless of what others do or say to us or about us, we must ask the Lord to help us forgive them and forget the offense. People can be very cruel at times. When they ask us to forgive them, we must be able to say, "I forgive you. God bless you," and forget the offense. We should always forgive, yet in a church situation, depending on the type of sin, they may need to be put on *probation* to prove themselves before they are restored.

3. Moses was an Israelite, knowing both the Egyptian and Hebrew mentality. Moses had the distinct advantage of not only understanding the mentality of his own people, the Israelites, but also the mentality of the Egyptians, because he was raised in Pharaoh's court.

"I Am that I Am"

In Exodus 3:13-15, Moses received a revelation of God's name. *"And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou*

say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.”

The Lord revealed His name to Moses as, I AM THAT I AM. This was none other than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. This appearance to Moses occurred nearly 1,500 years before the “I AM” became flesh and dwelt among us (Jn. 1:14). When Jesus was on earth He affirmed, “Before Abraham was, I AM” (Jn. 8:58). The name “I Am That I Am” means, “I always was; I always will be.” Hebrews 13:8 declares, “*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.*”

We need a revelation of God’s name as well. God has many names. He desires to reveal His name that corresponds to the ministry to which He has called us. There is an impartation that comes with the revelation of one of God’s names.

For many years, my wife and I travelled non-stop all over the world, ministering in over 100 countries. Then the Lord called me to stop travelling for a time to pastor a large church with several thousand members. It had been several years since I had pastored full-time and I realised that I needed to pray and ask the Lord to give me the mantle of a pastor again.

The mantle and anointing of a travelling Bible teacher is very different from the anointing of a pastor. On a weekly basis,

pastors must feed everyone in their congregations, giving the milk of the Word to new believers and the meat of God's Word to the mature believers.

However, Bible teachers normally minister to mature believers and must seek to provide them with the meat of God's Word, a fine steak dinner, as it were. The Lord changed my whole demeanour, and my mannerisms while I was pastoring.

At that time, the Lord gave me a vision of Himself from behind. He was sitting upon a rock in the middle of a field overlooking a flock of sheep. The Lord caused me to understand that these sheep were the people in the church. I saw a very well-formed, mature sheep come up to the Lord and rub against His leg. The Lord caressed him and after a little while the sheep walked off perfectly content. Then the vision stopped.

I asked the Lord, "What are You trying to tell me?" He said, "You are not looking after the people in your church." I replied, "But Lord, after every service those who need counselling come and the secretary takes their name and schedules an appointment for me to meet with them. We pray for everyone who is sick." (The elders and I did that together.) God replied, "You are only taking care of the sick and those with problems. You are not taking care of those who are well. All of the sheep need to feel the touch of the shepherd's hand. They are joined to the shepherd. You need to shake hands with everyone in the church."

The next Sunday I explained the vision to my congregation, saying: “After the last verse of the last hymn, the song leader will take over. Please wait until I have gone to the back of the church before you are dismissed because I would like to shake your hand.” What ensued was amazing. Many people came up to me and said, “We had seen you from afar before, but now we can touch you.” This whole episode showed me there is an impartation from the shepherd to the sheep. The sheep need to feel the touch of their pastor.

Furthermore, there is an impartation that comes with the revelation of God’s name. The Lord revealed His name, the Good Shepherd, to me through that experience. It was to see Him as the Chief Shepherd—to see how a shepherd works. This impartation enabled me to fulfil my calling as a pastor.

Every pastor should ask the Lord to reveal Himself to him as the Good Shepherd. In John 10:11,14, Jesus is the Good Shepherd. In the English language, this is not very clear; it can give the impression that these verses are indicating that He is morally good, as of course, He is. However, these verses really mean that He is *good at being a shepherd*. Therefore, if God has given you the ministry of a shepherd, you need a revelation from Christ, who is good at being a shepherd.

The Preparation of the People

So far, we have been looking at the preparation of the leader. Now I would like to briefly consider the others who had to be prepared, too. To get people to be willing to leave their homes

and lands as the children of Israel did when they left Egypt was no small task. Thus we can see that it is not enough for the leader to be prepared; the people must also be prepared to willingly follow the leader.

God, knowing well the hearts of the children of Israel, prepared them through affliction (see Exodus 1). One of the reasons that the Lord caused the taskmasters to afflict them was to make them uncomfortable in Egypt. Otherwise, they would not have wanted to leave. You will recall that after they left, they continually wanted to return to Egypt. They kept remembering the leeks, the garlic, the melons, and all the other savoury things of Egypt (a type of this world).

Several things took place that prepared the children of Israel to leave Egypt:

1. They were under bondage to a cruel king (Ex. 1:10).
2. Cruel taskmasters afflicted them with burdens (Ex. 1:11).
3. Their lives became bitter (Ex. 1:14).
4. They were in an “iron furnace” (Deut. 4:20).
5. They had to irrigate the seeds with their feet (Deut. 11:10).

The children of Israel had to irrigate the Egyptians’ crops by pumping a little wheel with their feet. It was very hard work to pump the water from the Nile through the different levels up to the land of Goshen. Their life was extremely difficult, yet this helped condition their hearts to want to leave Egypt. They were under bondage to a cruel king and cruel taskmasters. This can also have a spiritual application to us as believers.

Let me share an experience to illustrate this. A pastor friend of mine was sent to a church that was filled with problems. He asked us to pray because there was a division in the church, many were discouraged and were leaving. After my wife and I prayed, we shared with the pastor that we felt that the problem was the immorality of the previous pastor. My friend said to me, “That is true, but he confessed it.”

We prayed again and the Lord showed us the spirit of immorality over the church. Spirits have different forms, some very peculiar. This particular spirit of immorality had a long tail, and it was hooked into the foundation of the church. We asked the Lord, “What does this mean? The former pastor confessed his sin, so it should have been cleansed.” It came down to this—the Lord revealed to us that even though the pastor had repented, the church members had not forgiven their former pastor. Their unforgiveness caused the spirit of immorality to remain.

When we shared this with our friend, he asked us to come to his church. When we arrived, the Lord gave us a further revelation that there was a demonic king or ruling spirit of immorality over the church and that there were many other “taskmasters” under that king operating in the church.

The spirit of immorality reigned over that church because the people would not forgive their former pastor. As a result, many people were involved in adultery in the church. In addition to the ruling spirit of immorality, there were other spirits, like the spirit of lust, which brought with it the spirit

of rebellion, which, in turn, brought jealousy. Jealousy produced hardness of heart in the people, and division came as a result of the people's hard hearts.

This, in turn, brought a spirit of deceit and discouragement over the people. All of these spirits (or taskmasters) were operating under the king or ruling spirit of immorality over the church. That spirit of immorality brought in adultery, lust, rebellion, jealousy, hardness of heart, division, deceit, and discouragement.

The point I am trying to bring out is this—we not only have to deal with the king (or ruling spirit), but we also have to deal with the taskmasters (the secondary spirits). The children of Israel had to be delivered from the king, Pharaoh, and also from the taskmasters. Their lives were made very bitter with bondage, but it made them willing to listen to what God had to say.

May we remember the leader has to be prepared, yet the people have to be prepared *for* the leader. Thus, there is a *time* for a leader to go into a certain situation.

The Three Signs

Moses knew his people very well. He said to the Lord in Exodus 4:1, “*But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee.*” Consequently, the Lord gave Moses the power to perform three signs that would give

him credibility and cause the Israelites to accept his message. In the New Testament, we are told that God confirms His word through signs and miracles (Mk. 16:17, Acts 5:12). Jesus also said, “...*Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe*” (Jn. 4:48).

These are the three signs that God gave to Moses:

1. Moses’ rod turned into a serpent. We read in Exodus 4:2-5: “*And the LORD said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand: That they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.*” A rod is a symbol of authority (Ps. 110:2, Rev. 2:27; 12:5). The serpent is a symbol of Satan (Gen. 3:1, Rev. 12:9; 20:2). Therefore, this sign depicts Moses as having authority over Satan. We, too, must have authority over Satan wherever God places us.

The serpent also was a symbol of Pharaoh, whose crown featured a serpent. Therefore, Moses not only had authority over Satan, but he also had authority over Pharaoh.

2. Moses’ hand became leprous and then was restored to health. We read in Exodus 4:6-8, “*And the LORD said*

furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom: and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow. And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again; and plucked it out of his bosom, and, behold, it was turned again as his other flesh. And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign.”

Leprosy is a symbol of sin! Miriam, Gehazi, and King Uzziah were all stricken with leprosy as a punishment for their sins (Num. 12:10, 2 Ki. 5:27, 2 Chr. 26:19). Therefore, this sign depicts that Moses had authority over sin.

This is very important for a leader. By the grace of God, we must have authority over sin. We must be clean from sin, not only for our own sakes, but also to deliver others from sin. We cannot deliver anyone from a sin that is binding us. This principle is illustrated in Acts 19:13-16, *“Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.”*

During a deliverance service, there was a lady who was filled with a demon of pride. The pastor very gently started to

address the lady about her problem when a young man in the church approached the lady and said, “In the name of Jesus, I command you, spirit of pride, to come out!” The demon in the lady replied: “I’m not going to come out for you. There is more pride in you than in her.” We must be clean ourselves before we have the authority to cast out demons. Demons know who is who.

3. Moses turned the water into blood. We read in Exodus 4:9, “*And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land: and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land.*” Blood, in the negative sense, is a sign of death and judgment. In this respect, it was *a dual sign*. It was a sign of judgment for those who opposed Moses, but salvation and life to those who believed.

Moses’ Submission to Jethro

The humility of Moses can be seen in Exodus 4:18, “*And Moses went and returned to Jethro his father in law, and said unto him, Let me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren which are in Egypt, and see whether they be yet alive. And Jethro said to Moses, Go in peace.*”

Although he was about 80 years old and had just met with the living God, Moses still humbly submitted himself to the one in authority over him, his father-in-law, Jethro. He took

the appropriate action by appealing to Jethro for his blessing and consent.

Moses' Message to Pharaoh

In Exodus 4:21-23, we read God's message for Pharaoh, "*And the LORD said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go. And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn: And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn.*" Why was the firstborn slain? Because Pharaoh would not let God's firstborn, Israel, go, God told Moses that He would kill the firstborn of Egypt. There would be an exchange of firstborns in this final plague against Egypt.

2. Circumcision at the Inn

Exodus 4:24-26 records the circumcision at the inn, "*And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the LORD met him, and sought to kill him. Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me. So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband thou art, because of the circumcision.*"

This was an amazing account. Here was a man, Moses, who had been prepared and commissioned by God to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt and into the Promised Land.

He had been endued with power and authority from God, and had received signs to demonstrate before the people. Moses obeyed the word of the Lord and took his family with him to Egypt. However, on his way to Egypt, the Lord sought to kill him because he had not circumcised his son.

Herein is a lesson that we must all learn. Moses was on God's path and on his way to fulfil what God had told him to do, yet God sought to kill him. Why? Because he was *not practicing* what he was going to preach in Egypt.

The token and requirement of the covenant God made with Abraham was circumcision, as seen in Genesis 17:7-10, "*And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.*"

The condition of the covenant was circumcision and the promise of the covenant was that Abraham's descendants would inherit the land of Canaan. Moses was the minister of the covenant. His calling was to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt and into the Promised Land. The condition for dwelling in the Promised Land was circumcision and Moses

was not even practicing it in his own family. This was a denial of his whole message!

I want to be very candid about this point. Our preaching *will not* save us. Even performing God’s task for our life will not save us. We must practice what we preach in order to be saved. I have seen many ministers around the world who were mightily used of God; those who have manifested God’s power, held fruitful ministries, and even performed miracles. However, they ruined their lives. They were lifted up to a height, but then God rejected them because they did not practice what they preached. They were doing the will of God in the sense that they were preaching, but their own lives were contrary to the message they were preaching to others.

Many people have said to me, “God will never reject me because I have prophesied, and the prophecies I have given have been fulfilled.” We must remember that the basis of our salvation is the blood of Jesus Christ, not our good works or our prophecies. Moreover, His blood is only effectual in our life as we walk in the light, as clearly stated in 1 John 1:7, *“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”*

Salvation is not dependent upon the condition of ministering, preaching, or healing the sick; it is as we are walking

The basis of our salvation is the blood of Jesus Christ, not our good works or our prophecies.

in the light, as He is in the light. It is Jesus' blood and righteousness that assures us of eternal life. First John 1:9 says, *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

I wish that I could say that everyone I have taught in Bible schools around the world will make it to heaven. Sadly, some of my former students have already left the path of righteousness. They left right after graduating from Bible school. At a conference where another preacher and I were scheduled to speak, he shared, "There were ninety students in our Bible school. Do you know how many are in the ministry today? There are about three in the ministry; the others are looking after bars and so forth."

Many Christians seek the Lord for His will and are willing to go to the mission field. Many are more willing to deprive themselves and face hardships than to face the sin God is confronting them with in their own lives. For some, the ministry is far more important than having a clean heart. I have often been surprised at what people are willing to do for the Lord. Sadly, often those who are willing to make the greatest sacrifices are backslidden in heart.

However, we must remember that God has *His* standards for sacrifice. Samuel addressed King Saul's motives for making sacrifices in 1 Samuel 15:22-23: *"And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of*

rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.” Saul was willing to make all the sacrifices, but Samuel made it clear that sacrifices were not what God was interested in.

The thought of “*hearken*” is to listen to God and do what He says. God’s interest is in those who obey and hearken unto Him, “...*Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.*”

Zipporah’s Act of Righteousness

Moses was saved from being slain by the Lord at the inn by his wife’s act of righteousness. We read in Exodus 4:25-26, “*Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me. So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband thou art, because of the circumcision.*” Zipporah took the initiative to circumcise their son because Moses had not done it. In this regard, she was more faithful to God than was Moses, since he was not keeping the covenant of Abraham (which was to circumcise the male children). This caused a great conflict between Moses and Zipporah.

It appears that in many ways Zipporah walked closer to God than Moses during the 40 years in the wilderness. Moses appears to have entered into a period of spiritual discouragement during his time in the wilderness. So often

there is a difference between a man and a woman. A woman often has the ability to persevere more than the man.

A godly wife can make all the difference in a minister's life. She can hold the minister constant during a long trial, and keep him pressing on towards the goal.

3. Meeting with Aaron

In Exodus 4:27-28, Moses met with his brother, Aaron, *“The Lord said to Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went, and met him in the mount of God, and kissed him. And Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord who had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him.”*

This meeting was very important, because Aaron would become Moses' assistant and he had to catch the vision before it could be imparted to others. The key is for the senior pastor to impart his vision to his assistant pastor or the vice-president of his ministry. God's Spirit will witness it to his heart so that the two can stand firmly together.

4. Gathering of the Elders

The Lord revealed this principle to Moses in Exodus 3:16, *“Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt.”*

After meeting with Aaron, Moses gathered the elders of Israel and revealed God's plan to them, "*And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel: And Aaron spake all the words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. And the people believed: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped*" (Ex. 4:29-31). The order of God's revelation is very clearly demonstrated for us here. He first revealed His plan to Moses; then Moses revealed it to Aaron. Together Moses and Aaron shared it with the elders of Israel, after which they shared it with the congregation of Israel.

I have seen many pastors make tragic mistakes because they ignored these very important steps. Because of their neglect, their churches did not embrace what God was saying. In some cases, the end result was a church split. Pastors should not announce a fresh direction for the church without first sharing it with their pastoral staff and church leaders.

"And Aaron spake all the words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. And the people believed" (Ex. 4:30). The whole congregation of the children of Israel believed and embraced Moses' message. They even bowed their heads and worshipped the Lord. Why did they embrace his message? Because Moses had the full support of Aaron and all the elders. Moses spoke with the authority of a united leadership. I cannot overemphasise the importance of this. There is tremendous power in unity.

CHAPTER 4

Ministry in Egypt

1. Initial Rejection by Pharaoh

After the children of Israel embraced their message, Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and declared the word of the Lord to him. Keep in mind that Moses has behind him a united leadership, a believing congregation, and a God who has clearly directed and sent him. Yet we have a king who will not receive his message.

Pharaoh's initial rejection of their message is seen in Exodus 5:1-4, "*And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness. And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go. And they said, The God of the Hebrews hath met with us: let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the LORD our God; lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword. And the king of Egypt said unto them, Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works? get you unto your burdens.*"

Let us consider the significance of Egypt and Pharaoh. Egypt's principal treasures are the pyramids, which housed

the mummies (skeletons) of the Pharaohs. In this sense, Egypt, which specialised in the embalming of the dead, represents death. It also represents this world, because the end of this world is death and hell, which is in the lower parts of the earth (cf. Rom. 6:21). Ezekiel was told to wail for the multitude of Egypt and for the unredeemed nations who go down into the lower parts of the earth (Ezek. 32:18).

Pharaoh himself had a serpent engraved on his crown. As we have noted before, serpents represent Satan. Therefore, Pharaoh represents Satan, the prince of this world. Pharaoh can also represent the governing demonic spirit over our city or locality. If the Lord promises to give you your city or locality for Christ, you need to communicate that promise to your assistant pastor and elders. Do not forget that you will have to reckon with the Satanic force over that area. There will be no spiritual liberty until that governing power comes down.

2. Increase of Burdens

In addition to rejecting Moses' message, Pharaoh retaliated by increasing the burdens of the Israelites. We learn of Pharaoh's cruel treatment in Exodus 5:5-9, *"And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now are many, and ye make them rest from their burdens. And Pharaoh commanded the same day the taskmasters of the people, and their officers, saying, Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore: let them go and gather straw for themselves. And the tale of the bricks, which they*

did make heretofore, ye shall lay upon them; ye shall not diminish ought thereof: for they be idle; therefore they cry, saying, Let us go and sacrifice to our God. Let there more work be laid upon the men, that they may labour therein; and let them not regard vain words.”

3. Rejection by Israel

Instead of improving, the situation for the Israelites after they embraced Moses’ message grew worse. We read in Exodus 5:20-21, “*And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way, as they came forth from Pharaoh: And they said unto them, The LORD look upon you, and judge; because ye have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us.”*

The same people who had accepted the signs and believed the message of Moses and Aaron now confronted them. The children of Israel blamed the situation on Moses and Aaron, and even asked God to judge them. The taskmasters, which represent bondages, had increased the Israelites’ burdens.

Often our bondages or problems will increase after God speaks to us, and we seek to obey His voice. When a leader hears from God and seeks to take his church or ministry in that direction, Satan will oppose him. Although the congregation may at first embrace the new direction, Satan will cause things to happen to discourage the people and try to make them lose faith in their leader. Some people might become sick and the

bondages of others might increase. They begin to doubt and blame the pastor for the problems. The leader is always blamed when something bad happens. Leaders must be prepared for opposition from the devil and sometimes from their own people.

People might say to their pastor, “We used to worship the Lord and have glorious services. Now it is hard to meet with God. Did you really hear from God? You must have been wrong.” This was the same attitude that the children of Israel adopted toward Moses as we see in Exodus 6:9, “*And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage.*”

How did Moses handle the Israelites’ rejection? He went to the Lord in prayer. We read in Exodus 5:22-23, “*And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Lord, wherefore hast thou so evil entreated this people? why is it that thou hast sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all.*” The solution for every trial we face in life is to go to the Lord and seek His counsel. The leader must always go back to the Lord. He is our source of supply (cf. 1 Cor. 15:28).

Moses recognised the hand of God in the increase of the Israelites’ burdens, saying, “Lord, wherefore hast thou so evil entreated this people?” In other words, he was saying, “God why have You let this happen?” We must recognise the sovereignty of God in our lives as well. It is futile to simply

blame the devil (or people) for everything that happens to us. We must understand that nothing can happen to us unless God permits it, as we see in the life of Job. We must seek the Lord and ask Him what He is doing in our lives.

At the same time, from Exodus 5:23, we realise that the leader does not get the complete revelation at once. Moses was under the impression that it would be a quick deliverance. He was not prepared for a long and arduous battle. Moses had given the children of Israel the impression that their deliverance from Egypt would be very quick. Often leaders do not have a clear understanding of how long it will take for God to accomplish His will and purposes. When God speaks, we expect it to happen tomorrow. However, most of the time there are many tomorrows before it happens. It may even be years.

Then the LORD said unto Moses, *“Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land”* (Ex. 6:1). In essence, the Lord was saying that by the time He was finished with Pharaoh, he would be glad to let the children of Israel go.

God often does not give us complete revelation. He cannot show us the whole picture of what will happen because we would not be able to endure seeing it all. We could not, with our spirit, bear the knowledge of all the troubles, pressures, and trials we will face. In His wisdom, the Lord only gives us a glimpse of what His ultimate purpose will

be. He does not elaborate much on what will happen between now and then.

In Exodus 6:1 the Lord told Moses that he would see the final result, *“Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh.”* Yet He did not tell him about all the opposition and delays that he would face before the final result. In Exodus 6:2-3, the Lord met with Moses and gave him a fresh revelation of His name, Jehovah, *“And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the LORD: And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them.”*

In Exodus 6:4-8, God gave Moses several wonderful promises for the Israelites, *“And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers. And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant. Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I am the LORD.”*

4. Israel's Refusal to Listen

After this fresh meeting with God, Moses was strengthened. He had fresh courage to speak to the children of Israel. However, we read, *“And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage”* (Ex. 6:9).

The Lord's reaction to Pharaoh's stubbornness and Israel's inability to hearken is seen in Exodus 6:10-13, *“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Go in, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land. And Moses spake before the LORD, saying, Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me; how then shall Pharaoh hear me, who am of uncircumcised lips? And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, and **gave them a charge** unto the children of Israel, and unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.”* The Lord gave Moses and Aaron a charge—**Israel was to come out of Egypt.**

5. Being Made as God to Pharaoh

In Exodus 7:1, Moses was elevated to a higher ministry and he received an increased anointing. *“And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.”* The NIV says, *“Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron will be your prophet.’”* No man before Moses had been made a god to Egypt.

After Moses had obtained a fresh revelation from God of His name and a new spiritual mantle, the Lord gave him insight of the struggles to come with Pharaoh. *“Thou shalt speak all that I command thee: and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land. And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt”* (Ex. 7:2-3). With his new mantle, Moses was able to bear the knowledge that it was not going to be easy. He knew there would be warfare.

This is what God does in our own lives, too. He shows us a glimpse of what He has called us to, and along the way He will make things clearer. He normally does not show us all of the struggles and pressures that we will experience along the way. If we knew everything that would happen, we would not be able to bear it. Many Bible school students think that they have attained unto God’s calling for their lives when they enrol in school, but that is really just the beginning. There is a period of preparation to come.

6. Confrontation of the Magicians

Moses and Aaron confronted Pharaoh and his magicians in Exodus 7:10-13, *“And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the LORD had commanded: and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron’s rod*

swallowed up their rods. And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said."

The names of the magicians are not recorded in Exodus, but Paul reveals their names centuries later as Jannes and Jambres in 2 Timothy 3:8, "*Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.*"

Aaron threw down his rod before Pharaoh and his magicians, and it became a serpent. Then Jannes and Jambres threw down their rods and they became serpents as well. However, Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. This illustrates a very important truth: Satan is capable of performing the same miracles as God.

All the gifts of the Spirit can be counterfeited by Satan. Many years ago in another country, in a worship service I witnessed what I thought was a powerful demonstration of the gift of prophecy and the word of knowledge by a certain man. He accurately revealed every detail of another person's life. I was quite amazed, but then the Lord opened my spiritual eyes and I saw a fallen angel standing by that man giving him all of that information. We should ask the Lord to give us discernment to distinguish between the works of His Holy Spirit and the works of the devil.

Pharaoh Hardens His Heart

We read in Exodus 7:13-14 that Pharaoh hardened his heart, "*And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not*

unto them; as the LORD had said. And the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh's heart is hardened, he refuseth to let the people go."

Paul said in Romans 9:17-18, *"For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."*

From studying very carefully, we find that Pharaoh hardened his heart ten times and God hardened Pharaoh's heart ten times. There comes a time when God hardens the hearts of those who have habitually practiced evil.

Romans 9:19-23 further develops this theme of God's sovereignty, *"Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."*

The Word of God clearly states that God hardens whomsoever He will, but He shows compassion to whomsoever He

chooses. This is what we term *the sovereignty of God*. However, the snare a person can fall into is when a person believes that since everything is the sovereignty of God, man has no choice in the matter.

This would be like a superb chess game in which God hardens a person and moves him to that square, another to this square; and if you happen to be the white (saved) you will be fine, but if you are the black (unsaved), you are in trouble. This could tempt an individual to wonder where he is in the game of life, and if he is just a pawn to be positioned wherever a sovereign God places him.

Exodus gives the history behind the statement made by Paul in Romans about Pharaoh, a history which should be observed carefully. Why did God harden Pharaoh's heart? Clearly we see in Exodus 1:8-10, "*Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph. And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we: Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land.*" Pharaoh had set his heart against God's people. Therefore, it is clear that Pharaoh, not God, had set the course for his life.

We must understand the sovereignty of God, and we must also understand the free will of man. God has His part, and man has his part. Psalm 18:25-26 states: "*With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful; with an upright*

man thou wilt show thyself upright; With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt show thyself froward.”

If we are merciful, He will show us mercy. If we are honest with Him, He will be honest with us. However, if we are deceitful, then God will allow us to be deceived. This shows us that *God meets us according to our direction*. Therefore, because Pharaoh hardened his heart against the children of Israel, God hardened Pharaoh’s heart. Man has been given a free will and the ability to make his own choices. **God’s sovereignty and man’s will always work together.** We are not puppets on God’s strings.

God deals with us according to the condition and disposition of our hearts. We read in Daniel 2:21, “*And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding.*” To whom does God impart wisdom? To those who are wise. To whom does God impart knowledge? To those who have understanding.

**God meets us
according to
our direction.**

Jesus said in Luke 19:26, “*For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.*” This illustrates the biblical principle that is also an economic principle. The rich become richer; the poor become poorer. The saying, “Money begets money,” is very true. It takes

money to make money. There is a beatitude that goes along with this, “*Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy*” (Mt. 5:7). If we have a merciful heart, we will receive more mercy.

When people fail to understand the balance between God’s sovereignty and the free will of man, they tend to blame God for man’s failures. Some people have even said that Pharaoh should not be blamed because God raised him up for that very purpose. They feel he had no choice, as God hardened his heart. However, we need to realise *why* God did that. It was because *Pharaoh had already hardened his own heart*. It was a way of life for him.

God gave him the opportunity to make the right decisions, but he refused, saying in Exodus 5:2, “*Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go.*” Therefore, Pharaoh wilfully disobeyed the Lord. God sets us in the course that we have chosen for our lives. If we choose to serve God and obey Him, He will honour that decision and give us the grace to obey Him.

7. Ten Plagues

In Exodus 7, we see the onset of the ten plagues. We must understand the reason for the execution of these judgments. After all, if God were only dealing with mortal man, He would not have to demonstrate such tremendous power. God was dealing with something more than just mortal man.

We see this clearly in Exodus 12:12, *“For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and **against all the gods of Egypt** I will execute judgment: I am the LORD.”* Numbers 33:4 also confirms this, *“For the Egyptians buried all their firstborn, which the LORD had smitten among them: upon their gods also the LORD executed judgments.”*

Through these plagues, God was not only bringing down the power of Pharaoh and impoverishing Egypt; He was also bringing down the gods of that land—the demonic gods which were worshipped by the Egyptians.

1. The Waters Became Blood (Ex. 7:20-25) — The Nile River was the principal waterway in Egypt. It was sacred and was worshipped as a god by the Egyptians. God turned the waters of the river into blood, as a sign of judgment. Thus, God brought down one of their gods. All of the fish in the river died and the Egyptians could not drink the water.

2. The Frogs (Ex. 8:1-15) — In the second plague, the Lord caused the land of Egypt to be overrun and cursed with frogs. The frog was another Egyptian god. Therefore, God caused the Egyptians to hate the very frogs that they worshipped.

In the Word of God, a frog represents an unclean spirit, and false prophecy in particular. This is illustrated in Revelation 16:13, *“And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.”*

The Egyptian magicians were also made to perform this miracle, but they were not able to make the frogs return to the rivers and ponds. Pharaoh pleaded with Moses to ask the Lord to take away the frogs (Ex. 8:8). The next day Moses caused the frogs in their houses and fields to die and only the frogs in the rivers remained. However, after they died, Pharaoh hardened his heart and would not let the children of Israel leave Egypt.

3. The Lice (Ex. 8:16-19) — The third plague was lice. The Lord smote the land with lice because the Egyptians also worshipped their land. All of the dust of the land became lice.

The Egyptian magicians were able to duplicate the first two plagues, but they could not bring forth an act of creation. The magicians recognised the hand of God, saying to Pharaoh in Exodus 8:19, *“This is the finger of God.”* Another magician in the New Testament who recognised the hand of God was Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8:9-24). However, Pharaoh would not listen to his own magicians and further hardened his heart.

4. The Flies (Ex. 8:20-32) — The fourth plague was a swarm of flies. Beelzebub, which means “lord of the flies,” is one of Satan’s titles (Lk. 11:14-19). This plague was a judgment upon the land of Egypt, and also upon Satan.

At this time the Lord made a difference between His people and the Egyptians. He protected them from this judgment. Again we see God’s judgment coming down on the gods

of Egypt, for Moses had power over all of these gods and the demonic spirits behind them. At this point, Pharaoh made his first offer in an attempt to bargain with Moses in Exodus 8:25, followed by a second offer in Exodus 8:28.

5. The Murrain (Ex. 9:1-7) — The fifth plague was a murrain or plague upon Egypt's cattle because the Egyptians worshipped idols and gods in the form of cattle. Apis-Seraphis was the sacred cattle god at Memphis. Their cattle gods and idols can be seen in Egyptian, American, and British museums where there are Egyptologists. The Israelites even made a golden idol in the form of a calf in the wilderness (Ex. 32:4). God judged this Egyptian god (see Ezekiel 20:6-17).

Again the Lord made a difference between His people and the Egyptians. The cattle of the Egyptians died, but the Israelites' cattle were preserved.

6. The Boils (Ex. 9:8-12) — The sixth plague was boils, an especially painful judgment because it attacked their flesh. The Egyptians were very sensual and immoral, as depicted in ancient Egyptian artwork. Therefore, God was judging their sensuality and immorality.

The magicians could no longer even stand before Moses because they were afflicted with the boils as well. We read in Exodus 9:11-12, "*And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils; for the boil was upon the magicians, and upon all the Egyptians. And the LORD*

hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had spoken unto Moses.” Even after all of this, Pharaoh still would not humble himself before the Lord.

7. The Hail (Ex. 9:13-35) — The seventh plague was hail mixed with fire (Ps. 78:47-48; 105:32). It was a judgment upon the agriculture of Egypt, which the Egyptians worshipped. They also worshipped Osiris, the god of fire. Those who neglected the warning and remained in the field were destroyed along with the trees and the herbs.

At this point, Pharaoh even acknowledged his sin and confessed that the Lord was righteous and that he and his people were wicked. However, when the hail stopped, Pharaoh hardened his heart again and would not let the Israelites leave (Ex. 9:34-35).

8. The Locusts (Ex. 10:1-20) — The eighth plague was the locusts (Ps. 78:46). Egypt worshipped Sebeh, the insect god. Moses had power over this god and mocked it by commanding locusts to cover the land and devour everything that the hail had not destroyed. God judged the Egyptians’ food supply, and they were stricken with hunger.

In Exodus 10:7, Pharaoh’s officers pleaded with him to let the children of Israel leave Egypt. Pharaoh made his third offer to Moses to let the children of Israel leave, with the condition that the Hebrew children had to remain in Egypt (Ex. 10:8-11).

9. The Darkness (Ex. 10:21-23) — The ninth plague was complete darkness upon Egypt for three days, while the children of Israel had light. One of the principal gods of Egypt was Ra, the sun god. They worshipped the sun perhaps more than any other god. Even Pharaoh's name means sun. Therefore, when God brought darkness upon the land of Egypt, He broke the power of the sun god.

10. Slaying of the Firstborn (Ex. 12) — The tenth plague was the slaying of the firstborn of Egypt. The Lord said in Exodus 12:12-13: *“For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.”*

The firstborn children and firstborn of the livestock of the Egyptians were slain by the Lord, including Pharaoh's firstborn. What was the purpose of the slaying of the firstborn? Israel was God's firstborn, and Pharaoh would not release them. Therefore there was an exchange of firstborns. In effect, God said to Pharaoh, “If you will not release My firstborn, I will slay your firstborn.” This gives us an idea of the rationale behind the plagues—to show the mighty power of God, and to deal with their gods, breaking their power.

The Egyptian gods that God judged through the Ten Plagues

| Plague | False god judged |
|---------------------------------|--|
| The water became blood | The Nile River |
| The frogs | The frog god |
| The lice | The land |
| The flies | Beelzebub, Lord of the flies |
| The murrain | The cattle god |
| The boils | The god of sex |
| The hail | The agriculture god and Osiris, the god of fire |
| The locusts | Sebeh, the insect god |
| Darkness | Ra, the sun god |
| The slaying of the firstborn | The god of the pride of the firstborn |

Pharaoh's Four Proposals of Compromise

Pharaoh tried to bargain and negotiate with Moses four times; and each bargain had conditions attached. These four proposals are the same subtle forms of compromise used by Satan in all generations to tempt and ensnare the people of God. We would do well, then, to observe them and commit them to memory.

1. Pharaoh proposed for the Israelites to worship the Lord in the land of Egypt. Exodus 8:25 says, “*And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron, and said, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land.*” Satan urges the redeemed to stay in

the “land”, or to stay in Egypt (the world). Christians who try to serve the Lord and stay in the world end up conforming to the ways of the world, and compromising their moral values (Rom. 12:2).

2. Pharaoh proposed for the Israelites to leave Egypt, but not go very far. Pharaoh said in Exodus 8:28, *“I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness; only ye shall not go very far away: entreat for me.”* In effect, Satan was saying “Stay close to the world. Do not be too spiritual.”

Demas never fully detached himself from his attraction to the things of this world, and they eventually lured him back to the world. Paul said in 2 Timothy 4:10, *“For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica.”*

3. Pharaoh proposed for the Israelites to leave Egypt, but for their women and children to remain in Egypt. We read in Exodus 10:8-11, *“And Moses and Aaron were brought again unto Pharaoh: and he said unto them, Go, serve the LORD your God: but who are they that shall go? And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we must hold a feast unto the LORD. And he said unto them, Let the LORD be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones: look to it; for evil is before you. Not so: go now ye that are men, and serve the LORD; for that ye did desire. And they were driven out from Pharaoh’s presence.”*

Too many parents seek to live a godly life, but allow their children to live like the world. Many parents desire worldly prosperity for their children at the expense of their spiritual welfare.

4. Pharaoh proposed for the Israelites to leave Egypt without their flocks and herds. Pharaoh said to Moses in Exodus 10:24, *“Go ye, serve the LORD; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed: let your little ones also go with you.”* Without their flocks and herds, Israel then would have nothing to sacrifice unto the Lord. This represents being so entangled with the affairs of this life that we have no time, energy, or substance to offer unto the Lord.

8. Institution of the Passover

As we stated in the Introduction, we will look at the seven Feasts of the Lord as they relate to our lives in this study on the Journey of Israel. Believers are called to spiritually celebrate these seven feasts.

The Lord instituted the Passover just prior to the tenth and final plague, the slaying of the firstborn. As we have already noted, Egypt represents the land of death. The Passover represents salvation by the blood of the Lamb because the blood on the doorposts of the Hebrew homes preserved their lives. The antidote for death is the shedding of the blood of the Lamb.

Paul said in Hebrews 10:1, *“For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by*

year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.” Biblical types and symbols are shadows of the truths they represent. (They are not always exact, so we must be very careful not to carry a type too far.)

The Passover was celebrated in the first month, as seen in Exodus 12:2, *“This month shall be unto you **the beginning** of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.”* We spiritually celebrate the Passover at the beginning of our Christian walk when we experience salvation.

The Lord said in Exodus 12:3, *“Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house.”* It was the tenth day of the first month. In biblical numerics, the number ten represents the Law.

The fact that the lamb was taken on the tenth day means that it must fulfil the law. In Matthew 5:17 the Lord Jesus said, *“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.”* Indeed, the Lord Jesus Christ is truly the Passover Lamb, for He perfectly fulfilled the Old Testament law.

The Passover lamb had to be without blemish, as seen in Exodus 12:5, *“Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats.”* Jesus Christ, our Passover Lamb, was without blemish or sin.

First Peter 1:19 says, *“But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”* Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:21, *“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”* Christ was tempted in every point just like we are, but He never sinned in any way (Heb. 4:15).

Another aspect of the Passover lamb was that it could not have any broken bones, as seen in Exodus 12:46, *“In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof.”*

A broken leg is symbolic of disobedience. In olden times, shepherds would break the legs of disobedient and wandering sheep so that they would not wander away again.

This was also prophetic of the Lord Jesus. Psalm 34:20 says, *“He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.”* The Lord fulfilled every aspect of the Passover lamb (Jn. 19:33-36, 1 Cor. 5:7, Rev. 5:6).

We read in Exodus 12:6, *“And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.”* The lamb was to be taken on the tenth day and slain on the fourteenth day in the evening. During those four days, the lamb was inspected to ensure that it had no blemishes.

Christ, our Passover Lamb, was inspected by four people: Annas, Caiaphas, Herod, and Pilate. They found *no* wrong in Him. In much the same way, we are inspected by four groups: the world, the Church, Satan, and the Lord. Exodus 12:6 tells us that the whole congregation of Israel killed the Passover lamb. It was the Jews who crucified the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Israelites had to take the blood of the lamb and put it on the sides and tops of the door frames of their homes, as seen in Exodus 12:7: *“And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.”*

There was another feast instituted at the same time, the Feast of Unleavened Bread. These two feasts are to be kept continuously, for they are eternal truths that apply to all generations.

We read in Exodus 12:8-10: *“And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire.”*

The flesh of Christ, the Passover Lamb, represents His Word. Christ Himself said that He is the Bread of Life (Jn. 6:35). We must feed upon God’s Word. Jesus said in John 6:53, *“Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his*

blood, ye have no life in you.” If you lose your blood, you will die. Thus, we are commanded to drink the blood because His life and His Spirit are in the blood. We do not literally eat His flesh and drink His blood. Communion is *symbolic* of this commandment. The communion emblems of which we partake merely represent His body and blood (1 Cor. 11:23-26).

In Exodus 12:11, we read about the manner in which the Israelites were to eat the Passover meal, *“And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD’S passover.”* This depicts preparation for a journey. Any man who was so arrayed was prepared to travel. We understand, therefore, that when we accept Christ as our Saviour, we begin a journey and are headed toward a destination.

The Lord said in Exodus 12:13, *“And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.”* In order to be preserved from death, the Israelites had to apply the blood of the lamb to their homes. In like manner, as believers, the blood of Christ is our protection. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. It is His blood that pardons and forgives us of our sins (Heb. 9:22).

We read in Exodus 12:15, *“Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away*

leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.” The Feast of Unleavened Bread was instituted at the same time as the Passover (Ex. 12:17, Lev. 23:6). The Israelites were to eat unleavened bread for seven days (Deut. 16:3-8).

Leaven is a symbol of sin (1 Cor. 5:6-8), hypocrisy (Lk. 12:1), and false doctrine (Mt. 16:12). Thus, unleavened bread represents the pure, unadulterated Word of God. The number seven represents “completion.” Seven also speaks of the beginning and the end of our spiritual life. Therefore, from the very beginning of our Christian experience until the end of our days, we are to read the pure Word of God.

“Even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses...” From the very first day, the Israelites had to remove all leaven from their homes. As believers, we should begin removing all of the leaven from our lives as soon as we get saved. This can include purifying our homes and lives from ungodly magazines, pictures, books, artefacts, and TV programs.

David said, *“I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes”* (Ps. 101:3). We must be very careful especially with books, because many books (even religious ones) have evil spirits. Some artefacts from foreign countries have evil spirits. Numbers 33:52 commands us to destroy all pictures that are not wholesome, for an evil spirit can gain an entrance into our lives through our eyes if we look at evil and ungodly pictures.

The Israelites also had to dip hyssop into the basin of blood to apply that blood to the doorframes of their homes. We read in Exodus 12:22, “*And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel [the top of the door post] and the two side posts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning.*” Hyssop was a small bushy plant with numerous small flowers in bunches.

David prayed to the Lord in Psalm 51:7, “*Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*” Hyssop is associated with purging or cleansing. Therefore, we could state that the blood-dipped hyssop represents the spiritual truth that the blood of Christ cleanses us.

The power of the blood of Christ, the Lamb of God, can be seen in Exodus 12:23, “*For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.*” **It is clear from Scripture that Satan is controlled by God.** He can only do what God permits.

**We are
protected by
God as we
stay covered
with the blood
of Christ.**

We are protected by God as we stay covered with the blood of Christ. His blood protects us from judgment. Nothing else

can pardon and forgive us. How do we continually cover ourselves with His blood? First John 1:7 gives us the key, *“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another; and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”* It is to walk in the light by obedience to His Word.

9. Journey to the Red Sea

Enrichment After Trials

Exodus 12:35-36 states, *“And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed [or asked] of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent [or gave] unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians.”* In essence, Israel was receiving in one night their back wages for the several hundred years that they had been slaves in Egypt.

This was a fulfilment of the Lord’s promise to Abraham in Genesis 15:14 (cf. Ps. 105:37), *“And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.”* It is a principle of God that He *enriches* us *after* long, difficult *trials*.

Psalm 66:10-12 says, *“For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried. Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidst affliction upon our loins. Thou*

hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.”

After Job’s trial, the Lord enriched him and blessed him with double what he had before his trial. *“Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold”* (Job 42:11).

Isaiah 61:7 promises, *“For your shame ye shall have double; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them.”* Zechariah 9:12 promises the prisoners of hope: *“Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee.”* After we have successfully passed through a trial (a stripping or a heartache), there comes a time of enriching—naturally, spiritually, or economically.

Rameses to Succoth

The first part of the journey of the children of Israel was from Rameses to Succoth (Num. 33:5), as seen in Exodus 12:37, *“And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children.”* There were about 600,000 men. Including

the women and children, there were probably between two and three million Israelites at the time of the exodus.

The Mixed Multitude

“And a mixed multitude went up also with them” (Ex. 12:38). Not only did God’s people come out of Egypt, but also with them came some of the Egyptians and other people in the land. Having a mixed multitude of the unsaved and the saved is a very serious issue even in our day.

I would like to compare this to the Parable of the Net. Jesus said, *“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away”* (Mt. 13:47-48). All kinds of people come into the Church, spiritually speaking, both the good and the bad. We have to ensure that all receive the opportunity to be saved. At the same time, we have to make sure that the bad apples do not affect the good apples—that those who cling to their evil ways do not corrupt the good people.

The Bones of Joseph

We read in Exodus 13:19 of an oath Joseph had exacted of the children of Israel, several hundred years before, *“And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away*

hence with you.” This refers to Genesis 50:24-25, where Joseph reaffirmed the promises God had made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that God would bring their seed into the land of Canaan and entrust it to them for an inheritance, “And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.”

In one sense, although Joseph was dead, yet he still spoke (cf. Heb. 11:4)! He died before the time of the fulfilment of God’s promise regarding the Promised Land, but he entered into the promise by faith. This means that a man or woman can die before the time of promise, yet inherit the blessing of another generation. **In other words, by vision and faith, people can appropriate and enter into the blessings of future generations.**

Succoth to Etham

From Succoth, the children of Israel journeyed to Etham. We read in Exodus 13:20-22, “*And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness. And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.*”

Etham to Pihahiroth, Migdol, and Baalzephon

From Etham, the children of Israel traveled to Pihahiroth, near Migdol and Baalzephon, as recorded in Exodus 14:2: *“Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn and encamp before Pihahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baalzephon: before it shall ye encamp by the sea.”* “Baal” means “lord,” and “Zephon” comes from a Hebrew root word meaning “hidden” or “dark.” Therefore, one of the meanings of Baalzephon is “the lord of darkness.” The Lord brought them into a dark experience in order to give them a great victory and destroy their enemies.

10. Pharaoh’s Pursuit

The Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart and caused him to pursue the children of Israel so that He could execute His final judgment upon him and the Egyptians (Ex. 14:5-12). *“For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in. And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, that he shall follow after them; and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; that the Egyptians may know that I am the LORD. And they did so”* (Ex. 14:3-4).

The attitude of the children of Israel is very interesting. We read in Exodus 14:10-11, *“And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the LORD. And they*

said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt?"

When the children of Israel saw that Pharaoh was pursuing them, they said that they wished they had not left Egypt. Some might think the children of Israel said this because they were filled with fear. Unfortunately, I have seen believers express the same sentiments in difficult situations. Many believers wish they had stayed where they were in the world. It had been so much easier for them, as they had no battles. It is not incidental that this situation was recorded in the Scriptures for us. We need to recognise the heart attitude of some people.

They continued in Exodus 14:12, *"Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness."* It is sad but true that people love bondages. *"For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face"* (2 Cor. 11:20). The NIV says, *"In fact, you even put up with anyone who enslaves you or exploits you or takes advantage of you or pushes himself forward or slaps you in the face."* Not everyone wants to be delivered from his bondages.

A number of years ago, several ministers prayed for a lady who had about 60 demons. They were able to cast out most

of the demons, but then they confronted a few particularly strong ones which refused to leave.

Then my wife and I were asked to come and help them pray for the last few demons to be cast out. By God's grace, through prayer we were able to cast out all of the demons except one. When we came down to the last demon, a fallen angel walked in and strengthened the demon. There was a reason we could not cast out this last demon—she did *not* want to give it up!

We knew that God wanted to deliver this lady and that He was able to do so. We told her, "You can be delivered if you want to be delivered." The demon wanted to come out because it did not like the power of God, but she would not allow it to leave. Then the fallen angel spoke through this lady, "May I respectfully remind you that man was created a little lower than the angels." He wanted everyone to know he was present, and it was not just the little demon. Once he strengthened the demon, we could not do anything about it. Because the lady wanted to hold on to her bondage, there was nothing more we could do for her.

Later that night this lady said to her friends, "I could have been delivered tonight, but I wanted to hold on to my bondage." Some people love their bondage. Here at the Red Sea, we see the same attitude reflected in the Israelites—"*Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians.*"

CHAPTER 5

Red Sea to Sinai

1. Crossing of the Red Sea

When the children of Israel saw that Pharaoh was pursuing them, they were overcome with fear (Ex. 14:10). Moses tried to dispel their fears: “*And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will show to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace*” (Ex. 14:13-14). In leadership, we must keep a “fear ye not” attitude, as Moses did.

In their fear, the Israelites hastily and rashly decided to go back to Egypt. The worst time to make a major decision is during a time of darkness and difficulty when everything is going wrong. Never make a decision when you are in a time of despondency.

Regretfully, I have seen many people backslide and marry the wrong person in their backslidden state. When they come out of that time of backsliding, they have collected something they can never get rid of.

God spoke through Moses to “*stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD...*” Beloved, stand still during these times of

darkness and difficulty. Let me repeat this—***never make decisions in a time of despondency.***

The “Go Forward” of God

The Lord said to Moses in Exodus 14:15, “*Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward.*” When you are looking for direction and God is silent, stay on the course you are presently pursuing.

Many years ago my wife and I were in the Cameroon, West Africa. We needed direction as we did not know what we were supposed to do next. We were unsure whether to return to England or go on to America or Zaire. We wrote to our missions’ board, the Evangelical Missions Home, asking for direction as to whether or not we should go to Zaire, but no reply came. However, the Lord spoke to us that the angel of the Lord would go before us and would be waiting for us in Zaire.

We were staying in a town called Myuka, which is known as *the white man’s grave*. Even the country’s brochures warn visitors not to go there. The heat was so intense that we had to go to bed every afternoon from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. We just could not move. It was so terribly hot that after lying on the bed for a time, we could see the outline of our bodies from the perspiration on the bed sheets. The average life expectancy in that town was only 40 years.

One afternoon I was on my bed staring at the wall, and I saw some ants walking, going across a board upon which some

kerosene had been spilled. As you know, ants depend on their sense of smell for their sense of direction. Otherwise one little ant goes until he meets another who says it is okay to continue on. This is how they travel.

The kerosene had caused them to lose their own scent. I could tell that they were confused and were not sure where to go. Some of them gave up and turned around, so they did not reach their destination. They could not go any further. Yet others had their course determined by the previous ant, so they persevered and kept their course right through the kerosene. They made it through the kerosene, picked up their course, and arrived at their objective. The Lord spoke an awesome truth to me through this experience: “There are kerosene patches on your trail. Pursue the course, and you will pick up the trail again.”

Therefore, even though we had not received a reply from our missions’ board, we decided to stay the course and go on to Zaire. As we were travelling, I kept getting this word from the Lord, “My angel will be with you.” I told my wife that we should let everyone else get off the plane before us. When we got off the plane, I saw someone holding up a sign with my name on it. God said, “See, I told you My angel would be there waiting for you.” Because we had gone forward in the Lord, we picked up our course again; our spiritual “scent” had returned.

What is my point? If you are going in the direction that God has ordained for your life and all of a sudden things become

very confusing and you are not able to hear from God, do not panic. Continue on through the “kerosene patch” and you will pick up your course again. If you turn back, you will lose your course and you will not fulfil your mission. That was the position of the children of Israel at the moment.

The Lord said, “Go forward.” Therefore they went across the Red Sea. Before they did, God performed another miracle. *“But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen”* (Ex. 14:16-17).

The Darkness and the Light

The Lord caused the pillar of cloud to divide the camp of Israel from the camp of Egypt. The Egyptian camp was in complete darkness, whereas the Hebrew camp was full of light. *“And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night”* (Ex. 14:19-20). God was controlling the enemy. God is always the Master of every situation.

The Dividing of the Waters

In Exodus 14:21-22, the Lord divided the waters of the Red Sea and the children of Israel passed over on dry ground. *“And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.”* Some people say that the children of Israel were able to cross the Red Sea because it was very low. They feel it was a little marshland there, which was why it was easy for them to go across on dry land. However, it would have required a greater miracle than the dividing of the waters to drown the whole Egyptian army, including their horses, in a puddle of water.

The Troubling of the Egyptians

As the Egyptians pursued the Israelites, the Lord troubled them. We read in Exodus 14:23-25, *“And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the LORD looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians.”* The Lord caused the wheels of their chariots to come off.

The Return of the Waters

We read in Exodus 14:27-28, “*And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them.*” God saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians.

The Symbolism of the Crossing of the Red Sea

It is crucial that we know history well, because the children of Israel’s crossing of the Red Sea is a very significant event in history. Reference is made to it many times in Scripture (Num. 21:14, Deut. 11:4, Josh. 2:10; 4:23; 24:6, Neh. 9:9, Ps. 106:9-11, 22; 136:13-15, Acts 7:36, Heb. 11:29). There are so many spiritual truths and lessons connected to this event that are pertinent to you and me.

As we mentioned earlier, our journey begins in Egypt as we partake of the blood of the Lamb, and as we experience salvation. Also, we begin our Feast of Unleavened Bread, whereby we continue to feed upon the pure Word of God. Then we come to the Red Sea, which is symbolic of water baptism. After we are saved by the blood of the Lamb and begin partaking of the Word of God, the next major step in the Christian life is to be water baptised. Water baptism is also an act of righteousness (Mt. 3:15). We read in

1 Corinthians 10:1-2, *“Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.”*

People in the charismatic movement say that the important event is the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and that water baptism does not matter. However, it should be noted that the act of water baptism breaks bondages from the old life, as well as denominational ties.

Egypt represents bondage, as Moses said in Exodus 13:3, *“Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage.”* Water baptism can deliver us from many bondages of our old life. It does not break them all, but it does break some.

Another important aspect of the crossing of the Red Sea was that the Israelites began to believe in the Lord and in their leader, Moses. It caused faith to arise. We read in Exodus 14:31, *“And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses.”*

The crossing of the Red Sea accomplished many things in the lives of the Israelites, but it did not remove the love for Egypt from their hearts. Throughout the wilderness journey, the Israelites wanted to return to Egypt whenever something went wrong (Ex. 14:11-12; 16:3; 17:3, Num. 11:5,20; 14:4). **They were out of Egypt, but Egypt was not out of them.**

There is a saying, “You can take the boy out of the farm, but you cannot take the farm out of the boy.” You can take a person out of his environment, but that does not mean you have taken the environment out of him. It is the same with water baptism. It separates us from the world, but it does not completely purify our hearts from the love of this world.

What was the purpose of crossing the Red Sea (Water Baptism) for the children of Israel?

1. The Red Sea separated God’s people from Egypt, known as the house of bondage.
2. It broke many ties of the past. They came out from under the power of Pharaoh. His power over them was broken!
3. It destroyed the enemies who tried to pull them back into Egypt.
4. It promoted faith in the Lord and in the leadership.
5. It brought death to the old life, and enabled them to live a new life for God.

The Feast of Firstfruits

As believers, we spiritually celebrate the Feast of Passover when we give our lives to Christ and the Feast of Unleavened Bread as we continually feed upon the pure Word of God (Ps. 1:2). The feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread were celebrated in Egypt.

The third feast is the Feast of Firstfruits. We read in Leviticus 23:10-11, “*Speak unto the children of Israel, and*

say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.”

In 1 Corinthians 15:20-21, Paul explained that Christ is the Firstfruits from the dead, *“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.”* Therefore, in this sense the Feast of Firstfruits represents **resurrection life**.

Water baptism identifies us with Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection. Paul develops this theme in Romans 6:3-5, *“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.”*

Colossians 2:12 reaffirms that water baptism represents resurrection life, *“Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.”* After we are baptised in water, we should begin to walk in newness of life.

Therefore, we can associate the crossing of the Red Sea, which represents water baptism and resurrection life, with the Feast of Firstfruits that also symbolises resurrection life. Although there is no record that the children of Israel celebrated this feast when they came out of Egypt, as it was not instituted until later, it was to be celebrated the day after the Passover Sabbath. We know that they left Egypt and crossed the Red Sea after they celebrated the Passover. The feasts will be developed in more detail later in the book.

2. Song of Moses

As long as the children of Israel were in the land of Egypt, their enemy was not subdued. They had escaped from their enemy, but Pharaoh was still pursuing them. God not only gloriously delivered His people from Egypt as they crossed the Red Sea, but He also destroyed Pharaoh and all his armies.

In Exodus 15:1-19, we have the “Song of Moses” recorded for us. We read in Exodus 15:1-2, *“Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The LORD is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father’s God, and I will exalt him.”*

This is a very important truth for us. When we have an enemy, we must make sure that our enemy is completely

vanquished. It is imperative to destroy the enemy completely so that he does not continue to pursue us.

In some localities, there are churches that have perpetual problems. So often the problem goes back several generations. Perhaps there had been revivals years before, and they broke through into certain significant blessings, but then they did not deal with the enemy. The result was that the enemy came back again and caused trouble for future generations. **We must press the battle to the finish when we are dealing with spiritual powers, so that we not only dispossess them, but we also have the mastery over them.**

In Revelation 15:3, we see the victorious saints of God in heaven singing the song of Moses, *“And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.”*

I have seen people freed from bondage who failed to deal with the root of the bondage. Therefore, the bondage still followed them and caught up with them again. King David said that he pursued his enemies relentlessly until they were utterly destroyed (2 Sam. 22:38-41).

Especially in our families, when problems have been passed down through the generations, we must see that the bondages are stopped here and now. Perhaps they skipped over one generation that gained a certain mastery over them, but then they came over to the next generation. By the grace of God,

we must bind them and commit them to the pit so they will not hinder later generations or influence other people. When the enemy's power is broken and bound into hell, he cannot gain a stronghold even if there is some area of vulnerability in our lives.

Vision of Mount Zion

Moses spoke of Zion as the ultimate destination of the children of Israel in Exodus 15:17, *“Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O LORD, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established.”* The Lord brought the children of Israel out of Egypt to lead them into the Promised Land, unto Mount Zion, His dwelling place.

The mountain spoken of here does not refer to Mount Sinai, because Mount Sinai was situated in the wilderness, and was not in the land of their inheritance. It can only refer to Mount Zion. This is confirmed in Psalm 78:54,68, *“And he brought them to the border of his sanctuary, even to this mountain, which his right hand had purchased...But [He] chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion which he loved.”*

It is so important for a believer to know where he is going, and where his inheritance is. As we have noted before, the journey of Israel represents the spiritual journey of Christians. Therefore, since we have clearly established that the ultimate destination of the children of Israel was Mount Zion, we can

also state that **the ultimate goal and destination for believers is heavenly Mount Zion.**

In Hebrews 12:22-23 it is reiterated that Mount Zion is our goal, “*But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.*” We must not stop short or be content with a place below our inheritance in this life.

Many years ago, I actually experienced physical death. The angel of the Lord came and took me to heaven. After I crossed over the river into heaven, I was shown the whole of my life in cameo form. At this point in my life, I realised that **we must give account for more than just the deeds we have done while living in this flesh.** The Lord showed me that I had died before my appointed time and had not fulfilled God’s course for my life. Mercifully, the Lord allowed me to return to earth and gave me another opportunity to finish His course for my life.

**We must not
stop short of
our inheritance
in this life.**

Since that experience, I have had a constant burden, not only for my life, but also for the believers whom I teach—*even before the foundation of the world God had a plan, a goal, and an inheritance for us. We must not stop short of our inheritance.*

The Lord had ordained for the generation of the children of Israel that left Egypt to enter the Promised Land. Regretfully, they died in the wilderness because of their disobedience and lack of faith. It was not until David's generation that they reached Zion's holy hill.

Miriam the Prophetess

In Exodus 15:20-21, we read about Miriam, Moses's sister, who took a timbrel and led the women in song and dance unto the Lord, "*And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.*" Clearly, Miriam was designated as a prophetess. In Ephesians 4:11, we have the five ministry gifts. Obviously, a woman can be a prophetess.

I would like to make two comments about women being in the ministry. First, the brethren should accept such sisters who have a call to the ministry. Secondly, the sisters who have a God-given calling should realise that they can also have a calling, like Miriam. This is very important, because in some countries woman are not accepted; and they struggle, thinking that the ministry is only for the brethren.

3. Bitter Waters

One thing we have to prepare people for in the Christian life is disappointments. After the Red Sea, the children of Israel

travelled for three days in the wilderness and were unable to find water. Then they found water at Marah, but it was bitter and they could not drink it. We read in Exodus 15:22-24, *“So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?”*

There will be places of bitterness along life’s journey for us, as believers. We have to know how to overcome bitterness in our personal lives because bitterness is very dangerous. Hebrews 12:15 says, *“Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.”* Bitterness reproduces very quickly. If one person has bitterness, it will flow into many, many hearts. Bitterness sets in because people harden their hearts when they are hurt, and they resist available grace.

Bitterness comes into our lives when we fail to appropriate God’s grace to overcome disappointments. We may be disappointed in a person, in a situation, or in what a person does to us. However, there is available grace for every trial and for every circumstance. It is *always* possible to overcome and triumph!

What then is the key to overcoming bitterness? We are shown in Exodus 15:25: *“And [Moses] cried unto the LORD; and the LORD showed him a tree, which when he had cast into*

the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them.”

The key was **the tree**, which is a type of **the cross**. To gain the victory over bitterness, (1) we must **go** to the cross, realising that **we have no rights of our own**. After we have gone to the cross, (2) we must take the second step, which is to **forgive**. Forgiveness is rooted in step three, which is (3) **forgetfulness**. We cannot truly forgive unless we can forget what has happened.

In Genesis 41:51, we find a spiritual truth that will bring victory into our lives if we can appropriate it and then practice it, *“And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: For God, said he, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father’s house.”* This verse speaks of Joseph’s firstborn son Manasseh, one of two sons which he had after he came out of prison. Manasseh means “forgetfulness.” Joseph said that the Lord caused him to forget all of his toil and suffering. The name of Joseph’s second son was Ephraim, which means “double fruitfulness.” Therefore, we see that it is forgetfulness that leads us to a fruitful Christian life.

When my wife and I lived and ministered in Switzerland many years ago, we operated a Bible school inside a hotel. We had people from all over Europe asking for counsel. We had many difficult counselling sessions, some of which would go on for hours as people would pour out their hearts and share all the sins they had struggled with. By the grace of God, the key for each situation was given, and they would walk away victorious.

However, I began to feel like a cesspool because I had collected all the knowledge of their sins. When I looked at those dear people again, I could remember everything they had told me. I cried out to God, “Lord, I can’t continue like this.” He replied, “Ask Me for Manasseh (forgetfulness). When you have finished counselling, go back to your room and ask Me to give you Manasseh.”

To illustrate my point, it is like a child who is taking off one hat and putting on another. All you have to do is pray, “Lord, I am taking off this old hat and all its thoughts, and I am putting on a new hat. I am putting on Manasseh.” After this, I could look at these dear people I had counselled, and I could not remember a thing that they had said! God can give you **holy forgetfulness** just like He gave Joseph.

It is wonderful, and necessary to have God’s forgetfulness in counselling. Many people are in need of a trusted counsellor whom they can counsel with, and perhaps even confess to, in order to put things right—someone who will not repeat their sensitive struggles to another. They do not want to have to look at that counsellor afterwards and think, “He has a storehouse of all my secrets.”

With a Manasseh, I could literally look at a person and not remember what he had shared with me. When people have come back to me and asked if I remember what they had told me, I could not even remember counselling with them. Forgetfulness—it is so powerful. It keeps our spirits free!

The first place *holy forgetfulness* should be practiced is in the home. It should work with husbands and wives, and between parents and children.

I cannot overemphasise the need for *holy forgetfulness* for pastors. A young pastor will probably find in his first congregation the same kind of people King David had in the wilderness—the kind who were in debt, distressed, and discontented (see 1 Samuel 22:2). This is usually the case, unless you are succeeding a godly pastor who has cleaned everything up for you, which is rather doubtful. We will often have all kinds of people saying things about us—things that are true, and some that are untrue. The most painful are the words that are true, because with the untrue we can let the words roll off like water off a duck’s back.

When someone does say something, go quickly to God and ask for your *holy forgetfulness*. By this means, we can have peace and victory. Start practicing this right away so that you can triumph in the waters of Marah (bitter experiences). When you have the victory in your own life, you can impart it to others.

The quality of forbearance means “to be able to bear long with an evil in a person’s heart that God has not dealt with yet.” Paul said in Ephesians 4:1-2, “*I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love.*”

As a leader, you may have a serious need in your own life, and you may say, “God, please deal with this.” However, God may deal with everything else first. Eventually, He will remedy the thing we were most concerned about. God has His order when dealing with issues in a person’s life. Sometimes it is necessary to have certain people in the congregation who have real problems which God has not dealt with yet. This is for the purpose of developing a special quality of forbearance in our lives. We must learn to forbear the flaws we see in others, and also those we see in ourselves.

I can think of several people whom we have had to be in contact with quite frequently. They are beautiful people, but with serious problems in their lives. At times we have felt as though we would have to break fellowship with them because of these problems. However, God has repeatedly said, “I will deal with that in My time, and I am using it to develop forbearance in you.”

Remember, God is desirous of forming leaders. Therefore, He not only selects the pastor for the congregation, but He also hand-picks the congregation for the pastor. **Hence, we should thank God for our congregation, which has been expertly chosen to work out His nature and qualities in us.**

4. The Lord Our Healer

We have passed by the waters of Marah; now let us move on to Exodus 15:26 where the Lord said, “*If thou wilt diligently*

hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee.” Here we are introduced to Christ, the One who heals us.

Divine healing is in the atonement. In the Great Commission, the Lord said in Mark 16:15-18, *“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”* The Lord commanded us to lay hands upon the sick, with a promise that they would recover. Divine healing is a part of the gospel.

5. Elim

The children of Israel travelled to Elim where there were 12 wells of water and 70 palm trees (Ex. 15:27, cf. Num. 33:9). This verse reveals several truths concerning the development and organisation of a church. The number “twelve” speaks of government, the governing body of a church. A well is for quenching the thirst of others. A leader, therefore, is a well that must have water springing up in his own heart, flowing out to others (Prov. 10:11).

The Lord Jesus Christ said in John 4:14, “*But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*”

As leaders, we must make sure that our well of bubbling water is always open, and that it does not become stopped up. One way that we can stop or dry up our well is by living in the past. This happens to so many. At a recent conference, we were talking with some visiting brethren about a man we had all known. This is the report that they gave, “He is now living in the past! He is perpetrating what God used to do; he is not living in a present experience of God.” He had remained on a plateau and had not continued on in His walk with God, up His holy mountain. In other words, his well was stopped (cf. Rev. 3:1).

At one of the Bible schools I attended, there was a beautiful couple who later became pastors. I saw them five years later, and the level of our conversation was the same as it had been at Bible school. Unfortunately, they had not moved on in God. Every one of us needs a present experience in God, something God is speaking to us right now.

At Elim, we also see 70 palm trees. Seventy is the number of eldership. Palm trees speak of righteousness (Ps. 92:12). Isaiah 61:3 speaks of “...*trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.*” Therefore, we have here one of the qualities of eldership. Elders are to be like palm trees—straight and righteous. Moreover, people

who are righteous must surround themselves with others who are righteous.

Elim was an oasis in the desert; thus a leader should be an oasis to his flock. At the same time, a leader should be righteous, a well that quenches the thirsty soul, and an example to others.

6. Need for Food

Israel is now presented with another test. There was a shortage of food. We read in Exodus 16:1-3, *“And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt. And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness: And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”*

When Israel was tempted with leanness for a season, they failed the test. We, too, will be tested in this area in one way or another. Economically, we will be tried. God looks for faithfulness even in the lean times. He wants to know if we will serve Him even when our stomach is not fully satisfied.

God answered their cry with manna and with quail, as we read in Exodus 16:4, *“Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.”* God said, “I am giving you a certain portion every day and no more.” Sometimes, for perhaps a lengthy period of time, God parcels out only what we *need* and no more. We have our necessary needs met; but, if I could say it like this, we do not have enough for the lusts. We may not have enough for our desires, but only our needs. I am making reference not only to food here, but also to other areas of life.

Often these problems arise on the mission field. People may say, “I want this, this, and this. I want this type of house. I want a new car. I do not want my children growing up in this area,” and so forth. It breaks my heart, because they are living in Exodus 16:4, where God has limited their resources. They have enough, but they desire additional comforts, even comforts that others may not have. God has given them what is necessary, but they are not content.

Our desires and preferences, therefore, must be crucified in order that we may thank God for whatever He chooses to provide. There is a beautiful Scripture which expresses well the excellent attitude of the Apostle Paul. Paul said, *“Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and*

to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Phil. 4:11-13).

Nothing breaks your heart more than listening to a minister complaining about what he has or does not have. That attitude flows into his message, and the waters that flow from his mouth are both bitter and sweet.

Sometimes God pours upon us in abundance, and we have to learn to live with abundance without lavishing it upon ourselves. Or, as with the prophet Ezekiel, to eat and drink in limited amounts (Ezek. 4:9-11). Paul uses the phrase, “I have learned.” This is not something that comes naturally. It is most necessary to learn to live with what God gives us.

If we want to make it through the wilderness to the Promised Land, and then on to Zion, we must learn to be content with what God gives us (Num. 14:22-23).

Israel’s Disobedience

God had made it very clear that the manna was to be picked up every day, and not stored up. Then, on the sixth day, there was to be a double portion taken so that on the Sabbath (the seventh day), they were able to rest. Some disobeyed, gathering and storing the manna anyway, as we read in Exodus 16:20, “*Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank: and Moses was wroth with them.*”

Therefore in Exodus 16:28, “*And the LORD said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?*” The Israelites were very disobedient.

7. Need for Water

The Israelites Murmur Against Moses Again

In Exodus 17:2-3, we read of how the people were actually ready to stone Moses because of their thirst. They criticised Moses, saying, “*Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the LORD? And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?*” Repeatedly, we find an evil heart of unbelief in the Israelites. They once again wanted to go back to Egypt.

I am thinking of a minister and his wife in France. They had been teachers in a secular school for 15 years before they went into the pastorate. They continually focused on what they had given up, “We have given up fifteen years of seniority to be in the ministry.” They were constantly looking back.

Lot’s wife turned into a pillar of salt because she was constantly looking back. The Israelites did not make it into the Promised Land because they were also always looking back. There is a Scripture in Ecclesiastes 7:10 that warns,

“Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this.” Therefore, we must be very careful in our own lives not to say, “Our former days were better than these.”

Going to the Rock

We read in Exodus 17:4-5, *“And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me. And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go.”* In this case, we see that the Israelites needed water; therefore, God directed Moses to the source of water, and Israel drank. It required the moving on of Moses.

Absolute obedience is necessary for a leader. ***A leader always has to go before the people; a shepherd must always go before the sheep.*** It is a shepherd’s duty to search out what the congregation needs. The leader must not only be at the head of the congregation, but he must also be the spiritual head.

8. War Against Amalek

While Israel was at Rephidim, Amalek came to war against Israel (Ex. 17:8-16). Amalek was Esau’s grandson (Gen. 36:12). As most of you know, Esau was a man of his stomach; therefore, he speaks of fleshly and carnal desires. Thus, the Amalekites represent spirits of carnal desires. One

of the obstacles we will have to fight against and overcome in the congregation is carnality.

This account in Exodus 17:8-16 is very interesting. As long as Moses held up his hands, Israel prevailed. When he let down his hands, Amalek prevailed. The point I want to bring out is this—these battles were not quick battles. They were not over in a few minutes.

Sometimes our battles against carnality and fleshly desires are quite long. *A leader must persevere until he has the final victory so that he and the congregation are fully freed from carnal appetites.* Our goal is to attain to Paul's declaration, "*But godliness with contentment is great gain*" (1 Tim. 6:6).

9. Delegation

In Exodus chapter 18, we have what is termed "Jethrogation." When Jethro (Moses' father-in-law) brought Moses' family to him in the wilderness, Moses went out to meet him and declared all the goodness that God had shown unto the children of Israel (Ex. 18:5).

We read of the account in Exodus 18:10-19, "*And Jethro said, Blessed be the LORD, who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh, who hath delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians. Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them. And Jethro, Moses' father in law, took a burnt*

offering and sacrifices for God: and Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel, to eat bread with Moses' father in law before God. And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening. And when Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even? And Moses said unto his father in law, Because the people come unto me to inquire of God: When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws. And Moses' father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone. Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God."

Jethro was telling Moses, "Do not try to bear this massive burden all by yourself. Choose competent men who can carry the load with you. If you do this, you will be able to endure." Delegation of authority is something every leader must learn.

Exodus 18:20 states the role of a leader: "*And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must*

do.” From the pulpit we teach the congregation the ways, laws, and ordinances of God. We show them the way in which they must walk and the work which they must do.

The art of leadership is based upon the ability to delegate authority and responsibility to others. As your church grows, you must spend more time building up your leadership, and giving them responsibilities.

Today, these responsible individuals (undershepherds) are commonly called home group leaders. The qualifications for these leaders are listed in Exodus 18:21-22, “*Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee.*”

We must remember that the pastor should meet with the group of leaders *separately*—apart from the congregation—and instruct them. There is another Scripture in the New Testament that goes along with this, “*And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also*” (2 Tim. 2:2). The key to good delegation is to teach your undershepherds; and they in turn will help you to look after the rest of the flock.

One person can look after 10,000 people if he is well organised and has a team of well-trained under-shepherds assisting him. However, at times it is the will of God to divide the congregation into several churches, for it might multiply better that way. It all depends on the location, and of course, the mind of the Lord.

Having multiple services on Sunday morning is not always the best set-up, because you tend to have two congregations in one church. It can be very difficult.

In the Acts of the Apostles, they had a problem coping with the multiplication. We read in Acts 6:1, *“And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations.”* The apostles needed many other qualified under-shepherds to help look after the sheep and take care of other menial affairs.

In Acts 6:2-4, they took counsel together and made a decision, *“Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.”*

On a personal level, with all the responsibilities I have (with the leadership of a fellowship and a Bible school, and also with many commitments to other countries), I must delegate

authority. People continually come up and ask, “May I have this typewriter?” or “What colour should I paint the garbage cans?” I have had to say, “You make the decisions.” A leader cannot have his mind filled up with these things. Therefore, we must appoint people to certain offices and tell them, “Within reason, I have given you the authority. You take the responsibility of solving those matters; and if it is too difficult for you, then come to me.”

God’s whole universe depends on delegation. He equips people for certain responsibilities. The last thing the leader should be doing is using a hammer and nails when he should be studying God’s Word and praying. God has others who can hit a nail on the head! Now, do not go to your church and say, “I am the pastor, and you will not see me with a nail and a hammer.” There are times when ministers might be called upon to help in the menial affairs, especially when the church or ministry is small.

Many years ago, I had the responsibility of overseeing the building of several thousand houses for people in Guatemala after an earthquake; and I climbed the roof and banged in nails. Mercifully, they went in right! All I am saying is that the leader cannot be concerned with all the little details; he just has to ensure that someone else is looking after the menial affairs. It is clear in the Early Church that the senior pastors gave themselves to prayer and the study of the Word.

What is a church? It is a gathering of believers. In some places in Africa, they have no church buildings. In one village in

Kenya, their church was a place under a tree with tree stumps and pieces of wood between them that were used for seats. Actually, we do not need elaborate buildings. God could have a church that is provided by nature. However, this would obviously not work in a city.

In closing, the key to “Jethrogation,” as it is called, is that we choose people of good report to whom we can give both the responsibility and the authority. Once you have appointed someone, you check to see that the job (or task) is done—but do not get involved in the details, let him do his job.

CHAPTER 6

Mount Sinai

1. Trip to Mount Sinai

The Israelites had now come to Mount Sinai, “*In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai. For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount*” (Ex. 19:1-2).

The point I am developing is that when they came to Sinai, they camped before Mount Sinai in the third month; and the feast of the third month is the Feast of Pentecost. Therefore, Sinai is a type of Pentecost, and the events that transpire at Mount Sinai are related to the Pentecostal experience. They are a type of what takes place at the baptism of the Holy Ghost. This is a beautiful truth because so often we equate the baptism of the Holy Ghost simply with speaking in other tongues. In actuality, there are many other blessings wrapped up in the Pentecostal experience.

2. Being Called into God’s Presence

First of all, the Israelites were called into the presence of God. “*And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called*

unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel” (Ex. 19:3). God spoke to Moses very clearly and gave certain promises to Israel. Therefore, we can see that at Mount Sinai we have the presence of God and His voice.

The baptism of the Holy Ghost causes the presence of the Lord to open to us in a completely new way.

The baptism of the Holy Ghost causes the presence of God to open to us in a completely new way. We hear God speaking to us in a way we have not known before.

Borne on Eagle’s Wings

Here are some of the promises that God gave to Israel. In Exodus 19:4, the Lord said, *“Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself.”* God wants us to be “eagle Christians.” An eagle has peculiar characteristics that are very important.

One characteristic of an eagle is that its eye has the ability to see things that are very near, but it also has a telescopic lens that can see things very far away. It is important, as Christians, and especially as leaders, to have eagles’ eyes. We must pay attention to the close-up details of life, yet also have long-range vision.

My wife does not like snakes. This verse in Exodus 19:4 came alive to us when we were missionaries to the Cameroons where there were snakes everywhere. Night comes very rapidly in Africa. When you talk about black Africa, it is very black. One can literally touch the darkness. Obviously, you cannot stop your life at six o'clock in the evening.

There were no roads in the area where we were living, only little pathways to walk on. Not only did we have to carry a lamp, we also had to strap a lamp on our feet so that could shine on the path because there were snakes everywhere. This experience gave us new understanding of Psalm 119:105: *“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”* The Word of God shows us what we need to see down the road, and it also illuminates present circumstances. Such are the eyes of an eagle—they have near and far-ranging vision.

Returning to the subject of my wife and her dislike of snakes, one night, the Lord gave my wife a dream. She was walking through some very thick grass, and a snake was there. However, because it feared her, it slithered off. This dream was actually fulfilled the next day when she was walking in that very same place that she had seen. A snake appeared, saw her and slid away into the undergrowth. Something we had to learn in Africa and in some of these other countries is that God gave Adam, and all of us, dominion over the animal kingdom. If we are not afraid of them, and walk toward them, they will back off. The demons are very afraid of us, not because of what we are, but

because of Who is in us. Snakes are afraid of eagles. ***God wants us to be “eagle Christians” who are not afraid of evil spirits or demons. The darkness does not overcome the light, but the light overcomes the darkness.*** This must always be our attitude.

I remember a dear sister who had to spend a night in a haunted house. People had seen apparitions there, especially in the room in which she was staying. That night, these horrible apparitions rudely awakened her in the night. She simply said, “What are you doing disturbing my peace and my rest? Now go away!” The apparition left, just like that. This is the attitude of the “eagle Christian.” Remember, the eagle goes after the snake; the snake flees from the eagle. It is never the other way around.

God’s Peculiar Treasure

The Lord said in Exodus 19:4-5, “...*I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine.*” The children of Israel, and indeed, those who have been redeemed by Christ in the Church Age, are God’s special treasure because He has paid such a great price for us. We never pay a high price for something that we do not treasure.

A Kingdom of Priests

In Exodus 19:6 the Lord continues, “*And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.*” God’s

plan was for the whole nation to be ordained to become kings and priests. The Church retrieved what Israel lost.

First Peter 2:5,9 refers to the redeemed as being a royal priesthood, *“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”* We are called to be **made** into kings and priests.

Revelation 5:9-10 confirms this, *“And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.”*

First Samuel 2:8 states, *“He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the LORD’S, and he hath set the world upon them.”*

3. Sanctification of the People

In Exodus 19:10, there is a beautiful sanctification of the people, *“And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their*

clothes.” Some may ask how this relates to the baptism of the Holy Ghost—actually, it is a qualification for receiving the baptism. This qualification is sometimes overlooked. It consists of obedience—we must obey Him. This is brought out in Acts 5:32, “*And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.*” **Thus, there is a certain measure of obedience that is required to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost.**

Another pastor and I were having a meeting for those who wished to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost. A certain woman who came forward for prayer had been crying out to God, “Lord, baptise me in the Holy Ghost.” This lady pastor said in her heart, “Lord, surely this sister is going to receive.” Then the Lord opened her eyes, and she saw this woman as God saw her. At that point she understood why the woman could not receive the Spirit. She was not living in obedience.

I would like to give you another example. A brother was seeking the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and as he was praying, the Lord spoke to him, “Go into the other room and release the bird in your bird cage.” This bird had not been born in captivity. He had captured it and brought it into captivity. In complete childlike obedience to God, he went into the other room, opened the birdcage and released the bird. As soon as he obeyed, he received the baptism of the Holy Ghost!

Sometimes God requires an act of obedience before He will give us the baptism of the Holy Ghost. He is the Baptiser! So, be very careful that these truths are stressed to your people.

There are times when God says, “I will baptise you in the Holy Ghost, but I require you first to respond to that thing I have been speaking to you about.” Therefore, we must observe all the Scripture.

When seeking the baptism of the Holy Spirit, it is good for people to just come and stand in quietness before the Lord so that He can speak to them. If there is anything in their lives that God is putting His finger on because they are not obeying, they just have to put that right before praying. It is amazing! People who have been seeking the baptism for years receive their baptism as soon as they fulfil a little act of required obedience.

4. Receiving the Law

In Exodus 20, we see that Moses received the Law—the Ten Commandments. They are basically broken up into two parts, on two pieces of stone. The first part pertains to our duties towards God (commandments 1-4). The second part addresses our duties towards our fellow man (commandments 5-10).

We have to be very clear that the Ten Commandments have significance today. Nowhere is it even suggested that these Ten Commandments are repealed. The Lord Jesus Christ taught us clearly in Matthew 5:17, “*Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.*” How does the Law affect us? Romans 8:4 tells us plainly that the Law is to be fulfilled in us, “*That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*”

What is the new covenant? The answer is found in Hebrews 8:10, *“I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.”* It is not the law written upon pieces of stone, but it is God’s Law written upon our hearts. Remember, at the time of the baptism of the Holy Ghost there should be a fresh appreciation for the laws of God.

The Ten Commandments

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me (20:3).
2. Thou shalt not make any graven images or serve them (20:4-5).
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain (20:7).
4. Keep the sabbath day (20:8).
5. Honour thy father and thy mother (20:12).
6. Thou shalt not kill (20:13).
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery (20:14).
8. Thou shalt not steal (20:15).
9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour (20:16).
10. Thou shalt not covet (20:17).

5. Confirming of Covenant with Israel

In Exodus 23:20-33, God marvellously confirmed His covenant with Israel. The Lord beckoned Moses and the elders to come further up the mountain unto Himself in Exodus 24:1-2, *“And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off. And Moses alone shall come near the LORD: but they shall not come nigh; neither shall the people go up with him.”*

Then we read in Exodus 24:7-8, *“And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words.”*

6. Forty Days and Nights on the Mount

Moses spent 40 days and nights in the mount (Ex. 24:18). We read in Exodus 24:9-10: *“Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness.”* They literally saw God. I am of the persuasion that at the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the Lord really does become very clear. Sometimes we have visions of Christ or visions of heaven, and this is what they

experienced. All this happened on Mount Sinai. I am trying to present these truths to you so that you will see the extent of the blessings of the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

7. Tabernacle Pattern

During this time Moses also received the pattern for the tabernacle (Ex. 25-31).

The Tabernacle had three sections:

1. The Outer Court (100 x 50 x 5 cubits)
2. The Holy Place (20 x 10 x 10 cubits)
3. The Holy of Holies (10 x 10 x 10 cubits)

Therefore the total surface area of the outer court is 1,500. In biblical numerics, 1,500 represents the 1,500 years of the Age of the Law, from Moses to Christ. The measurement of the Holy Place, because it has a covering, becomes a cubit measurement of 2,000 which represents the Age of the Church, from Christ's first coming to His second coming. The measurement of the Holy of Holies is 1,000, which represents the millennial reign of Christ on earth. Thus, we see that with the baptism of the Holy Ghost (Mount Sinai) comes an understanding of God's purposes for the Church Age.

8. Golden Calf

The children of Israel grew impatient waiting for Moses to return from Mount Sinai. We read in Exodus 32:1 about how

they came to Aaron demanding, *“And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.”* We read in Exodus 32:4 of Aaron, Moses’ assistant pastor and a prophet, making a golden calf and saying, *“These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.”*

We see how they put their idolatry and the worship of God together, as recorded in Exodus 32:5, *“And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow is a feast to the LORD.”* Would to God this only happened in Israel, but regretfully, this mixture of worship, idolatry, and spirits happens in Pentecostal churches, too.

I remember that years ago when I was in a church in Switzerland, there was such a mixture during the service. God opened my eyes and I saw on the platform an angel of the Lord and a demon. The anointing was there, but there was also influence from other things. Why? Because the people were not whole-hearted, and there was sin in the camp.

9. Response of Levites to the Call

Moses stood in the gate of the camp and said, *“Who is on the Lord’s side?”* Then the Levites responded to the call and stood on the Lord’s side (Ex.32:26). The other 11 tribes did not

choose to stand on the Lord's side. There is a choice. When it comes right down to it, who is really on the Lord's side? Levi had to take a stand against his own brethren.

Sometimes when we are called upon to make a decision between following Christ and being with the brethren, by the grace of God, we must make the right decision to side with Christ. If we want to be everyone's friend, we will never make it to Zion. When Israel finally captured Mount Zion many years later, it was mainly the tribe of Levi who dwelt there.

As we have stated before, concerning the journey—although it was a geographical journey from Egypt into the Promised Land and on to Zion, it is a pattern and type of the journey each of us must take in our Christian life. As leaders, we will be responsible for bringing our churches unto Zion. Therefore, it is not merely an academic study but a way of life.

10. Intercession of Moses for Israel

Over the next few points, I would like to bring out some of the problems which those in leadership face. It is one thing to look at it from the children of Israel's point of view; it is another to look at it from Moses' point of view.

We must understand the awesome temptation that a leader will face, and the trying of his attitude. The temptation is described in Exodus 32:9-10, "*And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked*

people: Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation.” God said, “I will do away with them and make of you a greater nation.” Yet, Moses thought more of the children of God than he did of himself. He was thinking of God’s honour. Here we see the *attitude* of a true leader; Moses identified himself with the people. (See Ezekiel 20:10-17.)

Moses interceded for Israel again in Exodus 32:31-32, “*And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.*”

In Romans 9:1-3 Paul said, “*I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.*” Sometimes, God requires a leader to intercede and turn the wrath of God away from the people when they are so rebellious.

A leader has to bring the congregation with him. Oh, the problems that Moses faced! One of them was the apostasy (temporary) of the assistant pastor, his own brother, Aaron. Yet through it all, Moses was able to overcome. It takes a great man to overcome all these problems. The attitude of so many is, “Well, I’m going on anyway.” Moses’ attitude was “Lord, bring them all in.”

A leader needs compensations because of the added pressures. This is recognised in the business world. Those who administrate the top positions have much compensation. They are given extra cars, houses, and trips abroad. I am not suggesting this is what we should have. Our compensation, spiritually, is that we have a relationship with God and more of His presence. The Levites were not given an inheritance in the Promised Land; their inheritance was the Lord Himself (Deut. 10:9).

11. God Speaking to Him Face to Face

The compensation Moses received was that God spoke to him face to face as a man speaks to his friend, as seen in Exodus 33:11, “*And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.*” We see his response to the Lord in Exodus 33:15, “*If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.*” Moses was very aware of the fact that the presence of God had to be there all the time. It is so important that we do not undertake anything without the presence of God.

Moses cried out in Exodus 33:18, “*I beseech thee, show me thy glory.*” Moses did not ask anything for himself; he only longed to see God’s glory. **A leader has to be finely tuned to the point that he only desires one thing in life—Christ Himself.**

King David said in Psalm 27:4, “*One thing have I 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.” As king, David could have had virtually anything a person could desire, but all he wanted was the Lord.

We can see this same heart cry in the Apostle Paul when he exclaimed in Philippians 3:8, *“Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.”*

Believers, and especially leaders, will be destroyed if their desires and affections are not completely upon the Lord. If the utmost desire of a leader is to have a large church, a beautiful building, a great deal of money, popularity, or a prestigious position, he will surely be ruined.

What is our real desire? In Scripture, the people who possessed all of these blessings had one desire—the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. We can be disappointed in every other area in life but still triumph, because the joy and fulfilment of the presence of God cannot be taken away from us. The Lord said of Mary, “Mary hath chosen the better part that cannot be taken away from her” (Lk. 10:39-42). She just sat in the presence of the Lord.

I have had the privilege of meeting with many people who are successful in their Christian life. They have told me, “We have a huge congregation and prosperity on every side, but it really does not mean anything to us. All we are really

interested in is meeting with God. We can walk away from all of this if it would mean knowing Christ better.” We should have this attitude in our hearts, because we could lose everything in this life. However, if all these other things do not mean anything to us, we would have lost nothing.

Jesus never grasped for earthly position. Paul said, “*Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God*” (Phil. 2:5-6). This Scripture could be translated, “He thought it not [something to be grasped after].” Do not grasp for position. It means very, very little. **Those things which cannot be lost must be our consuming desire and goal.** You can seemingly have everything and not have the most important thing—Christ Himself.

12. Second Period of Forty Days and Nights on the Mount

Moses spent a second period of 40 days and nights on the mount with God. (Compare Exodus 34:28 with Exodus 24:12-18.) In Exodus 34:6, the Lord described Himself to Moses. The way Jehovah described Himself is very interesting, because it is the way He desires to be known:

1. God is merciful
2. God is gracious
3. God is longsuffering
4. God is abundant in goodness
5. God is abundant in truth

These are the five most important attributes of God's nature. So, when we walk with God, we must major in these five areas. The first quality that God wanted man to know about Himself is that He is merciful. He wants to be known as a merciful God. This is the attitude of the head of state. The head of state alone has the ability to show mercy, to pardon the condemned. When we study the Tabernacle of Moses, we will find that the highest revelation of God is in the mercy seat. God camps over the mercy seat.

Goodness means "incapable of doing evil." Years ago, the Lord appeared to me and said, "Touch me; I am altogether good. I am incapable of doing evil." Jesus said in John 14:6, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*" God is merciful, gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. We must major in these five qualities as well.

13. Building of the Tabernacle

The construction of the Tabernacle of Moses began in Exodus 36 and was completely finished by chapter 40 (Ex. 40:2,33). The dimensions and details of the Tabernacle of Moses started in Exodus 25:8, but were interrupted by the golden calf episode and the intercession of Moses in chapters 32 to 34. What exactly was the tabernacle? It was a tent for God to dwell in, or a sanctuary. It also could represent a church. While still encamped at Sinai, Moses was given all the ordinances for the feasts and offerings, and all the rules for the priesthood. The Tabernacle was God's

sanctuary, as seen in Exodus 25:8, “*And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.*”

A brief review of the steps in the journey of the children of Israel might help us. Moses brought the congregation of Israel out of Egypt. Spiritually, this represents the salvation experience. Then he led them through the Red Sea, which symbolises water baptism. From there, he took them to Mount Sinai, which speaks of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The next major event was the construction of the Tabernacle, which represents the building of a church.

When the congregation of a church has been baptised in the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit of God is flowing, this is the time to build a church. Wait for the blessing of God, for when it is there, there will also be a flow of finances to build. Until God plants us permanently, we have to camp in all kinds of little buildings and home group type settings.

14. Consecration of Aaron as the High Priest

In Leviticus, all the ordinances and laws for the feasts and offerings of Israel were instituted. In Leviticus 8:6, God told Moses to consecrate Aaron and his sons, “*And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water.*” Before we can be consecrated, we must be spiritually washed. Then Moses anointed Aaron in Leviticus 8:12, “*And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron’s head, and anointed him, to sanctify him.*” It is the anointing of the Holy Spirit that will sanctify us and consecrate us for ministry.

Think for a moment of the graciousness of Moses. Aaron is the one who introduced idolatry to the children of Israel with the golden calf. Just think about that. Here is Moses, who is whole-hearted for God, up on the mountain receiving revelation from God. While he is on the mountain, his own brother, his own assistant pastor, is leading the children of Israel into idolatry. How gracious of God and of Moses to appoint Aaron as the high priest. How essential it is to overlook people's transgressions!

God is so able to restore and fulfil a ministry in someone who has grievously sinned. I am leading up to a point that I want to emphasise again. We might have an assistant pastor who turns on us, but then God says, "Accept him back; he has learned his lesson well; he has truly repented." Being able to accept him back is the mark of a great leader. The important issue is that the man at the top does not obliterate one who has failed. The greatness of Moses is shown here.

15. Numbering of the People

We have seen that the Tabernacle of Moses was erected and completed in Exodus 40. In Leviticus, the feasts and offerings were instituted. Also, Aaron and his sons were consecrated for the priesthood. Now we come to the book of Numbers, where we learn that a census was taken of the tribes. Then the camp was divinely organised, each tribe in its proper place, to facilitate orderly mobility when they marched toward the Promised Land (Num. 2). Only the tribe of Levi was separated from the rest of Israel for the service of the Tabernacle (Num. 1:47-54).

16. Passover Is Kept

In Numbers chapter nine, we see that the Israelites celebrated the Feast of Passover exactly one year after coming out of Egypt, on the fourteenth day of the first month. At this point, they had been at Sinai for about ten months (Num. 9:1-14). Everything was now prepared to advance to Kadesh-Barnea near the Canaan border.

17. Enlisting the Help of Hobab

In Numbers 10:11-13, we read that after being at Mount Sinai for 11 months, the children of Israel resumed their journey toward Canaan, *“And it came to pass on the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from off the tabernacle of the testimony. And the children of Israel took their journeys out of the wilderness of Sinai; and the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran. And they first took their journey according to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.”* They left Sinai in the second month of the second year, having arrived in the third month of the previous year.

In Numbers 10:29,31, we read, *“And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses’ father in law, We are journeying unto the place of which the LORD said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the LORD hath spoken good concerning Israel. And he said, Leave us not, I pray thee; forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness,*

and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes.” Even though Moses was more spiritual, he pleaded for Hobab’s input and help. This shows the great humility of Moses.

Moses, who knew God so well, was dependent upon experts in the fields to help him. It is good to ask God to surround you with specialists. It is absolutely impossible for one man, no matter how spiritual he is, to know everything. Isaac Newton, who lived in the seventeenth century, was one of the last men who knew something about everything. At that time, knowledge had only been given to a certain degree. However, today that is not possible. When we have a church, we need to ask the Lord to give us the specialists that we need. God can fill our places so that every need is met, including craftsmen and sound technicians.

Moses, who was such a great person, depended upon Hobab to be his eyes, as he knew the wilderness better than Moses did. May we meditate upon Moses’ attitude.

CHAPTER 7

Sinai to Kadesh-Barnea

1. God's Fire Consumes Murmurers

The children of Israel complained once again even after all God had done for them. Therefore, God consumed them with fire. We read of this account in Numbers 11:1-3, *“And when the people complained, it displeased the LORD: and the LORD heard it; and his anger was kindled; and the fire of the LORD burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp. And the people cried unto Moses; and when Moses prayed unto the LORD, the fire was quenched. And he called the name of the place Taberah: because the fire of the LORD burnt among them.”*

2. Mixed Multitude Lusts for Food

We read of another problem in Numbers 11:4-6, *“And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic: But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes.”* God provided the Israelites with food, but they wanted the food that they were accustomed to in Egypt: cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, garlic, and meat.

God graciously gives us enough nourishing food, but sometimes He does not give us the food we prefer or are accustomed to. English food is very plain. I trust that none of you who love rich food will be called to England. The French food is superb.

Years ago, I went from England to France, and as an Englishman, I was accustomed to the plain food. Suddenly, before me was placed rich food I had never eaten before. However, do you know what my appetite cried out for? English fruitcake! It was terrible. I was trying to get the victory over my desire for English fruitcake. Deliverance came in the form of an English missionary lady who said to me, “I know just what you need. Will you come for four o’clock tea?” When I arrived, she said, “I know just what you want.” And down from her shelf came a delightful English fruitcake. I told that story once in New Zealand, and eleven fruitcakes appeared at the next service. Now every time I go back, there is always a fruitcake. I wish I had fruit (spiritual) like that from every message I preach!

In some of our seminars overseas, we provide enough food for everyone. However, in some countries, when we provide meat and vegetables but not rice, they think they have not eaten. Thus, appetite preference is a universal problem.

One of my former students encountered this problem in the Cameroons. He wanted to move a pastor from one church to another, but the pastor said, “I can’t go, Massa, they don’t cook like I do.” We have to gain the victory over our appetites

so that we eat what is set before us (1 Cor. 10:27). This is the only way we are going to overcome in our ministry overseas. One of my friends who is a missionary in Africa ate only rice for nine months. Another friend in South America lived virtually on bananas for several years. He said to me, "I did not know that it was possible to serve bananas in so many different ways."

Moses had to endure the constant complaining of the people. Pastors often come to me and say, "I don't know if I can stand it any longer. I cannot bear to go into the pulpit another day." When I ask, "Why?" They reply, "The people complain, they grumble, and they are angry and upset with everything. I cannot do anything right. Nothing pleases them." However, Moses took the matter to the Lord.

3. Crying Out to the Lord

We read in Numbers 11:10-11, "*Then Moses heard the people weep throughout their families, every man in the door of his tent: and the anger of the LORD was kindled greatly; Moses also was displeased. And Moses said unto the LORD, Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? and wherefore have I not found favour in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me?*" What a hard place for Moses to find himself! God was displeased; the people were upset; and the leader was in the middle.

Years ago, in a situation where the problems were innumerable, the Lord gave me a vision. In the vision, He showed me two millstones. One millstone was moving in one

direction, the other was moving in the opposite direction. The Lord was going clockwise and the people were going counter-clockwise. The people were moving contrary to God. Then I saw a little olive between the millstones. I was the little olive, and I was being crushed between the two. This is how an olive becomes oil and loses its identity. ***This is the key to the anointing. It is, in the words of the Apostle Paul, being “pressed out of measure” (2 Cor. 1:8).***

Nursing Fathers and Mothers

Moses said to the Lord in Numbers 11:12-13, *“Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers? Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh, that we may eat.”*

Recently, the Lord gave me a vision of a multitude of babies. The Lord said, “Multitudes are going to be birthed into the kingdom of God very soon in this coming revival, and I need nursing fathers and mothers.”

Those of us who have little ones know that they need a lot of attention. We cannot expect from an infant what we would from a four or five-year-old, or a ten or twenty-year-old. There is a new wave of revival coming; and the Lord said, “You are to prepare those who can be nursing fathers and mothers to the numerous infants.” Remember, we have to care for them.

Moses Unable to Bear the People Alone

In Numbers 11:14-15, Moses said to God: *“I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favour in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness.”* Moses felt so overwhelmed by the burden of having to care for all of the Israelites that he even asked the Lord to take his life.

I have heard pastors cry out to the Lord to take their lives as they cannot take the conflicts and pressures of the ministry anymore. Many people, in their zeal to do something for the Lord, ask the Lord to give them a church in which they can minister. However, they are unaware of difficult situations like this awaiting them. The conflict is not just in the church—it can also spill over into the city. We can have a whole city against us, and be a target of controversy.

We would do well to take note of these verses if we are called to be leaders, because Moses is a pattern for leadership.

4. Appointing of the Seventy Elders

God’s answer to Moses’ cry is given in Numbers 11:16-17, *“And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down and talk with thee*

there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.” The Lord instructed Moses to gather 70 elders to help him carry the burden of leadership.

There is an interesting truth here. In order to fulfil a ministry or a task, God gives the amount of the anointing of the Holy Spirit that is necessary. Thus there was an anointing upon Moses sufficient to carry these people. However, a portion of the Spirit had to be taken off Moses and placed upon the 70 elders so that they might have the necessary anointing to share the burden.

If we have a little flock, the anointing will be quite small. The larger the flock, the greater the responsibilities; thus there must be a commensurate increase of the anointing, according to our responsibilities.

For example, when I was in Ghana teaching 150 leaders, the anointing was strong, but that Sunday morning, when speaking to 2,000 members of the congregation, the anointing was actually weaker. This was due to the fact that the level of spirituality of the members was considerably weaker than the level of spirituality of the 150 leaders.

The Apostle Paul said, “*But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ*” (Eph. 4:7). Therefore, grace (which is divine enablement) is given to us according to our duties. God gives what is necessary.

5. Moses' Generous Attitude Toward Other Prophets

In Numbers 11:25, the Lord took a portion of the anointing that was upon Moses and placed it upon the 70 elders, *“And the LORD came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease.”* When the 70 elders received the same anointing that was upon the prophet Moses, they began to prophesy.

We read in Numbers 11:26-28, *“But there remained two of the men in the camp, the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and the spirit rested upon them; and they were of them that were written, but went not out unto the tabernacle: and they prophesied in the camp. And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them.”*

This was too much for Joshua, especially when two of them, Eldad and Medad, prophesied at that time. He told Moses, “You are supposed to be the one prophesying, not them.” I have heard some ministers who have had the same attitude as Joshua, telling their congregations that only the pastors of the church can prophesy. Note, however, the generous attitude of Moses towards them in Numbers 11:29, *“Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the LORD’S people were prophets, and that the LORD*

would put his spirit upon them!” **The desire of a true minister is to develop people to go on to greater heights than he himself has attained.** For example, if a man is a teacher, it is to his own glory to lift people up to a higher level of understanding than he himself has attained, by giving his pupils a shortcut into the knowledge of God’s Word.

6. Those Who Lusted for Meat Are Buried

In Numbers 11:31-32, the Lord miraculously provided quails for the children of Israel to eat, *“And there went forth a wind from the LORD, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp, as it were a day’s journey on this side, and as it were a day’s journey on the other side, round about the camp, and as it were two cubits high upon the face of the earth. And the people stood up all that day, and all that night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quails: he that gathered least gathered ten homers: and they spread them all abroad for themselves round about the camp.”*

However, judgment was brought upon those who lusted after the meat, as recorded in Numbers 11:33-35, *“And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD smote the people with a very great plague. And he called the name of that place Kibrothhattaavah: because there they buried the people that lusted. And the people journeyed from Kibrothhattaavah unto Hazeroth; and abode at Hazeroth.”*

They were slain with a very great plague from the Lord, and they were buried. It is very difficult for a leader to see God judging the congregation. The leader has to perform the funerals of those who are judged.

7. Enduring the Criticism of Aaron and Miriam

In Numbers chapter 12, Moses had to endure the criticism of his own brother and sister, Aaron and Miriam. We would have thought that Aaron had learned his lesson. The assistant pastor should have been eternally grateful to the pastor for restoring him to ministry, but it was not so.

Miriam was spoken of first, possibly because it was a question regarding the wife of Moses. Miriam seems to be the chief culprit here because she is the one God smote with leprosy, but Aaron went along with her criticism which he should not have done. The two who were nearest to Moses turned against him at this moment and criticised him because of his wife.

There is reason to believe that Zipporah, the first wife of Moses, had died for she is never mentioned again in Scripture. Moses then married an Ethiopian woman. The verse is vague and inconclusive, for Ethiopia had a mixture of races, both white and black. It is a very difficult passage; therefore, I will not comment on it because we do not have any substantial evidence as to the race of the new wife. Nonetheless, Miriam and Aaron were criticising Moses. Moses had to endure this criticism, yet he endured it with a spirit of meekness. God

frowned upon their criticism and came down. The Lord's response to their criticism of Moses is remarkable, "*Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed*" (Num. 12:6-9). God took it personally when people criticised Moses.

Miriam became leprous; and again Moses pleads for mercy. Do you see the tremendous burdens of the ministry? The leader is the one man who cannot fail, cannot crack, and cannot give up. The leader has to be a pillar. He has the responsibility to see it through; he cannot just walk away. This is why it takes years to develop leadership.

8. Purpose of the Wilderness

1. To deal with sin in our lives—The Lord uses the wilderness to deal with sin in our lives. In Leviticus 23:17, the offering on the day of Pentecost was loaves of bread baked with leaven, which represents sin. Therefore, the baptism of the Holy Ghost does not deal with all of the sin in our lives. There is another feast called the Feast of Atonement where the sin nature is dealt with. This takes place at the crossing of the river Jordan.

2. To produce faith and meekness in our lives—We read in Song of Solomon 3:6, “*Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?*” By comparing the nine spices and fruits in Song of Solomon 4:12-14 with the nine fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23, we can understand the spiritual significance of myrrh and frankincense. Myrrh represents meekness and frankincense symbolises faith.

3. To make us experts in spiritual warfare—The children of Israel had to learn how to do warfare in the wilderness so that they would be prepared to defeat the enemies in the Promised Land. Song of Solomon 3:8 illustrates this, “*They all hold swords, being expert in war: every man hath his sword upon his thigh because of fear in the night.*”

4. To humble and prove us—We read in Deuteronomy 8:2 that one of the purposes of the wilderness was to humble the children of Israel, “*And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.*” It is to see if we will be content with whatever God gives us in the wilderness (Deut. 8:16). Will we be thankful and satisfied with rice or other food we are not accustomed to?

5. To give us the treasures of darkness—We read in Isaiah 45:3, “*And I will give thee the treasures of darkness,*

and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.” In the wilderness, we will experience times of darkness. There are treasures in darkness that we do not find in light. There are certain things that God can only teach us in darkness.

6. To see if we will or will not be chosen of God—The Lord says in Isaiah 48:10, *“Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.”* The wilderness is a place of testing. Jeremiah 2:6 says, *“Neither said they, Where is the LORD that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, that led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of drought, and of the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt?”*

CHAPTER 8

Kadesh-Barnea

1. Sending of the Twelve Spies to View the Land

Numbers chapters 13 and 14 cover the account at Kadesh-Barnea, located on the border of the Promised Land. The Lord instructed Moses to send 12 spies to view the land: *“Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them”* (Num. 13:2).

These 12 spies spent 40 days in the Promised Land. Their activities are recorded in Numbers 13:21-25, *“So they went up, and searched the land from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, as men come to Hamath. And they ascended by the south, and came unto Hebron; where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the children of Anak, were. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs. The place was called the brook Eshcol, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence. And they returned from searching of the land after forty days.”*

2. Evil Report of the Ten Spies

We see the evil report of the ten spies in Numbers 13:27-28, *“And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there.”* They said that they were unable to possess the land because their enemies were greater than God’s people.

It is true that when God gives us an inheritance, the former inhabitants in that place have to be dislodged. We should not fear evil spirits, for they are afraid of us (1 Jn. 4:4).

We must have deliverance from fear in our lives. There is a difference between the fear of the Lord and phobia. Godly fear is the desire to please the Lord and a cautiousness not to displease Him in any way or come short of His purposes. It is comparable to the fear a wife should have toward her husband. She just wants to do everything that pleases him; this is something engendered in marriage. If we understand this, then we will understand the difference between the fear of the Lord and being fearful.

Now in Numbers 14:1-4, we see that the negative report of the ten spies affected the attitude of the whole congregation of Israel, *“And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the*

whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt? And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.” Whenever there was trouble, the children of Israel wanted to return to Egypt. They were out of Egypt but Egypt was not out of them.

Many years ago while I was visiting a church in Australia, the Lord quickened this passage from Numbers to my wife and me for the church. We admonished them that God had a purpose for them and wanted them to move on with Him. After we finished speaking, we went down into the congregation. Then the pastor of the church led the church in prayer. I will never forget what followed.

One of the elders got up and prayed, “Lord, we are well content with the wilderness. We don’t want to go on. We are comfortable here.” A spirit of unbelief had come upon this elder, and he had become a channel for a creative but negative prophecy. The same spirit that dominated them was the one in Israel in the wilderness.

Several years later I went back to the same church for the installation of another pastor. While I was at the pulpit, the Lord said, “Take a man and get him to take your belt and bind your hands. Then say to the congregation, ‘You have bound the hands of the pastors I have sent you.’” After I

told them what the Lord said, the Lord gave me a flashback of that prayer meeting seven years before, and I said, “That man and that spirit stopped you from going in, but now God is appointing yet another pastor. He is going to take you in.”

Mercifully, I was unaware that the man who had prayed that prayer was sitting in the balcony, for otherwise I could not have said it. It would not have been gracious. The congregation wept, and acknowledged the truth of the matter. This time, they consecrated themselves to go in. Apparently, there is a real move of the Spirit in that church today.

What I am trying to say is this—the journey of the children of Israel is repeated time and time again in local churches. There are some churches that decide to go on and other churches that are full of revival, but decide to stay where they are. In one charismatic group, before the guest minister was invited to come to speak to them, he was informed, “We want nothing deep. We only want salvation and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We just want testimonies.” **Most assuredly, God allows people to decide what level they want.**

3. Attitude of Joshua and Caleb

Not all of the 12 spies adopted a negative attitude. The attitude of Caleb and Joshua was “We are well able.” This is based on Numbers 14:8 which continues, “*If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey.*”

4. The Lord's Seeking to Destroy the Unbelieving

The Lord was so displeased with the children of Israel that He again wanted to destroy them (Num. 14:11-20, Ex. 32:10-14). He spoke to Moses in Numbers 14:11-12, *“How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have showed among them? I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they.”* This was the second time Moses was tested in this same area (Ex. 32:10). Moses was “fed up” with the people, too, because they were going to keep him out of the Promised Land.

Another point to consider is that Caleb and Joshua could not go into the land until God's time. Israel was also holding them back. **I want you to understand that when you are a pastor in a congregation, you might be on fire, but the congregation may not. If that is the case, they are going to hold you back; but you must remain with them.** Do you see the character a leader must have?

We are speaking of three great spiritual leaders here: Moses, Joshua, and Caleb. Moses did not get in because of a hard-hearted, rebellious congregation. Joshua and Caleb had to wander another 38 years because of them.

A congregation has a tremendous impact on the leadership. In actuality, they provoked the spirit of Moses so that he

reacted indiscreetly. Imagine what he had put up with all this time! If Moses had pastored a decent congregation, his spirit would not have been provoked, and he would have gotten into Canaan land (Ps. 106:33).

It is actually deeper than that, however, because Moses represented the Law. Therefore, if Moses had gone into the land, it would have meant the Law could take you into the Promised Land. Therefore one must balance this. Looking at it from another angle, Moses could never have gone in because it would have meant that the Law could get us into the rest of God. Joshua took them in later. He represented a new order, which was grace.

5. Moses Pleading for the Honour of God

As with the account in Exodus 32:10-14, Moses pleads for the honour of God and refuses the honour of becoming a greater nation. He was pleading for a people who had caused him much grief. Moses was truly one of the greatest men of all time.

6. Reviewing of the Ten Trials of the Wilderness

The Lord said in Numbers 14:22, *“Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice...”* There were ten trials in the wilderness, and Israel failed in all of

them. God then swore in His wrath that they would never enter into His rest, which was Canaan land.

Every test should have been a stepping-stone. Instead, Israel made it a stumbling block. The Spirit (represented by the cloud) led them into each difficulty, so that God could show Himself strong on their behalf, bring deliverance, and increase their faith. It is very important for us to review the ten trials of the children of Israel in the wilderness because we will face the same trials in our Christian walk.

The Ten Trials in the Wilderness

1. Opposition from the world: When the children of Israel left Egypt, Pharaoh came after them and tried to pull them back into bondage. Worldly friends and temptations try to lure the newly redeemed.

2. Bitter water: At Marah, the children of Israel were confronted with bitter water. Every believer will be tried by bitter experiences and disappointments. Bitter waters are made sweet only when the tree (the cross) is put into the waters.

3. Hunger: In the wilderness, the children of Israel experienced hunger. This represents economic trials. We will experience times when we do not have a lot of money or the things that we want. God does, however, take care of our needs.

4. Thirst: The children of Israel experienced thirst in the wilderness. Thirst represents dry and boring experiences. We must surmount these.

5. Idolatry: The children of Israel made the golden calf and worshipped it. Inordinate desires and lust must be conquered. Anything that replaces our reliance upon God can be idolatry. Also, it is evil to be in love with the past life.

6. Complaining about circumstances: The children of Israel constantly complained about their circumstances. Complaining causes us not to find favour with God.

7. Unthankfulness: The children of Israel never learned to give thanks to God. They were unthankful for the manna He provided for them; they wanted quails. Unthankfulness is one of the first steps to backsliding (Rom. 1:21).

8. Gluttony: The children of Israel gorged themselves with quail, and the Lord slew many of them. They had a love for pleasant food. Their appetites were not consecrated to God.

9. Criticism against leadership: The children of Israel constantly criticised their leaders, Moses and Aaron. Even Aaron and Miriam criticised Moses, the man who saw God's face.

10. Unbelief: After responding negatively to the first nine tests, Israel's pattern was set, and they failed the tenth and most important trial at Kadesh-Barnea, which was right on

the border of the Promised Land. The ten spies infected the whole congregation with fear and unbelief.

7. Returning of Israel to the Wilderness to Die

The Lord's judgment for their disobedience was that they would not enter into the Promised Land, but would die in the wilderness. The Lord said in Numbers 14:29-34: *“Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I swear to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised. But as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness. And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness. After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.”*

The only two people from the generation (above the age of 20) that came out of Egypt and entered the Promised Land were Joshua and Caleb. They were ready to enter the Promised Land at Kadesh-Barnea, but they were hindered and held back by the children of Israel. Leaders are often

hindered and delayed from entering God's promises by their congregations. However, leaders should not abandon their congregations for this reason, even as Joshua and Caleb did not abandon the children of Israel, but waited another 38 years to enter the Promised Land.

Moses was not permitted to enter the Promised Land because he allowed his spirit to be provoked by the Israelites (Ps. 106:33). Leaders must be careful not to make the same mistake that Moses made. However, if the children of Israel had not been so rebellious, Moses would not have lost control of his spirit and he could have made it into the Promised Land.

8. Contending with the Presumptuous

After God told the children of Israel to return to the wilderness, many of them repented and wanted to enter into the Promised Land. We read in Numbers 14:40-45: *“And they rose up early in the morning, and gat them up into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we be here, and will go up unto the place which the LORD hath promised: for we have sinned. And Moses said, Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment of the LORD? but it shall not prosper. Go not up, for the LORD is not among you; that ye be not smitten before your enemies. For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and ye shall fall by the sword: because ye are turned away from the LORD, therefore the LORD will not be with you. But they presumed to go up unto the hill top: nevertheless the ark of the*

covenant of the LORD, and Moses, departed not out of the camp. Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah.”

The children of Israel presumed to enter the Promised Land, but it was too late. When God says “go,” you go. If God says that you will not go, you cannot go. Here we have the sin of presumption. Referring to the journey of Israel Hebrews 4:7 says, “*Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.*” **God limits a day for us to obey Him and respond to the voice of His Spirit.**

CHAPTER 9

Kadesh-Barnea to Pisgah

Chapter 9 covers a period of 38 years. Israel arrived at Kadesh-Barnea about two years after their exodus from Egypt. At Kadesh-Barnea, they failed their tenth and final test. God was so grieved with that generation that He swore in His wrath that they would never enter into the land (Ps. 95:8-11, Heb. 3:7-19). Their journey from Kadesh-Barnea until the end of the wilderness journey when Moses died on Mount Pisgah spanned 38 years (Deut. 34:1-8).

1. Rebellion of Korah

Two Hundred and Fifty Join the Insurrection

In Numbers 16, we come to what is called the Rebellion of Korah. Two hundred and fifty of the chosen princes of Israel joined Korah, Dathan, and Abiram in a rebellion. They were troubled with jealousy, and their petition was for equal rights.

We read in Numbers 16:1-3, “*Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men: And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown: And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against*

Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD?" This rebellion of Korah was very serious (Jude 1:11). It was an attack, not only against Moses, but also against God (Num. 26:9).

God frowns upon insurrection and subversion of leadership. This is exactly what Lucifer did when he demanded equal rights and equal position with God (Isa. 14:12-14). When Lucifer tried to take over the throne of God, he eroded faith in the established leadership, causing great division among the inhabitants of heaven.

Now this is a very important truth because in our generation, there is a spirit that undermines authority and leadership. In the Church today, there is a tendency to downgrade the pastor. The pastor is an elder, yet not all elders are pastors. You cannot put Moses on the same level as Korah, and you cannot put Korah on the same level as Moses. Moses brings this out very strongly in Numbers 16:9-10, "*Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them? And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also?"* In other words, they had a service, a ministry, but Korah wanted a position and ministry that God had not given him.

This is a widespread problem in the Church today. The Levites had been given the privilege of taking care of God's house. They were anointed to assist the priests, the Aaronites. Only the family of Aaron could be priests (Num. 3:5-10). The priesthood or leadership positions are given by God alone. No one can take this honour unto himself, except one who is called of God, as was Aaron (Heb. 5:1-4).

There must be a clear understanding in our own minds that before the foundation of the world, **it is Christ who has chosen those who will be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. You cannot desire or take the office of any of the five-fold ministry positions (Eph. 4:11) unless there is a divine call and appointment of God.**

Putting this in more simple terms, there are no qualifications given for the five-fold ministry gifts, for these positions are not appointed by man, but by God alone. However, you can desire to be a deacon or an elder if you qualify. First Timothy 3:1-7 states, *“This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop [overseer], he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he*

fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.” The qualifications for elders are given here, and the qualifications for deacons are listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

When man is given the responsibility of choosing, then he must know the qualifications. Thus, man is responsible to choose elders and deacons, but he is not responsible to choose people for the five-fold ministry positions.

In an ordination service for those of the five-fold ministry, the presbyters are simply saying that they recognise these as having been appointed ministers by Christ. Man is not appointing them; it is simply a public recognition that they have been ordained by God. However, in an installation service, we appoint and put people in positions such as deacons and elders. ***Ordination is by God; installation is by man.***

Moses Pleads for the Congregation

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in Numbers 16:21, “*Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.*” Moses fell upon his face and pleaded with God for the congregation, “*O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation?*” (Num. 16:22).

Korah and the Rebellious Are Destroyed

In Numbers 16:32-35, we read of the account, “*And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses,*

and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation. And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also. And there came out a fire from the LORD, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense.”

Fire consumed Korah and the 250 men as the earth opened up, and they all went down in the pit. Then Israel murmured against Moses because Korah was judged, “*But on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the LORD*” (Num. 16:41). This is utterly amazing! The earth opened up, and Moses was held responsible for opening up the earth.

Can you see the attitude of the people? They felt that Moses and God were too harsh. These were the chosen ones of God; they were not like the skid-row sinners. These were the saints of the Most High. Can you see how difficult a church situation can be sometimes? In criticising God and Moses, they were saying, in effect, that they had more compassion than God. This is an example of false mercy and compassion.

How often in cases of insurrection are the sympathisers smitten with blindness and swerved aside from the course of God’s choosing because of siding with men who are subverting God’s leadership.

Moses Again Saves the People from Plague

We read in Numbers 16:44-50, “*And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them as in a moment. And they fell upon their faces. And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them: for there is wrath gone out from the LORD; the plague is begun. And Aaron took as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the congregation; and, behold, the plague was begun among the people: and he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed. Now they that died in the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, beside them that died about the matter of Korah. And Aaron returned unto Moses unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and the plague was stayed.*”

We see the attitude of Moses. Once again he fell upon his face and interceded on behalf of the children of Israel. Nearly 15,000 people died in the plague, but Moses’ intercession spared the lives of many others.

2. Rod of Aaron

In Numbers 17, God commanded the heads of the 12 tribes to be represented, each with a labelled rod. The rod that budded would show which tribe God had chosen for the

priesthood. God chose Aaron's rod, signifying that He had chosen the tribe of Levi.

Sometimes God has to make it very clear whom He has chosen and whom He has not chosen. The miracle of Aaron's rod budding is recorded in Numbers 17:8, *"And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds."* On the day after they placed the 12 rods before the Lord, the rod bearing Aaron's name budded, blossomed, and yielded almonds. This was a tremendous miracle. God caused life to come out of a dead rod.

3. Death of Miriam

In Numbers 20:1, Miriam died and was buried. *"Then came the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, into the desert of Zin in the first month: and the people abode in Kadesh; and Miriam died there, and was buried there."* This was at the end of 38 years of wandering after their refusal to enter the Promised Land at Kadesh-Barnea (Num. 14).

4. Provoking of Moses to Sin

Again there was a lack of water in Numbers 20:2-3, *"And there was no water for the congregation: and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron. And the people chided with Moses, and spake, saying, Would God that we had died when our brethren died before the LORD!"*

Can you see how these Israelites were twisting things? First they said that Moses had killed them all; then they turned around and said, “If only we had died before the Lord.” They were a very perverse lot to deal with. I can only commend these passages to you for meditation, to see how uncircumcised in heart the people of God can be.

The children of Israel continued their criticism of Moses in Numbers 20:4-5, “*And why have ye brought up the congregation of the LORD into this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die there? And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil place? it is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink.*” Actually, they should not even have been in the wilderness. If they had obeyed God at Kadesh-Barnea, they would have already been in the Promised Land. It was Israel who elected to stay in the wilderness.

This was the second time the children of Israel needed water. What was the Lord’s solution for the lack of water? In Numbers 20:8 we read, “*Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink.*”

The first time the Israelites needed water, God said to “smite” the rock (Ex. 17:6). The rock, throughout the Word of God,

represents Christ (1 Cor. 10:4). The smiting of the rock the first time signified that Christ had to be crucified. The rock represents Christ; the rod represents the rod of judgment. Christ was stricken for our transgressions so that the waters of life could flow out to thirsty and dying humanity. Zechariah 13:7 speaks of the fact that the Shepherd had to be smitten, *“Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered...”*

The second time they needed water, Moses was instructed to “speak” to the rock. We need to understand that after the crucifixion of Christ, all that is necessary is to “speak” and life flows.

Moses was provoked in his spirit. He had lost his temper and was now speaking and acting without discretion, as we see in Numbers 20:9-11, *“And Moses took the rod from before the LORD, as he commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also.”* He smote the rock twice, meaning that Christ would have to be crucified twice. Moses destroyed the type.

Moses was speaking to those who were made in the very image of God, yet he was calling them rebels. He reverted

to name-calling. This account is recorded again in Psalm 106:32-33, *“They angered him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes: Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.”*

God’s type had been destroyed and the man of God had failed, yet notice the greatness and mercy of God (Num. 20:11), for water still came forth from the rock. God sometimes will do miracles even when the person who is performing the miracle is in disobedience. A miracle does not prove that someone is in the will of God.

The Lord Jesus makes this point in Matthew 7:21-23, *“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”*

**A miracle
does not
prove that
someone is
in the will
of God.**

We have no right to taunt, mock, or rail at others because it is only the grace of God which makes us different. Elijah did this once, but it proved to be a tragic mistake. He ended up running from Satan, who indwelt the evil queen Jezebel (1 Ki. 18:27; 19:1-3).

Before the foundation of the world when there was a rebellion in heaven, Lucifer and one third of the angels fell. However, the other two archangels, Gabriel and Michael, and two thirds of the remaining angels retained their position by the mercy and grace of God. They were very cognizant of the fact that they were preserved from being swept into the rebellion by falling on their faces and asking God for grace. This is why in the tabernacle you have two archangels on the mercy seat. The godly angels are very aware of the fact that they have been kept by God's mercy and grace.

The godly angels would not bring accusation against their fallen peers. In the same way, when you command demons to come out in the name of Jesus, you must avoid calling them names. I heard of one incident where a brother was casting out demons and started calling the demons all kinds of names; a demon replied, "Don't you call me names."

When speaking to demons, fallen angels, or Satan, one must always be noble and wise. For example, we read in Jude 1:9, "*Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.*"

We must be careful concerning our attitude toward mortal man who is made in the image of God, even when we speak to the most perverse. We must always be gracious (Gal. 6:1). When D.L. Moody was walking along the streets of Chicago, he saw a drunkard come out of a tavern and stumble his way down the street. He simply said, "There

goes Dwight L. Moody, but for the grace of God.” We are different, only because of grace.

5. Refusing Moses and Aaron Entry into the Promised Land

God said to Moses and Aaron in Numbers 20:12, *“Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.”* Do you see the tremendous tests and standards God has for a leader? They are phenomenal!

Just think of the long way Moses had already gone. He had 40 years of preparation in Pharaoh’s court, another 40 years of training in the wilderness, and still another 40 years of wandering in the wilderness because of the congregation he had.

Moses should have already been in the Promised Land 38 years before this. However, he was denied what was most precious to him—entrance into the Promised Land. God had to show Israel and every generation to come how serious it was for Moses to smite that rock twice in order to cause water to flow, instead of speaking to it as God had commanded. Smiting the rock twice would have meant that Christ had to be crucified more than once.

6. Edom Refusing Israel Passage

In Numbers 20:14-21, Moses sent messengers to the king of Edom to ask him for permission to pass through the land of

Edom. We read in Numbers 20:18, 21, *“And Edom said unto him, Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee with the sword...Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border: wherefore Israel turned away from him.”*

The Edomites were descendants of Esau, who was also called Edom (Gen. 25:30; 36:8). Esau was Jacob’s brother and the children of Israel were descendants of Jacob. Therefore, the Edomites and Israelites were close relatives. However, Edom refused to allow his brother, Israel, to pass through his land. God always remembered that. If there are people who are supposed to help you, and they refuse, God remembers this against them.

7. Death of Aaron

The death of Aaron is recorded in Numbers 20:23-29. *“And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son; and Aaron died there in the top of the mount: and Moses and Eleazar came down from the mount. And when all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, they mourned for Aaron thirty days, even all the house of Israel”* (Num. 20:28-29). The older generation had already died. Aaron had been the only one with whom Moses could really commune. The death of Aaron left Moses very much alone.

8. Israel Becoming Discouraged

We read in Numbers 21:4-5 that after the children of Israel defeated the Canaanites in Hormah (Num. 21:1-3), they

became discouraged and again complained against God and Moses, *“And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged **because of the way.** Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread.”*

Proverbs 13:15 says, *“The way of transgressors is hard.”* Proverbs 14:14 says, *“The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways: and a good man shall be satisfied from himself.”* Some people speak against God because of the difficult way, even though it is the way they have chosen.

9. Brazen Serpent

The Lord was displeased with the children of Israel because of their complaining, and punished them by sending fiery serpents among the people, *“And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died”* (Num. 21:6).

The children of Israel confessed to Moses in Numbers 21:7, *“We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people.”*

We read the Lord’s solution for the fiery serpents in Numbers 21:8-9, *“And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall*

come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.” They only had to “look” and they were healed. This, of course, is taken up in John 3:14-15, where Christ referred to this very Scripture, saying, *“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up. That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.”* This is a beautiful evangelistic verse to use when you preach. “Only look to the Lord and be saved.” Jesus said in John 12:32, *“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.”*

10. Well of Springing Water

We read in Numbers 21:17-18, *“Then Israel sang this song, Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it. The princes digged the well, the nobles of the people digged it, by the direction of the lawgiver, with their staves. And from the wilderness they went to Mattanah.”* This seemingly obscure little event has profound spiritual implications and truths attached to it.

In Scripture, wells speak of salvation. We read in Isaiah 12:3, *“Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.”* Speaking to the woman at the well, the Lord Jesus said in John 4:14, *“Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up*

into everlasting life.” When we receive Christ as our Saviour, He puts within our hearts a well of bubbling water.

However, as the wells that Abraham dug were stopped up by the Philistines, so the wells of the water of life within us can also be stopped up. We read in Genesis 26:14-15: *“For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him. For all the wells which his father’s servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth.”* The Philistines represent envy. When envy enters our hearts and lives, then our spiritual wells likewise become blocked.

Strife and hatred are common well stoppers, too. We read of this when Isaac was digging the wells in Genesis 26:18-21, *“And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them. And Isaac’s servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water. And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac’s herdmen, saying, The water is ours: and he called the name of the well Esek; because they strove with him. And they digged another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah.”* Esek means “contention,” and Sitnah is defined as “hatred.”

The key to unstopping our spiritual wells is contained in Numbers 21:17-18, *“Then Israel sang this song, Spring up,*

O well; sing ye unto it: The princes digged the well, the nobles of the people digged it, by the direction of the lawgiver, with their staves...” These wells have to be dug afresh by the elders, often under the direction of the pastor or spiritual counsellor. They are dug with staves (which speak of authority), and in uprightness according to the Law or Word of God.

After the wells have been dug, they will continue to bubble as we sing unto them. A spiritual exercise that we highly commend is found in Ephesians 5:19, “*Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.*” This exercise is comparable to how the Israelites sang, “*Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it...*”

Joshua and Caleb maintained a rejoicing spirit, which nourished their faith and kept their spiritual wells from being stopped up. This was the key to their lives that caused them to make it through the wilderness and into the Promised Land (Num. 14:6-9).

11. Wickedness of Balaam

In order to make it through the wilderness into the Promised Land and on to Mount Zion, we must overcome the snares of Balaam. Balaam kept many Israelites from entering into the Promised Land. Balaam’s life is recorded in Numbers 22-25. He was a prophet of God who swerved off course into spiritism and began practicing enchantments. There were other loves in his heart (the love of money and position) that caused him to backslide.

Balaam was peculiar because of his double life. There must have been a consecration to God earlier in his life because he had tremendous gifts from God, and God Himself appeared to him. God would not have appeared to a spiritist medium. There was spiritual mixture in Balaam's life. He operated at times under the true anointing, but at other times he operated under a spirit of witchcraft.

Balaam's life can be characterised by five main things: greed, idolatry, inducing others to commit fornication, witchcraft, and a mixture of the true anointing and a false anointing. Peter upholds Balaam as an example of greed in 2 Peter 2:14-15, *"Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness."*

Jude 1:11 says, *"Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core."*

We read in Revelation 2:14 concerning the "doctrine of Balaam," which basically induced people to worship idols and commit fornication: *"But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication."*

Joshua 13:22 describes Balaam as a “soothsayer,” or a person who practiced divination and witchcraft: “*Balaam also the son of Beor, the soothsayer, did the children of Israel slay with the sword among them that were slain by them.*” It is possible to live under the direction of two spirits, at one time moving under the anointing and then moving under an evil spirit.

Balaam had tremendous power with his prophetic ministry, but unfortunately he became involved with two different streams of spiritual power. Balaam’s motives were corrupt, and this is what caused him to go off course, and to lead many others astray.

In Numbers 22:1-14 we find that Israel pitched their tents in the plains of Moab en route to the Promised Land. The Moabites were afraid of Israel. Therefore, Balak the king of Moab sent his elders to offer Balaam money to put a curse on the Israelites. They viewed Balaam as a man with great spiritual power. Balaam told them to stay overnight so that he could seek the Lord’s guidance. God appeared to Balaam and told him not to go with the men. He told Balaam that he could not curse the Israelites because they were blessed by Him.

Then Balak sent greater nobles to Balaam to make him a better offer, saying in Numbers 22:17, “*For I will promote thee unto very great honour, and I will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me: come therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people.*” When he was offered more money and honour, Balaam went back to God hoping to persuade God to change His mind and allow him to go (Num. 22:19).

Then in Numbers 22:20-22: *“And God came unto Balaam at night, and said unto him, If the men come to call thee, rise up, and go with them; but yet the word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do. And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab. And God’s anger was kindled because he went: and the angel of the LORD stood in the way for an adversary against him. Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants were with him.”*

These verses have baffled many Bible scholars. Balaam wanted to go with these men because of the money and position they offered him. Thus, he went back to God hoping to persuade God to change His mind. When he asked God again, this time God said, “Yes, go with them.” This is because God grants a person the desire of his heart. However, the Lord was angry with Balaam and sought to kill him while he was on his way.

We read in Numbers 22:23-31, *“And the ass saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field: and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way. But the angel of the LORD stood in a path of the vineyards, a wall being on this side, and a wall on that side. And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she thrust herself unto the wall, and crushed Balaam’s foot against the wall: and he smote her again. And the angel of the LORD went further, and stood in a narrow place,*

**God grants a
person the desire
of his heart.**

where was no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left. And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she fell down under Balaam: and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with a staff. And the LORD opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times? And Balaam said unto the ass, Because thou hast mocked me: I would there were a sword in mine hand, for now would I kill thee. And the ass said unto Balaam, Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine unto this day? was I ever wont to do so unto thee? And he said, Nay. Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face."

The donkey upon which Balaam was riding saw the angel of the Lord with his sword drawn, and turned aside to avoid him. Balaam did not see the angel and became furious at his donkey's strange behaviour. Balaam became so angry that when God enabled the animal to speak to him, he argued back with her. The Lord then opened his eyes to see the angel, and Balaam humbled himself before God. The angel of the Lord said to Balaam in Numbers 22:32, "*Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, I went out to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me.*"

Then Balaam confessed in Numbers 22:34, "*I have sinned; for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me: now therefore, if it displease thee, I will get me back again.*" Balaam knew in his heart that he should not have asked God the second

time, and that he should not have gone with Balak's men to curse Israel. He knew that what he was doing was not right.

What is God trying to tell us in this account of Balaam? Like Balaam, so many Christians know that something is not the will of God for their lives, yet they continue to ask God until He says, "Yes." Then they do what they wanted to do, and they say that God told them to do it (and that He even confirmed it with prophecies or visions).

God is trying to warn us that if we want our will instead of His, He may say, "yes." He may even allow us to have confirmations, but He will also send leanness into our souls. We see this in the lives of the children of Israel. Psalm 106:14-15 says, "*...But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.*" Here is the reason the Israelites did not make it through the wilderness and into the Promised Land. They were not content with manna; so God gave them quails, but He was not pleased with them.

The Israelites did not want God's way; they wanted their own way. Thus, God gave them what they wanted. **May we fear the Lord, and say, "Not my will but Thine be done" in every issue confronting our lives.** Otherwise, we may never enter into the Promised Land.

Balaam knew that he was unable to curse Israel because God had told him they were blessed (Josh. 24:9-10), but he was consumed by greed and the love of money, which is "*the*

root of all evil" (1 Tim. 6:10). Therefore, because he personally was not able to curse Israel, he told Balak how to bring God's judgments upon Israel. He counselled Balak to send Moabite women to commit fornication with the Israelites, thus bringing God's judgment upon Israel. The immorality with the Moabite women also led to idolatry, for many of the Israelites began to worship their heathen gods (Num. 25:1-5, cf. Jude 1:11, 2 Pet. 2:15-16).

This is also brought out in Numbers 31:16, "*Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.*" It is confirmed in Revelation 2:14, "*But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.*"

There are many *Balaams* in the Church today who lower God's standards, promote worldliness, endorse immorality, and encourage divorce and remarriage, which is adultery in God's eyes (Mt. 19:9, Mk. 10:12, Rom. 7:1-3). They are ministers who were anointed by God in the past, but have begun teaching false doctrines under a false anointing. To the degree that we operate in God's power, to that same degree we can begin to operate under a Satanic influence if we do not walk uprightly.

In order to make it through our own personal wilderness journey to the Promised Land and reach spiritual maturity,

we must overcome the sins and ways of people like Balaam. Remember, Balaam showed up at the end of the wilderness journey when God's people were ready to go into the Promised Land.

12. Numbering of New Generation

In Numbers chapter 26, the new generation was numbered. This census was taken after the 40 years of their wilderness wandering. The first numbering was at Sinai in Numbers chapter one when they first came out of Egypt.

In the second numbering, all of the first generation had died, except for Caleb and Joshua. *“But among these there was not a man of them whom Moses and Aaron the priest numbered when they numbered the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai. For the Lord had said of them, They shall surely die in the wilderness. And there was not left a man of them, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun”* (Num. 26:64-65).

13. Choosing of a New Leader

Moses said to the Lord in Numbers 27:16-17, *“Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, Which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no shepherd.”* It is the God-given responsibility of a leader to anoint and appoint a

successor who will give continuity of vision and bring the people of God into all that the Lord has promised the founder of the work. The new leader should seek to bring the congregation into God's promised inheritance for them.

Depending on the promises and God's overall purposes, it can sometimes take several generations, as was the case with Israel. Joshua brought them into the land, but it was left to David to bring them into the rest of God at Mount Zion, subduing all the territory and the enemies in the land.

The change of leadership must be ordained by God. When Moses was 120 years old, God told him that He was going to take him unto Himself. In fact, God Himself buried Moses, because the body of Moses would be required years later for the Mount of Transfiguration appearance (Jude 1:9).

Previously, Korah and his followers had tried to overthrow Moses' leadership and install themselves in his place. They suffered awesome judgement by trying to take the leadership out of the will of God. Under the direction of God, Moses prayed for the new leader.

Qualifications for Leadership

There are two qualifications for leadership found in Numbers 27:17, "*Which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no shepherd.*"

“Which may go out before them.” When sheep need new pasture, the shepherd leaves them in the corral and goes out to find new pasture for them. Since sheep represent Christians (Isa. 53:6, Jn. 10:14), this speaks to us that pastors and leaders must constantly seek the Lord for new truths, revelation, experiences, and a fresh anointing.

Sheep cannot feed on the same pastureland forever. In the same way, believers need new truths to feed upon; otherwise they lose the vitality of the Christian life, which is ever ongoing.

Shepherds must inspect the pasture to ensure that there are no poisonous weeds that can kill their sheep. In the same way, leaders must ensure that there are no erroneous doctrines that could harm God’s people.

“Which may lead them out, and which may bring them in.” After shepherds have found new pasture, they go back to their sheep and lead them into the new pasture. Leaders must take their people from old truths to new ones. Leaders must not teach their people doctrines that they have not carefully inspected themselves.

There are many erroneous doctrines circulating in the Church today. We must test the fruits of doctrines first (2 Tim. 2:6). We should take counsel with other

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godly men concerning every new wave of doctrine that comes into the Church.

Psalm 78:71-72 says of David, the shepherd of Israel, “*From following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance. So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands.*”

The responsibilities of a shepherd, which are also the responsibilities of a pastor, are as follows:

1. Feed the sheep with the integrity of his heart
2. Guide the sheep with the skilfulness of his hands
3. Inspect the sheep
4. Cleanse and anoint the wounds of the sheep with fresh oil from the throne
5. Lead the sheep into new pastures
6. Lay down his life to protect the sheep

A leader should be birthed and brought up in the same spiritual house, alongside the founder of the ministry. Joshua was trained under Moses (Ex. 24:13; 33:11). He had a different spirit and had fully followed the Lord. When Abraham went to war, he took 318 servants who were trained in his own house (Gen. 14:14). Those who have been brought up in the same spiritual house as the founder or leader of a ministry have the same mind, vision, and goals.

Joshua fulfilled all of these requirements:

1. He was Moses' minister (servant), and he was brought up alongside of him.
2. He fought the battles against the Amalekites; thus he was trained in spiritual warfare.
3. He entered with Moses into the very presence of God, even tarrying there on one occasion, after Moses had left.
4. He was one of the twelve spies, and brought back a favourable report.
5. He was well versed in the Law; thus he made right choices.

(A contemplative study of the requirements for elders in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 in conjunction with the above matters is recommended.)

The Charge

Joshua stood before the high priest, Eleazar, and the congregation as Moses laid his hands on him and gave him a charge. Three very important things happened at this ceremony:

1. The whole congregation of Israel recognised Joshua's authority (Num. 27:22).
2. Joshua received the mantle of grace from God to fulfil his office as the new leader (Num. 27:20).
3. The spirit of wisdom was imparted to Joshua (Deut. 34:9).

I cannot overemphasise the importance of this ceremony of laying on of hands, for it is not merely a scriptural injunction. I have seen men transformed and matured by the impartation they received in a ceremony like this. They received power and ability beyond their years when God's mantle came upon them.

14. Choosing an Inferior Inheritance

Numbers 32 records the sad account of the two-and-a-half tribes who chose their inheritance on the wrong side of the Jordan River. Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh did not choose God's best for their lives (Num. 32:33). They said in Numbers 32:5, "*Wherefore, said they, if we have found grace in thy sight, let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession, and bring us not over Jordan.*" The real promises and blessings of God, including Mount Zion, were across the Jordan River, but these tribes were content to remain where they were.

They settled for second best because they had much cattle and thought that the land east of the Jordan River was a good place for their cattle. Their hearts were attached to the things of this world. Years later when God judged Israel, Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh were the first tribes to be taken into captivity. One of the heartaches of leadership is that people determine the level of inheritance they receive. Not everyone in the Body of Christ obtains God's best for his life.

15. Repeating the Law to the New Generation

The Book of Deuteronomy is a series of sermons and exhortations given by Moses to the new generation at the time when they were about to enter into the Promised Land. Their parents, the generation that had come out of Egypt, had failed and had died in the wilderness. In the Book of Deuteronomy, Moses looked back and reviewed everything that had happened to the children of Israel since they left Egypt. Then he looked ahead to the conquest of Canaan Land, their inheritance, and the fulfilment of God's promises to the new generation.

From the Greek, Deuteronomy literally means "*The Second Law*." It is a repetition to the new generation of the laws that God had given Israel on Mount Sinai 40 years before. In Deuteronomy, Moses is preparing the second generation to enter into the Promised Land.

Deuteronomy is also filled with cautions and warnings. God foresaw that all of the blessings He was about to bestow upon His people would cause many to grow lax, forget the Lord, and turn to vanity. Therefore, Moses urged them not to forget the Lord after He had brought them into His blessings. He pointed out not only the way *into* the inheritance across Jordan, but also the way to *remain* in the inheritance after they had gained possession of it. If they did not obey the Lord, the land of their inheritance would spew them out (Lev. 20:22).

Basic Outline of the Book of Deuteronomy

- I. Looking Back: Deuteronomy chapters 1-11
 - A. Review of the way since Sinai (Deut. 1-3)
 - B. Review of the Law from Sinai (Deut. 4-11)
- II. Looking Ahead: Deuteronomy chapters 12-34
 - A. Final rules and warnings to Israel before they entered their inheritance (Deut. 12-30)
 - B. Final words and actions of Moses (Deut. 31-34)

16. Death of Moses

Deuteronomy ends with Israel reaching the eastern side of the river Jordan, the plains of Moab that overlooked the Promised Land. Moses gave his last sermons to Israel at the plains of Moab. Then Moses ascended Mount Pisgah, which was near Jericho and beheld the Promised Land (Deut. 34:1-3).

We read in Deuteronomy 34:4-6, *“And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I swore unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither. So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.”* As we mentioned earlier, God buried the body of Moses Himself because it would be needed many years later for Moses’ appearance on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mt. 17:3, Jude 1:9, Lk. 9:30-31).

Part Two

*The Crossing Over
into Canaan*

CHAPTER 10

Joshua the New Leader

Part Two covers the crossing over into Canaan under the leadership of Joshua. The children of Israel began to possess the Promised Land under Joshua, but we will see that they did not gain complete victory over their enemies. They did not possess their full inheritance under Joshua. Joshua had a long and productive ministry, covering the 40 years in the wilderness and about another 30 years in the Promised Land until his death at the age of 110.

1. His Early Life

Joshua was also called “Oshea” (Num. 13:16), a Hebrew variant of his name. The Greek translation of his name is “Jesus” (Heb. 4:8). He was the son of Nun, of the tribe of Ephraim. He grew up in Egypt where he and his fellow Israelites were under hard servitude to Pharaoh and his taskmasters. Thus, Joshua was well acquainted with the bondages and heart cries of the people he was about to lead.

2. Leading Israel Against Amalek

In his first appearance in Holy Scripture, Joshua led Israel in battle against the Amalekites, who were descendants of Esau (Ex. 17:8-16). Exodus 17:13 says, “*And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.*” Spiritually, the Amalekites represent the works of the flesh. Like Joshua, the

duty of a minister is to first deal with the works of the flesh in his own life, and then to protect his congregation from the attacks of these pernicious foes. It is noteworthy that this battle was fought and won under the direction of the senior leader, Moses.

3. Servant of Moses

Joshua, Moses' servant (or minister), went up with him to the mountain when he received the Law, as seen in Exodus 24:13, "*And Moses rose up, and his minister Joshua: and Moses went up into the mount of God.*"

4. Lingering in God's Presence

In Exodus 33:11 we read, "*And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.*" Even after Moses descended from the glorious mount, Joshua lingered in God's presence seeking to cultivate an intimate relationship with Him.

All true ministry is the result of a living substance God deposits within us as we wait before Him. All study, homiletics, charts, and outlines serve only as instruments to help us express what God has already deposited within. Sermons and classroom studies that witness in our hearts are actually the result of "seed" that God has already planted in our hearts from when we spent time with Him. God put "another spirit" in Joshua as he waited before Him. That spirit was the spirit of faith (Num. 14:6-9,23-30).

5. His Immaturity

Joshua's immaturity was seen in his handling of those who were prophesying in the camp (Num. 11:25-30). He did not want anyone except Moses to prophesy. Moses, on the other hand, had a very gracious attitude toward them, saying, "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them" (Num. 11:29). In the last days, God will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh, and the whole Church will flow in the prophetic. Men and women, young and old, will be prophesying (Joel 2:28-29). Moses never wanted this to be limited only to the church leadership.

6. Good Report of Joshua and Caleb

Joshua and Caleb were the two spies who brought back a good report from the Promised Land (Num. 14:6-10). The other ten spies inspired fear and unbelief in the people, causing them to despise the Promised Land and not enter into God's purposes (Num. 13:31-33, Deut. 1:28). Joshua and Caleb were the only two of their generation who entered the Promised Land (Num. 14:29-30).

7. A Foretaste of His Inheritance

Joshua had a foretaste of the good land 38 years before he actually possessed it. Every leader needs to have a foretaste of what God has for him and for those whom he is going to lead. A foretaste of our inheritance will help us to press through the long, dry wilderness.

8. Withstanding of Popular Opinion

Joshua was almost stoned for standing for what was right (Num. 14:10). He remained loyal to the Lord and continued to uphold God's highest standards, even when everyone else was going in the wrong direction. This was the trademark of Joshua's life and character. To him it was more important to please God than to please the people. Even at the end of his life he declared, "*As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord*" (Josh. 24:15).

9. Consecration as the New Leader

Joshua was consecrated as the new leader of Israel in Numbers 27:18-23: "*And the Lord said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay thine hand upon him; And set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation; and give him a charge in their sight. And thou shalt put some of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient. And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of the Urim before the Lord: at his word shall they go out, and at his word they shall come in, both he, and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation. And Moses did as the Lord commanded him: and he took Joshua, and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation: And he laid his hands upon him, and gave him a charge, as the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses.*"

From experience, I know the importance this act of consecration entails for those so consecrated and charged. I have seen ministers absolutely transformed and matured through a consecration ceremony. The reason is that the mantle of God for their particular office comes upon them, giving them a divine enablement to perform their new duties. This thought is confirmed in Ephesians 4:7, *“But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.”*

10. Continued to Obey Moses

As long as Moses was in command, Joshua received his orders from him. This was so with respect to the inheritance of the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh. We read in Numbers 32:28-29, *“So concerning [the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh] Moses commanded Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the chief fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel: And Moses said unto them, If the children of Gad and the children of Reuben will pass with you over Jordan, every man armed to battle, before the Lord, and the land shall be subdued before you; then ye shall give them the land of Gilead for a possession.”*

11. Distribution of the Land by Joshua and Eleazar

Joshua and Eleazar the priest were entrusted with the distribution of the land of Canaan for the inheritance of the tribes of Israel. *“These are the names of the men which shall*

divide the land unto you: Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun” (Num. 34:17).

This is the blessing and privilege of faithful leaders. **God gives faithful men the privilege of installing others into their inheritance and calling.** Psalm 45:16 says, *“Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.”*

12. Encouragement of Moses

The Lord instructed Moses to encourage Joshua in Deuteronomy 1:38, *“But Joshua the son of Nun, which standeth before thee, he shall go in thither: encourage him: for he shall cause Israel to inherit it.”* How necessary it is to understand that the young need help and encouragement as they set forth upon the uncharted courses of leadership. No leader can reproduce the past. Life progresses!

The Church of God is moving on. The Lord said to Joshua, *“Ye have not passed this way heretofore”* (Josh. 3:4). Every new generation has a fresh task that is different from that of the previous generation. Therefore, we will need to be of good courage and have complete reliance upon God, so that the part of the journey that is entrusted into our hands for any given congregation is successfully completed to God’s satisfaction.

Moses said in Deuteronomy 3:21-22, *“And I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, Thine eyes have seen all that*

the LORD your God hath done unto these two kings: so shall the LORD do unto all the kingdoms whither thou passest. Ye shall not fear them: for the LORD your God he shall fight for you.” The Lord told Moses to encourage Joshua again in Deuteronomy 3:28, “*But charge Joshua, and encourage him, and strengthen him: for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which thou shalt see.”*

13. Assurance for the Congregation Concerning the New Leader

Not only does the new leader need to be encouraged, but also the congregation needs to have confidence in the new leader. Only the former leader can really give the needed assurance, as Moses did concerning Joshua.

We read in Deuteronomy 31:3-8, “*The LORD thy God, he will go over before thee, and he will destroy these nations from before thee, and thou shalt possess them: and Joshua, he shall go over before thee, as the LORD hath said. And the LORD shall do unto them as he did to Sihon and to Og, kings of the Amorites, and unto the land of them, whom he destroyed. And the LORD shall give them up before your face, that ye may do unto them according unto all the commandments which I have commanded you. Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. And Moses called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of all Israel, Be strong and of a good courage: for thou must go with this*

people unto the land which the LORD hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it. And the LORD, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.”

14. Change of Command

In Deuteronomy 31:14-15, the Lord instructed Moses and Joshua to present themselves before Him, *“And the Lord said unto Moses, Behold, thy days approach that thou must die: call Joshua, and present yourselves in the tabernacle of the congregation, that I may give him a charge. And Moses and Joshua went, and presented themselves in the tabernacle of the congregation. And the Lord appeared in the tabernacle in a pillar of a cloud: and the pillar of the cloud stood over the door of the tabernacle.”*

Moses had to transfer the command of the Israelites to Joshua, and so he laid hands on him and imparted his mantle and anointing. We read in Deuteronomy 34:9, *“And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the LORD commanded Moses.”* Joshua was now filled with the Spirit.

15. God Speaking Directly to Him

Now that Joshua is the new leader, the Lord speaks directly to Joshua and gives him specific instructions for the task that he

has been called to accomplish. “*Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ minister*” (Josh. 1:1). These instructions are categorised in Joshua 1:1-9.

1. A statement that the former leader is dead (Josh. 1:1)
2. A directive for Joshua to arise and go over the Jordan River (Josh. 1:2)
3. A promise that every place that the sole of his foot touched would be given to him (Josh. 1:3)
4. A promise that no man would be able to stand up against him all the days of his life (Josh. 1:5)
5. A promise that the Lord would be with him as He was with Moses (Josh. 1:5)
6. A promise that the Lord would not fail him (Josh. 1:5)
7. An exhortation to be strong and of good courage (Josh. 1:6-7)
8. An exhortation to observe His commandments (Josh. 1:7-8)
9. An exhortation that the book of the law should not depart from his mouth and that he should meditate in it day and night (Josh. 1:8)

Leaders must have time to meditate upon the Word of God.

Conclusion

God needs many men and women like Joshua today. The Lord is going to bring His Church into its inheritance in

these last days, and He is searching for *Joshuas* who can lead His people into it. Joshua represents those who have been faithful in the wilderness tests and who have also tasted of the fruit in the land of promise.

CHAPTER 11

Crossing of the Jordan River

1. Significance of the Jordan River

The crossing of Jordan was a major turning point in Israel's journey. It was a new day for them in almost every respect. The old generation and leader had died and a new generation and leader had arisen. The wilderness tests were over and the Promised Land awaited them. They were about to take a major leap forward into the promises of God as their feet crossed over Jordan.

After they crossed Jordan, their attitude was completely changed. They never wanted to return to Egypt anymore. Something had happened in their heart and in their nature. Even their diet changed after crossing Jordan. The manna ceased and they began to partake of the fruit of the land (Josh. 5:12). There was new excitement and expectation. New strength and courage invigorated them to defeat their enemies. In addition to all this, crossing Jordan was a major step toward their ultimate destination, Mount Zion.

The Crucified Life

The crossing of the Jordan River has great spiritual significance for our lives as believers. We read in Joshua 3:15-16 that the

waters of the Jordan overflowed in the time of harvest all the way to the city of Adam. The fact that the city of Adam is connected with their passage across Jordan is significant, as Adam represents our old sinful nature.

After the Israelites left Egypt, they were out of Egypt, but the love of Egypt was not out of them. However, after they crossed the Jordan River, it was very different. The children of Israel were circumcised at Gilgal.

Circumcision represents heart circumcision and the cutting away of the things we were born with (Deut. 30:6). Therefore, the crossing of the Jordan represents the experience of being “dead to sin” whereby our old Adamic nature is crucified with Christ (Gal. 2:20).

As we have mentioned earlier, spiritually, the Red Sea represents water baptism. In Colossians 2:11-13, Paul clearly states that water baptism is analogous to “*putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ...*” Paul also says in Romans 6:4 that we are buried with Christ by baptism that we might walk in newness of life. Unfortunately, though we should walk in newness of life, there are many times when we do not.

Water baptism is not the full answer to the question of having victory over sin. Water baptism is the *judicial* act of putting off the body of sins. The *experiential* fulfilment of this comes at this time, during the crossing of Jordan.

At the Jordan, the Lord removed the love of Egypt from their hearts. They no longer desired to go back to Egypt, which represents this world. We read in Joshua 5:8-9, “*And it came to pass, when they had done circumcising all the people, that they abode in their places in the camp, till they were whole. And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day.*”

Therefore, the crossing of the Jordan River symbolises how God broke the power of sin, and dealt with the love of the world. It was the “adult circumcision.” It is equivalent to the Romans 6:6 experience, which we will now look at in further detail.

Knowing, Reckoning, and Yielding

1. Knowing That We Are Dead to Sin

As we have already established, the crossing of the Jordan represents the “dead to sin” experience of Romans 6:6, “*Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*” On the cross, Christ not only purchased our redemption, but He also made provision to deal with our sin nature so that it would not continue to have dominion over us. Our nature of sin would be destroyed or rendered inoperative. This is a very important spiritual experience because salvation, water baptism, and even the baptism of the Holy Spirit, do not deal with all of the sins and bondages in our lives.

The first step to being free from sin is knowing that our old man (our old nature) was crucified with Christ on the cross. The Greek word for “knowing” in Romans 6:6 is “ginosko,” which means “knowledge that comes by an experience.” It is not something that we grow into, not something that we can claim or take by faith. It is a sovereign appointment and meeting with God—a definite revelation from God of what He did on Calvary’s cross. When we have this experience, there is a great difference in our lives.

Paul spoke of this experience in Galatians 2:20, *“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”* We must seek the Lord to have this same experience so that we no longer serve sin.

Many years ago, God was putting His finger on a number of issues in my life. He was asking me if I was willing to give up certain things to Him. Some of them were easy to release to Him, but others were very difficult. The Spirit of God kept sweeping over me for several days on the question of being dead to sin.

Then one morning while I was in my office, I had a vision of Christ upon the cross with His back toward me. The Spirit of God lifted me up to hang on the cross with Christ. In the vision, I was literally *in Christ* on that cross. I looked down and saw all the people railing at Jesus, but He did not respond because He was on the cross. I also saw the veil that was rent

in the Temple when Jesus died. It was a literal experience! Then the vision ceased, and I came back into my room.

Out of my innermost being, something wanted to gush out. It then broke forth and flowed and flowed like a river. Out of my mouth came the words from Galatians 2:20, "*I am crucified with Christ.*" At the moment, I knew that my old man had been crucified with Christ. I understood that when Jesus died nearly 2,000 years ago, He not only bore my sins, but He also dealt with my old nature. Oh what strength and victory filled my soul! There was a peace that was indescribable.

By no means am I implying that you must have a vision or experience like mine. God could give you different Scriptures and different circumstances. The important matter is that you experience the reality of Romans 6:6, and have a revelation that your sinful nature has been crucified.

In addition to dealing with our sin nature on the cross, Christ also provided healing, as seen in 1 Peter 2:24: "*Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.*" Peter uses the past tense here, "ye were healed." Our healing has already been paid for, but we must appropriate it. We must have a revelation and meeting with God.

This is also true of salvation. Christ died for the sins of the whole world, yet it does a man no good until he experiences new birth by accepting Christ into his heart. Although our

salvation has already been paid for by Christ's death on the cross, we are not saved until we experience it. This same principle applies to being dead to sin.

Our old man was crucified with Christ on the cross, but we are still bound by the sin nature until we experience being dead to sin, as described in Romans 6:6, "*That the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*" Once we go through this, sin will no longer govern our actions and words. We will have a new strength to go against the enemy. There is such a release from our old man when we have this experiential knowledge. This "knowing" comes as we walk faithfully with God.

The Corinthians were born again, water baptised, filled with the Spirit, and moving in all the gifts of the Spirit; yet the Apostle Paul calls them carnal. Many of them needed to experience their own personal "Jordan." Paul even warned the Corinthian church not to fail in the wilderness and die there as Israel did (1 Cor. 10:1-11).

2. Reckoning That We Are Dead to Sin

"Knowing" is the first step to putting our *old man* on the cross. The second step in the walk of holiness is "reckoning" that we are dead to sin. Paul said in Romans 6:11, "*Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*" The Greek word translated "reckon" is "logizomai," which essentially means "to count something done."

When we have had the experience of “knowing,” then we must count it done. We have to remind ourselves that we have been freed from sin and that we do not have to give in to the desires of our carnal nature. The question has been asked, “After you have had your Jordan experience, can you lose it?” The answer is, “Yes.”

When the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea, they took 12 stones out of the Jordan River and erected them on the west bank of the river as a memorial, “*Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever*” (Josh. 4:7).

Israel had great victory at Jordan, and they went on from there to subdue Jericho. However, they were later defeated at Ai because of the sin of Achan. The 12 stones served as a memorial to remind the children of Israel of their Jordan experience. After they put things right, the Israelites had to remember that their old nature of sin had been dealt with. They did not have to let sin have dominion over them.

In much the same way, after we have a revelation that we are dead to sin, we have to daily remind ourselves that we are dead to sin. The experience in Romans 6:6 of knowing that we are dead to sin puts our old nature on the cross; “reckoning” we are dead to sin keeps it there (Rom. 6:11).

3. Yielding Ourselves to Righteousness and Holiness

After the experience of “knowing” and then “reckoning” or counting it done, we then have the power to “yield” the members of our body to God. This is the third step in the walk of holiness and freedom from sin.

Paul said in Romans 6:12-14, *“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.”*

Holiness is always a choice, a battle. After our Jordan experience, we have a new power to choose, for sin no longer has dominion over us. Remember, after Jordan, Israel never wanted to go back to Egypt. The Adamic nature was dealt with. They were circumcised from the flesh. That very day, God rolled away from them the reproach and tentacles of Egypt (Josh. 5:8-9).

How Do We Get to Jordan?

On our journey from Egypt to Zion, we must make our passage over Jordan to reach the Promised Land, our inheritance, and to reach Zion. Therefore, it is natural to say, “Let’s cross over Jordan now!” But the problem is,

we cannot cross over Jordan until we *arrive* at Jordan. We only get there when God brings us. The Israelites could not move unless the cloud by day or pillar of fire by night moved on. This truth should be firmly imbedded into our hearts.

God does not bring us to Jordan until He is satisfied that we have successfully passed our ten trials in the wilderness. This is the reason we must walk with God day by day, week by week, and month by month. Our prayer should be, “O God, bring me to my Jordan.”

Many of the Israelites never made it to Jordan. They failed *all* their tests in the wilderness. Their evil attitudes of unbelief and hardness of heart hindered them from finding favour with God, and they ended up dying in the wilderness. New Testament believers are warned not to follow their example of unbelief (Heb. 3:7-4:11, 1 Cor. 10:1-11).

Some Christians are perpetual wilderness wanderers. Disobedience and self-will deprive them of genuine guidance, and they wander aimlessly all of their lives. You do not have to be like this. Ask God for a soft and obedient heart, for this kind of heart insures us of God’s favour.

Joshua and Caleb were the only ones from their generation who made it into the Promised Land. They had “another spirit.” They had faith and a rejoicing spirit, declaring, “*If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land*” (Num. 14:8).

They spent time in God's presence, allowing Him to develop within them a soft and believing heart. That is the only way we can make it into the Promised Land. There are no short cuts to Jordan. Therefore, let us learn from the lives of Joshua and Caleb the keys to making it through the wilderness, to the Jordan River, and into the Promised Land.

2. Importance of Circumcision

The Israelites crossed the Jordan River, came to Gilgal, and erected the memorial of the 12 stones from the Jordan River, as recorded in Joshua 4:19-20, *"And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal, in the east border of Jericho. And those twelve stones, which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua pitch in Gilgal."*

At Gilgal, the Lord instructed Joshua to circumcise the people because the younger generation had not been circumcised by their parents in the wilderness. We read in Joshua 5:2-5, *"At that time the LORD said unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time. And Joshua made him sharp knives, and circumcised the children of Israel at the hill of the foreskins. And this is the cause why Joshua did circumcise: All the people that came out of Egypt, that were males, even all the men of war, died in the wilderness by the way, after they came out of Egypt. Now all the people that came out were circumcised: but all the people that were born in the wilderness by the way as they came forth out of Egypt, them they had not circumcised."*

Physical circumcision is the cutting away of the flesh with which a male child is born. An uncircumcised person in the Old Testament was considered unclean and could not partake of the blessings and rites of the Jewish faith.

Spiritual circumcision is the cutting away of the carnal and sinful Adamic nature with which we are born. It is a redemptive act done in our hearts by the sword of God. It is an ever-operative working of the sword of God to deal with and dissect the other areas of our inner life. The lack of spiritual circumcision represents the fact that the sinful desires, ways, thought patterns, and reactions that we were born with have not been cut away or removed.

In Genesis 17:10-11, the Lord commanded Abraham and his descendants to be circumcised as a token of His covenant with them: *“This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.”* Circumcision was required in order to inherit the promises of Abraham, which included the Promised Land. It was a sign or token of the Israelites’ devotion to God. **A believer cannot receive his inheritance until he is circumcised in heart.**

Evidence of a Circumcised Heart

1. A co-operating, compliant heart is a circumcised heart. It is a heart that does not resist the Holy Spirit or His messengers. Moses said in Deuteronomy 10:16, *“Circumcise*

therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked.” “Stiffnecked” means obstinate, inflexible, and stubborn. We cannot inherit the promises if we are stubborn.

We have a New Testament example in the form of Stephen’s defence in Acts 7:51-52, *“Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers.”* Stephen’s audience resisted and hated the words that the Holy Spirit had spoken through him. The Lord will reject the heart that despises and rejects the word of the Lord (1 Sam. 15:26).

2. A heart that is humble, broken, and repentant is a circumcised heart. When offenders justify their actions and shift the blame to others, when they refuse correction or discipline, they are uncircumcised. Although it is natural to respond this way, as we are born uncircumcised, we must acknowledge our own faults and accept punishment for our sins.

Leviticus 26:40-42 states clearly, *“If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers...if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.”*

3. A heart that is circumcised seeks God's approval, not man's. Paul makes this very clear in Romans 2:28-29, "*For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.*"

When friendships, family, and public approval are more important than God's approval, we are uncircumcised in heart. Some people are so afraid of reproach, embarrassment, or being misunderstood by others, that they will not obey God. (See Matthew 10:32-39, John 12:42-43.)

4. The ability to worship God in the freedom of the Spirit without being hindered by tradition or pride is a wonderful indication of spiritual circumcision. Tradition can be a form of uncircumcision if it repulses the manifestations of the Holy Spirit. Some believers despise clapping, raising of the hands, dancing before the Lord, and worshipping in the Spirit. We must remember that the desire of the Father is for those who can worship Him in spirit and in truth.

Jesus developed the theme of true worship in John 4:22-24, "*Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*"

5. Having “no confidence in the flesh” (Phil. 3:3) is one of the surest evidences that the Word of God has cut deeply into the heart. By nature, we are self-willed, self-reliant, and headstrong, relying on our own mind and abilities instead of on God. Natural charisma, personality, or good looks, are often depended upon rather than the Holy Spirit.

Christians often plan their own future and try to work out their problems apart from God’s guidance. Uncircumcised Christians also believe that by their own cleverness and intuition they can decide what is right and wrong, and what is truth and error; but they cannot! It is only by God’s mercy that we can rightly discern anything.

6. An obedient heart filled with love for God is the result of God’s circumcision. We read in Deuteronomy 30:6,8, *“And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live...And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day.”*

If we will let Him, God will so thoroughly cut away evil in our inner man that we will be able to love Him with all our heart. The sword will so deliver us from the bondages of the fall that we will be enabled to obey Him.

7. A circumcised Christian is able to forgive and release people for offenses they have committed against him. The hardened believer seeks to punish other by shutting them out

of his life. Jesus Himself said the reason for divorce is because of “hardness of heart” (Mt. 19:7-8, Mk. 10:4-6). A hardened heart cannot forgive but remembers and cherishes grudges.

What Is Our Inheritance?

The Israelites could not inherit the Promised Land and partake of the promises of Abraham unless they were circumcised. Likewise, in order for us to enter into the fullness of God’s inheritance for our lives (a call, a land, a ministry, a people, or a relationship), we must experience spiritual circumcision. Israel’s inheritance was the Promised Land, but even more so it was an intimate relationship with Jehovah.

Paul said in Romans 15:8 that Jesus was a Minister of circumcision, “*Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.*” The Lord desires to circumcise our hearts so that we can inherit the “promises made unto the fathers.” One promise was that they would inherit the Promised Land, which included Mount Zion.

Zion is the Lord’s dwelling place, the place of a full relationship with Him. In fact, all of the promises of God are in Zion. We must understand that we cannot enter into God’s full inheritance for our lives, nor dwell in His presence without a circumcised heart. The Lord makes this very clear in Ezekiel 44:9, “*Thus saith the Lord GOD; No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel.*”

Uncircumcision represents uncleanness. In order to come into the presence of the Lord, all filthiness of the flesh and mind must be cut away (2 Cor. 7:1). King David asked in Psalm 24:3, “*Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?*” The answer is found in Psalm 24:4-5, “*He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.*”

The generation that came out of Egypt judged themselves unworthy of the Promised Land. They failed the tests in the wilderness. Therefore, God swore in His wrath at Kadesh Barnea that they would never enter in. They wandered aimlessly for 40 years and then died.

Then another generation arose which God esteemed worthy to enter the Promised Land. These had sufficiently passed their tests in the wilderness. Sovereignly, God gave them a transforming experience at Jordan where *Adam* was dealt with and the “reproach of Egypt” was rolled away from them. Their flesh was circumcised; and with that tremendous victory over the old man, they were enabled to go against the enemies in the land of their inheritance.

Day of Atonement

As we have already established, the crossing of the Jordan River represents being dead to sin, and Gilgal represents heart circumcision. Therefore, the crossing of the Jordan

River can also symbolise the sixth feast of Israel, the Day of Atonement, which dealt with the sin of the nation.

The children of Israel crossed the Jordan River at the time of the Passover in the first month (Josh. 4:1-5:10). Thus the children of Israel did not literally celebrate the Day of Atonement when they crossed the Jordan River. However, it is clear from Scripture that the crossing of the Jordan can symbolise the Day of Atonement.

The Day of Atonement was kept on the tenth day of the seventh month (Lev. 23:27). The number ten represents trials. This Day was a time of cleansing of sin and affliction, as recorded in Leviticus 16:29-30, *“And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you: For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.”*

I believe the Church has now entered the time of this sixth feast. This feast started in 1973 with the Yom Kippur War. From that time forth God has been doing a deep inner cleansing and circumcision in the hearts of those who are willing, in order to bring them to the last and greatest feast, the Feast of Tabernacles. In no other generation has it been possible for the journey of Israel to be fully experienced by the Church.

As Scripture tells us, first the natural, then the spiritual (1 Cor. 15:46). Events in Israel often parallel what God is doing in spiritual Israel, the Church (Gal. 6:16). My wife and I were on the Mount of Olives just prior to the Yom Kippur War in 1973. Yom Kippur is the Hebrew name for the Day of Atonement. The Lord visited us in a very sovereign way, telling us that the war was about to begin and that Israel would retreat. He told us that the Church was spiritually entering into time of the Day of Atonement.

He also showed us many scriptural events that have not been fulfilled yet, including the division of the land of Israel and the bloodshed around Jerusalem in the last days. The Lord spoke to us that the young people who marched in 1973 during the twenty-fifth anniversary of the State of Israel would experience the Great Tribulation.

The Lord spoke to us: "I am going to reveal sin in high places. Then I will expose sin in My Church." The Watergate scandal of the time brought down President Nixon. The next year, 1974, about 30 heads of state around the world were brought down.

Then the Lord said, "After that, I am going to reveal sin in My Church." Regretfully, this has come to pass in the Church today. We see it everywhere. The Church is in a time of deep cleansing. It is a time of exposure of sin for those who refuse to be circumcised (Mt. 10:26). Jesus said in Luke 12:2, "*For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.*"

In 1981, while ministering in New Zealand, I was visited by two angels. One of the angels had a large sword in his hand. The word “circumcision” was written on the point of the sword. The other angel wore a sash inscribed with the words, “The Enforcer.” The Lord said to me: “I have come to circumcise the hearts of My people, and I will start with the leaders. Those who hearken and yield to My sword of circumcision will go on with Me. However, those who refuse God’s circumcision will know judgment.” “The Enforcer” will be dispatched upon them.

Before the Church as a whole and we as individual members of the Church can enter into the seventh feast, the Feast of Tabernacles, we must allow the Lord to do a thorough work of cleansing in our lives.

CHAPTER 12

The Thirty-One Kings

Joshua 12:9-24 is a record of the 31 kings that Israel had to drive out of Canaan in order to come into their high calling of rest at Mount Zion. Israel was empowered to war against these kings *after* they were circumcised at Gilgal.

The 31 kings represent enthroned areas of *self* where ego still reigns instead of Christ our Lord. These enemies must be thoroughly abolished by the sword of God. Otherwise, they will hinder us from coming into rest. We will not come to complete victory, and we will not possess Mount Zion.

God wants to subjugate every stronghold and imagination that exalts itself against Him. The Apostle Paul said we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers (2 Cor. 10:4-5). Thus, our battle is spiritual, against enemies within and without.

The 31 kings are as follows, *“The king of Jericho, one; the king of Ai, which is beside Bethel, one; The king of Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one; The king of Jarmuth, one; the king of Lachish, one; The king of Eglon, one; the king of Gezer, one; The king of Debir, one; the king of Geder, one; The king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one; The king of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one; The king of Makkedah, one; the king of Bethel, one; The king of Tappuah, one; the*

king of Hopher, one; The king of Aphek, one; the king of Lasharon, one; The king of Madon, one; the king of Hazor, one; The king of Shimronmeron, one; the king of Achshaph, one; The king of Taanach, one; the king of Megiddo, one; The king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam of Carmel, one; The king of Dor in the coast of Dor, one; the king of the nations of Gilgal, one; The king of Tirzah, one: all the kings thirty and one” (Josh. 12:9-24).

The following interpretation of each king is based on a message by Reverend A.B. Simpson. This message on the 31 kings is for believers who have already come through the wilderness and crossed over Jordan. It is for those who possess a level of maturity but require a deeper inner crucifixion.

King 1: Self-Will

Self-will is one of man’s greatest maladies. He is on the throne of his life instead of God. Many Christians make their own choices and decisions. Rather than asking God what His will is, they tell Him what their plans are and ask Him to bless them. The antidote is to seek only to do God’s will. As Jesus said to His Father in the Garden of Gethsemane, *“Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done”* (Lk. 22:42).

King 2: Self-Indulgence

Self-indulgence causes us to only focus on ourselves. This person’s favourite subject is himself. He monopolises

conversations, talking about himself, his experiences, and his achievements. Paul said, “*Look not every man on his own things, but every man on the things of others*” (Phil. 2:4). “*Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth*” (Prov. 27:2, 2 Cor. 12:2-5). Our first duty is to draw attention to the Lord and then stay out of the picture.

King 3: Self-Seeking

The third area of the self-life is a self-seeking attitude. Napoleon once said, “The only people I care about are those who can benefit me!” He had no use for anyone else. May we never be guilty of using people for our advantage! First Corinthians 13:5 says that love “seeketh not her own.” In other words, “it is not self-seeking” (NIV). True love is unselfish and considers the needs of others first.

King 4: Self-Complacency

Self-complacency is the exact opposite of hungering and thirsting for righteousness (Ps. 42:1-2, Mt. 5:6). It is being spiritual passive. The Laodiceans thought they had reached the apex of spirituality (Rev. 3:17). They thought they had it all! This is blindness and deception, of course, as they had stopped growing (1 Cor. 8:2, Gal. 6:3).

Even the Apostle Paul said in Philippians 3:13-14, “*Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the*

mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Unless we have an ongoing and progressive vision, we will become complacent in our Christian walk and dwell carelessly. Proverbs 29:18 says, “Where there is no [progressive] vision, the people perish.”

King 5: Self-Glorying

Paul warned about self-glorying in Galatians 5:26, “*Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.*” He also develops this theme in Philippians 2:3, “*Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.*” It is a tragic mistake for people to boast of having the fastest growing church in the country or the most successful ministry or outreach anywhere. Some churches boast of having the finest choir in the state, while some evangelists boast that they have never made a mistake with their spiritual gifts.

Solomon asserted that he was unsurpassed and unequalled by anyone who preceded him (Eccl. 1:16). Peter boldly declared that even if all his brethren forsook the Lord, he would never forsake Him (Mt. 26:33). All vain glorying and bragging is an exhibition of an inner king who must be removed and replaced by the King of Kings.

King 6: Self-Confidence

This king trusts in his own mind and judgment. He is self-reliant. He thinks he does not need anyone else because he

knows what he is doing. He thinks he has everything under control and can work out his problems on his own. He is a self-made man; he thinks he has all the answers. This is the opposite of that holy dependence Jesus had on His Father, saying in John 5:19, *“The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.”* Jesus also said in John 5:30, *“I can of mine own self do nothing.”*

King 7: Self-Consciousness

The king of self-consciousness relates everything that is said or done to himself. It is a dreadful bondage of worry. Every gesture, look, and word is carefully studied. He assumes everyone is thinking about him and talking about him. He is a prisoner of his own imaginations. It is such a relief to realise that people are scarcely ever thinking about us. The truth is, they are just like us, they are thinking about themselves.

King 8: Self-Importance

This enthroned king has an inflated ego. When he is not treated as a king, he is quick to experience anger or depression. Many believers who have received knowledge and training for a few years think that they have outgrown their teachers and pastor. Some even drift into the deception that they are God’s special messengers sent to correct their leaders. We read in Obadiah 1:3, *“The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground?”*

King 9: Self-Depreciation

Self-depreciation is a constant degrading of ourselves. It is not beneficial to repeatedly run ourselves down or continually focus on our shortcomings (Rom. 7:24). This is a preoccupation with self that hinders us from focusing on God. Philemon 1:6 exhorts the believer in “*the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.*” Give the Holy Spirit credit for all the good things He has done in your life. Turn the emphasis off you, onto Him.

If we do not have a wholesome opinion of ourselves, we probably will not have a wholesome opinion of others either. God wants us to have a wholesome sense of our worth in His eyes. Self-acceptance is important for good spiritual health. In order for us to love others, we must first love ourselves (Mt. 22:39).

King 10: Self-Vindication

The king of self-vindication demands his rights, defends his position, and justifies himself and his ways, even unto death. This king would rather die than give in to others. He is not convinced that “turning the other cheek” is really for today. Nor does he believe that injustices are ordained of God to move him closer to the throne (Gen. 50:20).

Jesus said in Matthew 16:24, “*If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*” Some Christians never learn this lesson. The very idea

behind the Incarnation was the renunciation of our rights! Are we better than Christ? A. B. Simpson said, “I solemnly believe that most of the blessings that have been given to me in my life and ministry have come because of the evil things people have said of me, and because God made me willing to allow them to say them.”

King 11: Self-Sensitivity

Self-sensitivity makes us touchy, easily irritated, quick to take offense, resentful, and very protective of ourselves. It makes us very conscious of our own feelings, but unaware when we have hurt someone else. Ironically, overly sensitive people accuse others of being uncaring and insensitive to them, unaware of how much they are hurting them by charging them so (Rom. 2:1).

King 12: Self-Seeing

This is the king who rigidly asserts, “There is only one way to do it!” This king is one who can only see things from his own point of view. The Apostle Peter struggled with this problem, saying, “I would never...” only to repent afterwards (Mt. 16:22; 26:33, Jn. 13:8, Acts 10:14).

Job’s three friends refused to budge from their philosophic appraisals of Job’s calamity. They were unqualified, however, to counsel or console him because they had never seen, heard of, or experienced anything like Job’s trial. Yet they insisted, “This is the only way to look at it!” This attitude is symptomatic

of several problems. It suggests that everything that can be known about the subject is already known. It also presents the attitude of infallibility. However, true wisdom encompasses a broad spectrum of matters, offers other workable alternatives in gentleness, and knows when enough has been said.

King 13: Self-Introspection

This king majors on Scripture verses such as Romans 7:18 and 24, *“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not... O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”* This is a person who is always looking within.

God never told us to analyse ourselves or figure out puzzles with our own minds. Jeremiah 17:9 says, *“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”* We do not know what is in our hearts; only the Lord does. David said to Solomon in 1 Chronicles 28:9, *“...know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts...”* We should not be overly self-introspective, but allow the Lord to search our hearts.

The Lord is the One who tries our hearts and will show us what we need to know, in His time. Until then, we should simply trust the Lord implicitly, be at peace, and keep joy in our hearts (Prov. 3:5-6).

King 14: Self-Love

This king lives for *himself* and resents inconveniences or intrusions upon his private life, time, or possessions. How contrary this is to the nature of God who willingly gave up His very life for others! John 3:16 says, “*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*”

Christ never chose the path of convenience. Some Christians refuse to go into the ministry or to a foreign field because of self-love. They love their life and security, but in so choosing, they lose both (Mt. 19:29). Jesus said, “*Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel’s, the same shall save it*” (Mk. 8:34-35). Joy is found where God leads you. Happiness is where the presence of God resides (Ps. 16:11). The safest place on earth is where and when we are in the will of God.

King 15: Selfish Affections

Jesus said in Luke 6:32-33, “*For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.*” When we appreciate only those who appreciate us, we are ordinary Christians. Even sinners are able to do this—love those who love them. Are we thankful only for those who approve of us

and praise us? Do we have little use for everyone else? Is our scope of fellowship small and cliquish? In a church of 300, are we friendly only to 30 people? God desires to enlarge and make the hearts of every one of his people more charitable.

King 16: Selfish Motives

Jesus said in Luke 6:34-35, “And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.”

This king donates money to God in expectation of getting more back for himself. Much of today’s prosperity message promotes this mentality—“Give to God so that He may return sevenfold back to you.” God truly is a generous God, and He loves to bless His people; but our motive for giving should never be for gaining greater dividends. Remember, ministers and evangelists who are genuine avoid using up whole services just to appeal for money.

King 17: Selfish Desires

People who have selfish desires are covetous, longing to be successful and to have security. They often seek to have close friendships with prominent people in order to gain influence and power. Some even try to marry into a particular family for wealth, prestige, or power. We should examine our motives

to see what is prompting our words and actions. Ask the Lord, “Why do I really want this?”

King 18: Selfish Choices

This king does not inquire of God for His perfect will. He tells God what he wants. We were created *for* God, to bring pleasure to Him (Rev. 4:11). Therefore, we should always ask God which choice would please Him the most. Philippians 2:13 says, “*For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*”

If we are not bringing pleasure to our Maker, then we are living in vain. Joy is the result of being what we were created to be and doing what pleases Him. David said in Psalm 40:8, “*I delight to do thy will O God.*” Life is filled with choices.

These choices include whom we should marry! Many Christians disobey God on this point. We must allow God to select our mate, for this will ultimately bring about a happier and smoother marriage—a marriage that is glorifying to Him. We must allow the Lord to choose for us because He knows best.

King 19: Selfish Pleasures

This is where a person gratifies self. Western society is pleasure-made. Today, the Scripture that is being fulfilled says that people are “*lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God*” (2 Tim. 3:4). Sports, cars, clothes, and hobbies can be idols, too. Much of the Church is obsessed with an insatiable appetite for pleasure.

Many Americans desire to move to Florida, not because they are longing to do the will of God, but to have a life of ease in the tropical climate. Some have allowed a retirement mentality to creep into their lives at a very young age.

True pleasure, however, is found in the presence of God and in the place of His will for our lives. We read in Psalm 16:11, *“Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”* Psalm 45:7 goes along with this, *“Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”*

King 20: Selfish Possessions

A grasping spirit is clearly seen with this king. The reading of a last will and testament is one sure way to cause hidden iniquity to surface from deep within a person’s heart. Families and friendships have been destroyed over the bitterness of a contested will. Jesus did not encourage the man who had an argument over an inheritance to fight for a bigger share. The Lord saw a motive of covetousness in his heart (Lk. 12:13-15).

Jesus warned that happiness is not measured by how many possessions we amass. The things people grasp for never satisfy anyway. Sooner or later, we will lose everything we try to hold on to with selfish motives. People who obtain riches or possessions by deceitful means end up being fools without fruit (Jer. 17:9-11). May we always be open-handed!

King 21: Selfish Fears and Cares

This king exemplifies self-preservation. He is very protective of himself and has an acute problem trusting God to take care of him. He thinks, “God is not going to take care of me, or God might let me fail!” Some fears stem from pride. The thoughts might be, “I might look like a fool, or I might be humiliated, etc.” Many times people worry about something for months, only to find that it was absolutely nothing when it comes. If our particular fear is rooted in pride, then humility can break our bondage. This king must be slain with the sword, because fear and unbelief cannot possess the promises.

King 22: Selfish Sorrows

Self-inflicted sorrows or sorrows from wounded pride are a result of this king. This king is quick to charge God and others of being irresponsible, of not caring about him. Some other examples are, “God let me down, or God has not been fair to me.”

These sorrows result from unfulfilled expectations—expectations of something God never intended for us to have. We need to remember that if God thwarted some plan or direction, then it was because He was being merciful, as He had something far better in mind. Remember, godly sorrow brings life, but self-induced sorrow brings death: *“For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death”* (2 Cor. 7:10).

King 23: Selfish Sacrifices and Denials

This king gives to satisfy self. Paul speaks of selfish sacrifices in 1 Corinthians 13:3, “*And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.*” A man could give all his goods to feed the poor, his body to be burned as a martyr, and still not have divine love as his ultimate motive. People can have bizarre motives. A man may fast for 40 days, not to draw closer to God, but to break a record or to have an experience to glory in. This is a fast to satisfy the flesh. Some self-denials are for displaying religiosity; make sure your motives are right.

Do you remember the story of the man who for 25 years sat on the top of a pillar and lived on roots and rations, all in the name of piety. What did it accomplish? It simply drew attention to the man himself. He became the very epitome of self-righteousness and self-consciousness.

King 24: Selfish Virtue and Morality

Selfish virtue and morality brings in a “holier than thou” attitude, whereby one feels, “I am better than others because of my high standards and beliefs.” It produces a standoffishness from others, and it is rooted in spiritual pride.

The Jews, in general, felt that the Gentiles were beneath them, and they would not eat with Gentiles or associate with them. If they came in contact with Gentiles through commerce, they

would carefully wash their hands afterwards (Acts 10:28; 11:3). This king must be slain, or he will hinder many from coming into our churches.

King 25: Self-Righteousness

Self-righteousness makes us think that we are righteous because of our works and efforts. It brings the attitude that we have made ourselves good by our devotional life, sacrifice, abstinence, separation, etc. With this attitude comes the feeling that we have the right to look down on others who have not worked as hard as we have. While it is true that effort on our part is required in order to live a holy life, the fact remains that if we have any righteousness or holiness within, it is because of God's grace. Therefore, we have nothing in which to brag or boast.

Paul said in Philippians 3:9, *“And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.”* Jesus Himself spoke concerning this matter in Luke 18:9-14. When Job found fault with God but none with himself, he was guilty of the deception of self-righteousness (Job 27:1-6; 32:1; 35:2). The only righteousness we have is God's righteousness (Isa. 54:17; 64:6).

King 26: Selfish Sanctification

This happens when a legitimate experience we had in the past becomes an idol to us and we fail to move on with God.

When people camp around an experience of the past, it goes sour. We must have new life flowing into us all the time, for no single experience can cause us to come to maturity. We must continue to grow and have new experiences all the time or we will dry up.

In Philippians 3:12-14, Paul said that he had not yet attained in spite of 28 years of walking with God: *“Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”*

King 27: Selfish Charity

There are people who contribute large amounts of money to a church or organisation with strings attached. They have ulterior motives, and want to control the work or use it to propagate their own ideas and beliefs. Some people give in order to have public recognition or the praise of man.

Jesus said in Matthew 6:1-4: *“Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that*

they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.” God desires that we not publicise our giving but let it remain between Himself and us.

King 28: Selfish Christian Work

God never intended ministry to take the place of our relationship with Him. The ministry must not be an idol in our lives. Just as a little child pouts when his toys are taken away, immature Christians sulk when God tells them to sit down and be quiet for a while. Will we pout and lose the victory if God withdraws us from our ministry for a season to speak to us?

The Ephesian church had become so busy doing the Lord’s work that they neglected their relationship with Him, as seen in Revelation 2:1-4, “*Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name’s sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.”*

King 29: Selfish Prayers

Many Christians have a selfish prayer life. The prodigal son said, “Father, give me!” But after he squandered his substance he said, “Father, make me!” In other words, “Make me the son you want me to be” (Lk. 15:12,19). Today’s prosperity message emphasises, “Give me! Give me a quick answer, the easiest way out of my problems, and give me provision and blessings.” However, it has failed to emphasise: “Make me!” Our prayer should be, “Lord, make me fit for your eternal kingdom, even if my circumstances are not always pleasant and the answers I seek do not come immediately. What can I do to bring pleasure to you, Lord?”

King 30: Selfish Hopes

This king lives in a dream world with unrealistic expectations. The human heart sometimes fantasises of becoming famous or wealthy, or covets something that belongs to someone else. God wants His people to learn contentment and thankfulness in their present circumstances. Paul said in Philippians 4:11, “*Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*” We should make sure that what we are hoping for is what God desires to give us (Ps. 62:5).

King 31: Our Whole Life

This king withholds his life from the Lord. We must remember that our very own life must not be held as a selfish

possession, but as a sacred trust. Paul said in Acts 20:24, *“But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.”*

May we remember that everything we possess is not ours; it has simply been entrusted or loaned to us. First Corinthians 6:19-20 says, *“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”*

CHAPTER 13

Incomplete Victory

1. Slackness in Possessing the Land

Under Joshua's leadership, the children of Israel did not possess their full inheritance. They were slack in possessing the land of Canaan. We read this sad commentary in Joshua 13:1, "*Now Joshua was old and stricken in years; and the LORD said unto him, Thou art old and stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed.*"

We also read in Joshua 18:2-3, "*And there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes, which had not yet received their inheritance. And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, How long are ye slack to go to possess the land, which the LORD God of your fathers hath given you?*"

Hebrews 4:8 tells us that Joshua was unable to bring the Israelites into full rest, "*For if [Joshua] had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.*" The Israelites were satisfied to settle for partial victory. This is also true of the human heart.

Many Christians reach a certain plateau in their walk with the Lord, and they are content to dwell there. Israel did not deal with all the enemies in their inheritance. They

compromised with the enemy, made alliances with them, and were content to coexist with them in the land of their inheritance. This was their downfall. They did not conquer their destination, Mount Zion. Instead, the Jebusites retained possession of it.

The book of Joshua ends with this account in Joshua 24:29,31, *“And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being an hundred and ten years old...And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the LORD, that he had done for Israel.”*

2. Book of Judges

The Book of Judges covers a period in Israel’s history that may best be described as an interim between the death of Joshua and the lives of Samuel, Saul, and David. The Book of Judges continues the narrative of the children of Israel, from the death of Joshua until the time of Samuel, a period of about 350 years.

During the period of the judges, the Lord tested the children of Israel to know what was in their hearts after they were settled in the Promised Land. We might also pass through periods in our life like this. Sometimes God withdraws Himself from us to see what we will do with what we know and what we have. This can be seen in the life of King Hezekiah.

We read in 2 Chronicles 32:31 that the Lord withdrew Himself from Hezekiah for a season to test him, *“Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.”* The godly King Hezekiah did not fare too well.

May we learn these painful lessons in the book of Judges so that if on this life’s journey from Egypt to Zion, we are led through similar spiritual situations, we will conduct ourselves in a more circumspect manner than some of them did in the account from the book of Judges. Furthermore, let us be careful not to jeopardise our inheritance and the inheritance of our seed as did the good King Hezekiah.

The Book of Judges opens with an account of Israel’s obeying the charge of Joshua. They began to dispossess the enemy in the Promised Land but were unable to overcome all of them. We read in Judges 1:1, *“Now after the death of Joshua it came to pass, that the children of Israel asked the LORD, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?”* We may now look at the account given of each individual tribe to appreciate this point.

1. The tribe of Judah (Judges 1:19): *“And the LORD was with Judah; and he drave out the inhabitants of the mountain; but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron.”*

2. The tribe of Benjamin (Judges 1:21): *“And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day.”*

3. The tribe of Manasseh (Judges 1:27): *“Neither did Manasseh drive out the inhabitants of Bethshean and her towns, nor Taanach and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns: but the Canaanites would dwell in that land.”*

4. The tribe of Ephraim (Judges 1:29): *“Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them.”*

5. The tribe of Zebulun (Judges 1:30): *“Neither did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the inhabitants of Nahalol; but the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became tributaries.”*

6. The tribe of Asher (Judges 1:31-32): *“Neither did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Accho, nor the inhabitants of Zidon, nor of Ahlab, nor of Achzib, nor of Helbah, nor of Aphik, nor of Rehob: But the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: for they did not drive them out.”*

7. The tribe of Naphtali (Judges 1:33): *“Neither did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Bethshemesh, nor the*

inhabitants of Bethanath; but he dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: nevertheless the inhabitants of Bethshemesh and of Bethanath became tributaries unto them.”

8. The tribe of Dan (Judges 1:34-35): *“And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountain: for they would not suffer them to come down to the valley: But the Amorites would dwell in mount Heres in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim: yet the hand of the house of Joseph prevailed, so that they became tributaries.”*

Reuben and Gad settled on the other side of Jordan, outside of the Promised Land. Simeon and Levi were not given designated land (Gen. 49:5-7). Simeon dwelt among the tribe of Judah, and Levi was scattered among the other tribes.

3. The Lord’s Rebuke

In Judges 2:1-3, we are told of an angel of the Lord who came up from Gilgal (which means the place of sanctification) unto Bochim (which means the place of weeping). He was warning Israel not to make a league with the inhabitants of the land.

“And an angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of

this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this? Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you.”

The Lord rebuked the children of Israel for compromising with their enemies instead of killing them. Israel was not truly repentant, and again forsook the Lord.

God addresses issues in the lives of His people over and over again. There comes a time, however, if God is repeatedly ignored and people choose to love their bondages and sins, that He will no longer give them grace for deliverance. They will be locked into their bondages. There comes a time when God sets a person in the course he has chosen for his life.

How we need the *gift and spirit of repentance* to bring us to *weeping*, that we may return to Gilgal, the place of sanctification and fellowship with God. A repentant spirit, and weeping, will cause us to make *no* alliances or compromises with the world, the flesh, or the devil.

4. Alliances

One of the most important lessons that we have to learn in the Christian walk is to make right alliances. We have to understand the awesome consequences of making the wrong alliances. Making a league with the inhabitants of the land of

Canaan destroyed Israel on many occasions, and resulted in intermarriage with the unbelieving heathen.

We read in Judges 3:5-7, *“And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites: And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and forgot the LORD their God, and served Baalim and the groves.”* Thus, total idolatry entered into the nation and with it the consequent judgments of God.

This was also the case during the reign of the righteous King Jehoshaphat. He made an alliance with Ahab, the king of Israel, a very wicked king (2 Chr. 18:1-3). The result was that Jehoshaphat’s son, Jehoram, married Ahab and Jezebel’s daughter, and walked contrary to God’s commandments (2 Chr. 21:4-6). In 2 Chronicles 19:2, the Lord rebuked Jehoshaphat for his alliance with Ahab, *“And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD.”*

While wrong alliances can have devastating consequences for future generations, right alliances can bring forth tremendous blessings for the generations to come. Let us learn also from the admonition of Psalm 1:1-2, *“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor*

standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.”

Three Degrees of Fellowship in Psalm 1:1:

- 1. Walking:** signifies receiving counsel or being guided by the ungodly, those who leave the path of righteousness.
- 2. Standing:** signifies openly espousing the cause of sinners, those who habitually commit evil works.
- 3. Sitting:** signifies taking up one’s abode with those who scorn spiritual matters, and have been given over to a mind incapable of sound judgment.

May we heed the promise and warning seen in Proverbs 13:20, *“He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.”*

The Lord was angry with the Israelites because of their disobedience, as seen in Judges 2:20-23, *“And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and he said, Because that this people hath transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not hearkened unto my voice; I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died: That through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the LORD to walk therein, as their fathers did*

keep it, or not. Therefore the LORD left those nations, without driving them out hastily; neither delivered he them into the hand of Joshua.”

Consequently, the children of Israel never possessed their full inheritance, as seen in Judges 3:1-4: *“Now these are the nations which the LORD left, to prove Israel by them, even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan; Only that the generations of the children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof; Namely, five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwelt in mount Lebanon, from mount Baalhermon unto the entering in of Hamath. And they were to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.”* It was left to David to bring perfect rest to Israel. This is developed in our next section.

Many people have bondages in their lives for decades because they made alliances with the wicked. They then face lifelong battles with those works of the flesh, even seeing their children plagued by the same sins. We read in Hosea 14:9, *“Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.”*

We will continually be plagued if we make alliances with the wicked. We will be plagued by their wrong counsel, and so often by their sins, which we have tolerated or even condoned.

Part Three

Inheriting Mount Zion

CHAPTER 14

Shiloh

1. History of Shiloh

After Israel crossed Jordan and entered the Promised Land, they had three capital cities: Shiloh, Hebron, and Zion. Their first capital was Shiloh. We read in Joshua 18:1, *“And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there. And the land was subdued before them.”*

The meaning of Shiloh is obscure, but the spiritual sense of the word is “peaceable” (Isa. 8:6). The King James Version speaks of the waters of Shiloh *“that go softly,”* suggesting that it was intended by God to have been a pleasant place in which to dwell. Spiritually, it was a place of blessing. All this changed as the Israelites backslid during the time of Eli, the high priest. We will see this a little later.

Located about 30 miles north of Jerusalem, Shiloh was the place God chose for the Tabernacle of Moses to be erected after Israel entered the Promised Land. The Tabernacle remained there until it was taken to Gibeon (1 Chr. 16:39).

The Tabernacle of Moses was located in Shiloh for several hundred years, starting from their entry into the land until it was overrun in the days of Eli (Josh. 18:1, 1 Sam. 1–5,

Ps. 78:55-68). Shiloh, located in the territory given to the tribe of Ephraim, served as Israel's religious centre. It was part of the inheritance of Joseph. Joshua was from the tribe of Ephraim, the son of Joseph (Num. 13:8). Therefore, Shiloh was the natural choice for the Tabernacle since it was located in the inheritance of Joshua, the leader who brought Israel into the Promised Land.

Shiloh was also a place where important decisions were made. It was there that the inheritance of the tribes of Israel was divided. The tabernacle, and the literal presence of God, were there. We read in Joshua 18:8-10: *“And the men arose, and went away: and Joshua charged them that went to describe the land, saying, Go and walk through the land, and describe it, and come again to me, that I may here cast lots for you before the LORD in Shiloh. And the men went and passed through the land, and described it by cities into seven parts in a book, and came again to Joshua to the host at Shiloh. And Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD: and there Joshua divided the land unto the children of Israel according to their divisions.”*

2. Departing of the Glory from Shiloh

Although the period of time the Israelites were in Shiloh was glorious at first, it ended in a time of compromise, wrong alliances, and co-existence with the enemies. In spite of the great leadership of Joshua and the literal presence of the Lord, God's people were satisfied with incomplete victories. They did not enter into rest or come into God's plan for their lives.

Zion, the greatest inheritance, was left uncaptured and uninherited. Many Israelites even regressed into immorality and idolatry, as described in the time of Eli.

The time of Eli was one of the darkest periods in the annals of the history of Israel. The book of 1 Samuel opens with a most lamentable account of the spiritual condition at the house of the Lord in Shiloh. Eli's sons were called sons of the Devil; and they did not know the Lord. Their servants seized the sacrifices offered to the Lord for themselves. Eli's sons were also very immoral with the women who assembled at the door of the congregation. Although Eli reprimanded his sons, he did not put his sons out of the priesthood. Therefore, he himself was reprimanded by God, because he honoured them above God.

For that reason, God chose Samuel, who would be a faithful priest unto whom God would grant a sure house. How we, as parents and spiritual leaders, should learn from the lives of Eli and his sons so that we do not walk in their error! God rejected not only Eli and his seed from being priests (the last was Abiathar, who was cast out by Solomon), but also the whole tribe of Joseph. Shiloh was situated in the tribe of Joseph; therefore, the tribe was polluted. Because of this, we read the following account of God's dealings with that tribe:

“Moreover he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim: But chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion which he loved. And he built his sanctuary like high palaces, like the earth which he hath established for

ever. He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds: From following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance” (Ps. 78:67-71).

When apostasy came, God rejected the tribe of Ephraim, which He had chosen to bring Israel into the Promised Land. In their place, God chose King David, from the tribe of Judah, to lead Israel back into God’s presence and to possess Mount Zion, God’s dwelling place. Because they did not repent, God’s Spirit was lifted from Ephraim, and they grew worse and worse. The Book of Hosea brings this out vividly.

In Genesis 49:10, which includes the prophecy of Jacob for Judah, we read, *“The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.”* This is understood to mean that Shiloh represents the Messiah—Christ. Therefore, the Lord saw that Ephraim would fail, and so He chose Judah (from whom Christ would come) to take the pre-eminent position among the tribes.

3. Lessons of Shiloh for Believers

Shiloh holds an important truth for believers today. Shiloh speaks of the place or situation wherein believers make decisions about where they want to settle, and where their inheritance will be. God can use us mightily for a time.

However, if we do not walk uprightly with God, then God will do with us as He did with Shiloh. That is, He will set us aside (or even bring His judgments upon us) and will look for believers who want to press into His presence and perfect will—to go on to Zion and be planted in the place of His choosing.

CHAPTER 15

Hebron

1. Introduction to the Life of David

David was the third major leader of the journey, following Moses and Joshua. He is the one who brought Israel to Zion. David was of the tribe of Judah. Why Judah? Remember, the tribe of Judah had all the promises of inheriting the throne; and Mount Zion and Hebron were both in the land of Judah.

Prior to taking Zion, David was anointed in Hebron and reigned there for seven-and-a-half years. The journey of Israel goes through Hebron first and then onto Zion. Thus, Hebron is a stepping-stone to Zion; and we must experience Hebron's message before we are able to come to Zion. What then does Hebron represent?

2. Spiritual Significance of Hebron

In order to understand the spiritual meaning of Hebron for believers, we must first consider the people in the Bible who are associated with Hebron, including Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, Caleb, Othniel and Achsah.

Separation Before Multiplication

The first person associated with Hebron is Abraham. Genesis 13:18 tells us that Abraham dwelt at Hebron, "*Then Abram removed his*

tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD.”

Before Abraham went to Hebron, he separated from Lot, as recorded in Genesis 13:9, *“Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.”* The result of this separation from Lot can be seen in Genesis 13:14-17, *“And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.”*

Abraham’s separation from Lot was a prerequisite for entering into the true fellowship of Hebron. After Abraham’s act of extreme generosity (in letting Lot have first choice), we find that God made phenomenal promises of fruitfulness and multiplication to him. These blessings came after a *separation* was made from one who did not have the same vision or call.

This principle is also seen in the lives of Isaac and Jacob, who are also associated with Hebron, having been buried there. Isaac had to separate from Ishmael and Jacob had to separate from Esau. Isaac is the type that brings forth a hundredfold to God (Gen. 26:12-14). He is the type of man who inherits the promises.

Many who are offered golden opportunities and promises fail to lay hold of them.

Jacob was a man who wrestled with God, prevailed, and had his name changed to Israel, which means “a prince with God.” He went down into Egypt with just 70 people but came back with a mighty multitude (under Moses). Again we see the thought of extraordinary multiplication. Yet for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, there first had to be separations in their lives. Therefore, this is part of the message of Hebron—separation, then multiplication.

Dedication, Wholeheartedness

Hebron speaks of *wholeheartedness*. Caleb was wholehearted, and he inherited Hebron. He wholly followed the Lord, as we read in Joshua 14:13-14, “*And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance. Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite unto this day, because that he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel.*”

Later, David gained the territory of Hebron. David was a man after God’s own heart. His heart was not divided. *Davids* are the kind of people who possess Hebron and all it represents, enabling them to go on to Zion, which is the final destination.

It is also interesting to study some of the women associated with Hebron. Several years ago, the Lord stood by my bed as

I lay there. He said to me, “If you had a son, what qualifications would you require in the wife who would marry your son?” Immediately, a whole list of qualifications came to mind. Then the Lord said, “Do you see how particular you would have been about the qualifications of the wife of your son? Do you now understand how careful I am in choosing wives for My sons?” The Lord then started opening Scripture to me.

The first wife the Lord mentioned was Achsah. She was the daughter of Caleb, who took Hebron. She was given as a wife to Othniel, the first judge (Jdg. 1:12-13). Othniel had a vision, a mark to press toward. He had to take a mountain to get Achsah as his wife. His wife then moved him on in his vision. She said, “Make sure you get the upper and lower springs, too!”

A wife has tremendous power to *turn* her husband one way or another, either into God’s purposes or away from them. For example, Jezebel moved her husband Ahab in the wrong way, motivating him to great wickedness (1 Ki. 21:25). Of Achsah it says, “*She moved him*” to ask for the springs (Jdg. 1:14-15). Remember, every wife *moves* her husband in one direction or another.

The Lord also said to me, “I chose Ruth to be in the Messianic line.” The whole communication I had with the Lord was quite awesome. I saw the seriousness with which God approaches marriage. It is an awesome thing when He communicates a certain truth. It transforms your thought life when He speaks to you.

There is a period of qualification on the part of a woman to be selected by the Lord to become the wife of one of His sons. God made it very clear to me that He selects with great care because He does not want His sons deflected from the vision that He has given and purposed for them. It then became clear that a girl has to seek God very earnestly to qualify to be chosen by God to be married to one of His sons, and to have God impart His vision for her life.

Continuing with this thought, let us look at some more women associated with Hebron and the Messianic line. One woman associated with Hebron is Sarah, who was buried there. She was the only woman in the whole Word of God to have her name changed. It was changed from Sarai to Sarah—“princess of the multitudes.” Why was her name changed to Sarah? It was because she was to be married to one who had *the vision*, to Abraham, who was going to become the “father of many nations.” She had to have a like name; she had to have a like vision.

Consider the great care that went into the selection of the wife of Isaac, Abraham’s heir. Eleazar asked God for a very difficult sign or confirmation. “*And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master*” (Gen. 24:14).

This does not appear to be much of a sign, but it is a fact that a camel can drink up to 30 gallons in 10 minutes. Since there

were 10 camels, they would need at least 300 gallons of water. If Rebekah's bucket held 2-3 gallons, that would have required over 100 drops into the well! Her heart was very generous to offer to water 10 camels. She was the one that God chose. Rebekah was not aware that she was being tested, and often neither are we. This was a menial task; God tests us in menial affairs. **Attitudes determine whether or not we are selected.**

Rebekah did not know that God was testing and watching her. In passing her test, she became part of the Messianic line and also inherited Hebron. She had no idea that when she responded to the servant Eleazar that it was the sign that determined whether or not she would be in Hebron. Likewise, we do not know when God is testing us to see if we qualify.

**God tests
us in
menial
affairs.**

Just as Abraham chose to offer up Isaac, we are all making choices today! Those choices will determine if we go on or not. Remember, as was discussed earlier, a woman has to *qualify* to become the wife of a son of God. This is very important! A woman cannot live a careless life and expect God to give her one of His choice sons for a husband. He is not! God made that very clear to me. Many girls are in the state of qualifying. If they do not qualify, God will take others who do and give them to His sons.

God wants a Ruth or a Rebekah. In these two Old Testament saints we see the type of women God wants for His sons. God's standards for His sons are *excellence*. God's standards

for the wives of His sons are nothing less. He will not choose one who is half-hearted and will turn one of His sons from the mark of the prize of the high calling of God. For some, either there will be a change of heart or they will miss God's purposes for their lives.

Nevertheless, being single can be an even higher calling, as we see from 1 Corinthians 7:37-38, "*Nevertheless he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well. So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better.*"

A wife becomes an integral part of a man. She becomes his very life. She is his helpmate and can literally determine the destiny of her husband. God made it very clear to me that He will not give a wife to a son if she is not wholehearted or if she has a tongue filled with guile. God's sons are priceless. They are foreordained before the foundation of the world to accomplish a mission. God is only going to bring into each son's life a consecrated woman who will ensure that he hits the mark.

This message of whole-heartedness is not only for the single girls. It is also for married women. Wives need to ask themselves if they are wholehearted. They need to ask, "Am I helping my husband to fulfil the vision that God has given him? Am I all-out for God, *or* am I turning my husband away from the prize of the high calling of God because I am not wholehearted and want the things of this world?"

Of course, this can apply to either a man or a woman. If a wife has been called of God as part of the five-fold ministry (apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher—see Ephesians 4:11-16), it is important for her husband to be supportive and wholehearted for God as well. We must all give an account of our life before the judgment seat of Christ. For the wives, God will require an account of their lives as to whether they helped their husbands fulfil the course God had ordained for them, or whether the wives dragged them down and hindered them because of desires that were not wholehearted for God. Unless some change, their husbands will miss the mark, and they will be held accountable at the judgment seat of Christ. But there is grace available to change! May we cry out to God, “I want to change. Make me like Sarah. I want to be an Achsah. Oh, God, I want to be a Ruth. I desire to be a blessing, I want to be wholehearted.”

Wholeheartedness means the ability to relinquish what is so dear to us, whether it is spiritual or natural. It is to have a heart that is so free that if God asks us to let go of anything, we will be able to release it back to Him, by His grace. God puts His finger on things in our lives at times. When He does, I would urge you to say to the Lord, “Yes, God. I release the matter You have been speaking about to You now.”

Marriage

Our marriage partner is of prime importance for our own lives. Not only must he or she have the same calling, but also that

partner must be trustworthy, supportive and faithful. God alone knows the end; therefore, although with the seeing of the eyes and the hearing of the ears a man or a woman might appear pleasing, only God knows the choices that they will make along life's path which will determine their ultimate destiny. He knows who will fulfil the call, who will remain supportive to the partner's call and ministry, and who will be a faithful marriage partner. **Therefore, we must place our choice of a marriage partner upon the altar and ask God to choose.** This applies both to men and women, whether we are called to the five-fold ministry or not.

I knew a girl who considered herself unsteady, unstable, and incapable of staying on course. In desperation she sought a man who appeared to be a strength to her. Only to discover that after marriage, it was she who had to become that pillar of strength. How they ended I do not know. Had she enquired of the Lord she might have been directed to another marriage partner. So enquire diligently of the Lord and remember beauty is but skin deep and the Lord alone knows the hearts.

Barrenness First, Then Fruitfulness

Several of these women were barren before they were fruitful. Hebron is associated with barrenness that leads to fruitfulness. Before God gives multiplication, there is a spiritual barrenness. During this time, there is a *deep purification* in our lives. There were seven barren women in the Word of God who brought forth remarkable sons. They were: Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Hannah, Ruth, Samson's mother, and

Elizabeth. Those who are of spiritual “Hebron” will be tried by fire by a period of barrenness.

Joseph was prepared to be a deliverer to his generation, and the Word of the Lord tried him during the period of barrenness in his life (when he was sold into slavery). But at the end of his life, he was abundantly fruitful.

We read in Isaiah 54:1-3 that God makes the barren fruitful in His time, *“Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.”*

Circumcision

Another aspect of inheriting the promises of multiplication at Hebron is circumcision. The Lord had promised Abraham, *“And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee”* (Gen. 17:6-7). However, in order to receive the promises of multiplication and fruitfulness, he and his

seed had to be circumcised (Gen. 17:10-11). Therefore, circumcision is the prerequisite for being fruitful.

Those who crossed Jordan and were circumcised at Gilgal *began* to inherit the promises. Unfortunately, many of the saints evaded areas where the sword needed to cut away the flesh and they settled for an inferior inheritance. However, those who will come to spiritual Hebron must submit themselves *fully* to the circumcision of heart.

As mentioned earlier, I once had a vision in New Zealand of an angel with his sword drawn. On the end of the point of his sword was written “circumcision.” God said that those who were going to be multiplied and be fruitful would have to be willing to expose their hearts before the Lord and allow the Lord to circumcise their heart. Unless we have a heart that is circumcised, we are not in the covenant; the covenant of multiplication.

All the Abrahamic Blessings

When Caleb saw Hebron, he cried out, “*Give me this mountain!*” (Josh. 14:12). Oh, what a mountain he was asking for! On that mountain Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were buried. Therefore, Mount Hebron speaks of a covenant relationship. It speaks of all the promises that God had given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Caleb was not just asking for a mound of earth! “This mountain” represented all the Abrahamic blessings. Caleb was saying that he wanted to enter into all those blessings given to Abraham.

Tearing Down the Strongholds of Satan

Samson broke the gates of the city of Gaza and took them to Hebron, as seen in Judges 16:3, “*And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron.*” The gates of a city are its strength and stronghold. Therefore, Hebron can represent the devouring of the strongholds of Satan. The Lord wants His Church to have the power to break the spiritual powers governing our cities, as He said in Matthew 16:18, “*...I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*” This means that the strongholds of Satan will give way and yield before the triumphant Church of Christ.

Enlargement

David became king in Hebron. When David was anointed there, he was given authority over *a sector* of the nation. He was king only over Judah. When he was anointed again, he was given authority over the whole nation of Israel. In a very real sense, his second and third anointings were over companies of people. They speak of multiplication, uniting, and enlargement. There is an anointing for enlargement, which David received at Hebron.

City of Refuge

Hebron was also a city of refuge, as seen in 1 Chronicles 6:57, “*And to the sons of Aaron they gave the cities of Judah,*

namely, Hebron, the city of refuge, and Libnah with her suburbs, and Jattir, and Eshtemoa, with their suburbs.” A true Hebronite opens his gates to those who are in need. We must have a bountiful eye. We must be open-handed and be conduits of God’s finance. Many people say, “I love to give when I have it.” But if they would try giving what they did have, they would have more to give. The people who do the most giving are usually not classified as rich. One man I know scarcely has a penny to his name, yet millions flow through him. The scriptural principle is: “*Give, and it shall be given unto you*” (Lk. 6:38). We should have a heart to help those in need in any way we can, providing solace, love, food, and lodging.

Pure Worship and Teaching

Hebron was a priestly city. The priests were the teachers of Israel. Hebron was a place where the teachers were developed. The priestly ministry, however, does not just involve preaching and teaching the law. The priests were also praise and worship directors. Priestly cities like Hebron were for the raising up of ministries that were able to lead God’s people into true worship. Hebronites should major in pure worship and music, as well as in teaching.

Sacrifice of Our “Isaac”

The whole character of Hebron is *whole-heartedness*. The whole purpose and yearning of Abraham’s heart was to fulfil God’s will. Abraham was consumed with the call of God. He

was called to be the father of many nations. Yet he had no son, and the promise looked more and more impossible. Finally, Isaac was born when Abraham was 100 years old. Then God tested Abraham and said, “Give him back to Me!” That was like asking him to offer up everything for which he had ever lived. Abraham was asked to give up his call, his ministry, the promises, and everything he had waited for. A *true* Hebronite is willing to give up even what is dearest. These are the ones who go on to Zion.

To drive this truth home in a new way, the Lord once showed me His heart. I saw the Lord Jesus standing before the earth, which He and His Father had so carefully and lovingly created together. They not only made this beautiful earth, but they also made all the thrones of glory and all the splendour of heaven. However, there came a time when the Father said to the Son, “Will you relinquish it to become a man and die for the sins of the world?”

The Spirit of God in Philippians 2:6-8 shows us more vividly what Christ was willing to relinquish. “*Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God [or a thing to be grasped after]. But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*” The true meaning of this verse from the Greek reveals that Jesus willingly released everything. Equality with God was not something He held on to or grasped after (see 2 Cor. 8:9; 5:21).

My wife and I had been instrumental in the founding of a missionary society in New Zealand. We had worked there for 10 years, and God blessed it. It had been fruitful in many parts of the world. Then early one morning, the Lord spoke to me and said, “Give it all up. Resign.” I had laboured there ten years, and the Lord said, “Let it go.” When I said, “Yes, Lord” from my heart, the song came, “I’m Free to Be a Servant of the Lord.” Recently, the Lord reminded me of this incident and said, “Unless you had given up all those things, you could never have been My servant.”

Philip the Evangelist was told to leave the revival in Samaria to go and meet the eunuch of Ethiopia in the desert. This actually resulted in greater fruitfulness; the establishment of the Church in Ethiopia.

Hebron speaks of being wholehearted. It means holding things very lightly, even what God has given us. What dedication on the part of Abraham to be able to offer Isaac his son! He was not only giving up his son, he was giving up his very call, too. In Isaac were all the promises. Let us be true Hebronites, as was Abraham. Only wholeheartedness will bring us into the blessings of Hebron. Remember, David was anointed at Hebron. It was only when he had entered into the fullness of the blessings of Hebron that he could come and take Zion.

It is very clear that we cannot come to Zion until Hebron is a reality. Only the wholehearted ones can come to Zion. This may mean giving up an “Isaac”—cherished possessions, calling, or ministry. But there is something we must

understand—God knows our hearts and precisely what we are holding on to, and that will be the thing that He will ask for! Therefore, we must not have an iron grip on anything, whether it be spiritual or natural things.

Summary of the Message of Hebron

The message of Hebron is the key to going on to Zion. Shiloh experienced a marvellous move of the Holy Spirit under Joshua's ministry. Many crossed Jordan and had come into something in God. This is true of so many today. Numerous men and women have weathered the wilderness, crossed Jordan, and come into fruitful ministries and blessings. Unfortunately, because areas of the heart are not reached by the sword, many have fallen into sin or have been deflected from their course.

The simple fact remains that if we do not continue to move on in our journey, we will actually go backward. The key to reaching the mark is to *continue to respond* to what God is putting His finger on in our lives. Every time we say “yes” to God, a transformation takes place in our heart. But when we say “no” to God, we cease to grow. In fact, we regress! Many of the Israelites evaded the sword and settled for compromise and coexistence with the enemy. Not only did they cease to go onward to Zion, they also lost the blessings they had attained at Shiloh. Remember, even when we are given a “kingdom” or blessings, we will be tested to see if we are worthy to keep them. Saul would have kept his kingdom forever if he had passed his tests (see 1 Sam. 13:13-14).

Hebron was the place of circumcision. It was the place of the wholehearted ones. This is where we face the sword, where we face the issues confronting us. If we will allow God to do His entire work in our hearts, we will move on to Zion.

Hebron Represents:

- **Separation before multiplication**—Abraham had to separate from family and friends who did not have the same vision and call.
- **Dedication, wholeheartedness**—This involves faithfulness in menial affairs, and keeping right attitudes.
- **Marriage**—Many blessings and safeguards come into our lives when we let God choose our companion. After marriage, we must continue to be wholehearted for God in order to help our mate go on in God's call. An unconsecrated wife will hinder her husband from fulfilling the call of God. Also, a man will answer to God for keeping his family from God's highest.
- **Barrenness first, then fruitfulness**—Barrenness does a *deep purification* within our hearts.
- **Circumcision**—This means facing *whatever* God's Word is confronting us with.
- **All the Abrahamic blessings**—These are only obtained by the wholehearted ones.

- **Tearing down the strongholds of Satan**—The Lord wants His Church to have the power to break the spiritual powers.
- **Enlargement**—At Hebron, there is an anointing for enlargement.
- **City of refuge**—Hebron is a place for showing compassion to the poor and needy, and being openhanded.
- **Pure worship and teaching**—One important key to going on with God is avoiding worldly music, and leading others into pure worship and praise, as well as teaching.
- **Sacrifice of our “Isaac”**—At Hebron, we release our most cherished possessions, even our calling and ministry if God so requires. Everything we have is simply *loaned* to us by God.

CHAPTER 16

Mount Zion

1. History of Zion

We are living at the end of time. This dispensation of the Church Age is nearly over. Israel's journey was long, especially through the wilderness. If they had obeyed the Lord it could have been much shorter, perhaps as short as two years.

In these last days, we should not expect it to take a long time for people to come to and cross over their Jordan. For leaders who have had to spearhead their way into these experiences, it has taken a long time. They have had to learn all the difficulties of the wilderness. Yet, there is a sense of God's timing. Ever since 1973, the Church has moved into *the Day of Atonement*. Since that point, God has really plummeted the sword of circumcision into the hearts of His people. Thus, God will cause His Church to rapidly finish this journey from Egypt to Zion in these last days.

Abraham was the founder of Hebron. As a pilgrim, he dwelt in that land of promise. Although he never came to earthly Zion himself, as he was not in the dispensation that could go to Zion, he had the onward heavenly vision of Zion (Heb. 11:9-10; 12:22). Sometimes people have a vision of the dispensation beyond which they are living.

There is an earthly Jerusalem with a holy hill called Zion in the midst of her. This is a type of the heavenly Jerusalem with a Mount Zion situated in her also (Rev. 14:1-5).

John describes this city in Revelation 21:10-11 as beaming with the glory of God, and being as clear as crystal. Revelation 21:18 speaks of pure gold, like unto clear glass. The underlying thought is that it is *without distortion*. It is absolutely transparent. God is seeking to qualify us for Zion because it is a place that is inhabited only by the *transparent ones*.

In Revelation 21:12, the number 12 is mentioned. Twelve is the number of government; thus, Zion is a city inhabited by those who are under God's government. Zion very much speaks of government. Zion is not for the independent or lawless ones. It is for those who have accepted God's corral, bridle, and yoke. It is for those who are governed by God.

Let us look at Zion now in a little more detail. As we look into the Word of God, we find that nearly all the prophecies relative to the Church of the Last Days concern the sons and daughters of *Zion*.

Zion was a city of David, the man after God's own heart. Zion was taken by David after his third anointing at Hebron. The Lord has been speaking to me constantly that there is a work that first must be accomplished in the "Hebronites" before they can move on to Zion.

Three Mountains

On Israel's journey there were three mountains. Mountains speak of power, authority, and position. The first mountain was *Sinai*, which represents the baptism in the Holy Spirit. There were no inhabitants to overcome on Sinai. There were no giants to fight to take this mountain. Receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit is no battle. Unfortunately, looking at the next two mountains, we find that they were inhabited. When Caleb said concerning *Hebron*, "Give me this mountain," he had the mighty sons of Anak to overcome. We cannot obtain Hebron without defeating some big giants. *Zion*, however, is even more difficult to conquer—it is the last stronghold. The inhabitants of Zion were the Jebusites. They hold out until the very end, and it takes great warfare to dislodge them.

2. Spiritual Significance of Zion

Zion—Place of Unity

The Jebusites were the last of the seven nations that occupied the land of promise, and they are a type of those enemies mentioned in Proverbs 6:16-19. The seventh enemy is the sower of discord among the brethren. The Jebusites are typical of those who cause division. That which causes *division* is the most difficult to overcome. However, one becomes the very antithesis of the enemy he overcomes. Thus, after the enemy was dislodged from Zion, the ground they once held became the place of glorious unity.

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore” (Ps. 133:1-3). Thus, Zion’s hill became the place of blessed harmony.

If we follow this thought throughout the Word of God, we will see that any area we are able to get the victory in then becomes our greatest strength. When we overcome the Jebusites (who represent division), we will then enter into the unity of the brethren. This unity is likened to that ointment that was used to anoint Aaron and his sons in Exodus 30:23-25. This anointing is also the anointing required to minister unto the Lord (Ex. 30:30).

The constituents of this ointment are very important. They are:

1. **Myrrh**, which speaks of meekness or a death to one’s self.
2. **Cinnamon**, which speaks of goodness. It means to be altogether good, to be filled with the goodness of God, and incapable of doing evil to anyone.
3. **Calamus**, which is analogous to gentleness. David said, *“Thy gentleness hath made me great”* (Ps. 18:35).
4. **Cassia**, which speaks of humility and tears.
5. **Olive oil**, speaking of peace.

All of these virtues must be worked out in us—meekness, goodness, gentleness, humility and peace. These are the ingredients necessary for unity.

Oh, if only a vial or horn of that beautiful ointment could be placed above us, and as that ointment is poured upon us, we could be instantly transformed. But it just does not work that way! Sometimes there is that anointing and we feel so good, but then the anointing lifts and we are ourselves again. God, however, wants to *work* these qualities into our lives.

Zion—Perfection of Beauty

Psalm 50:2 says that Zion is “the perfection of beauty.” Another verse that goes along with this is Psalm 48:2, where Zion is said to be “beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth.” The standards of Zion are absolute perfection. Zion is the beauty of Jesus, the perfection of beauty shining through His saints.

The perfection of beauty and “singleness of heart” are related. David was the king of Zion. Of course, he is also a type of the King of kings. David said in Psalm 27:4, “*One thing have I 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 enquire in his temple.*” Here we see that **the perfection of beauty comes from a singleness of heart where there is just one desire—to behold the beauty of the Lord and to enquire in His temple.**

Zion—God’s Preferred Dwelling Place

Zion is the dwelling place of God. Therefore it cannot be moved (Ps. 125:1). In 1947, the first possession Israel regained when they became a nation again was Zion. They had to wait a long time to receive the other part of Jerusalem, but they obtained Zion first. Also, in the last siege of Jerusalem, just prior to the Second Coming of Christ, Jerusalem falls to its enemies, but Zion does not fall (Zech. 14:1-3).

“For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation” (Ps. 132:13). Although Zion is a physical hill, it speaks of a spiritual mountain too. It is the place of God’s habitation. Psalm 87:2 tells us what God thinks of Zion: *“The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.”* Therefore, wherever we look in Israel, however much they were blessed of God, however much they pressed into God and received blessings from God, the Lord preferred the gates of Zion more than all the other dwellings of Jacob. The Ephraimites had special blessings because of Joseph. Hebron had special blessings. There were many synagogues and assemblies throughout the whole nation, each one having his own *emphasis* and form of worship. But Zion was preferred above them all. Our call is to Zion.

An Innumerable Company of Angels

As we have already mentioned, Zion is the heavenly Jerusalem. Within heavenly Zion is a large company of

angels, “*But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels*” (Heb. 12:22). I believe with all my heart that we are going to experience angelic manifestations in these last days. We will need them! Without them we are not going to make it. Unless the heavenly army marches, the earthly army will not triumph. It is the two armies marching together that will bring us to Zion. When we say that we are coming to Zion, we are speaking of entering into heavenly realities, into a realm of the Spirit while we are still upon this earth.

The Double Portion

Zion is the church of the firstborn (Heb. 12:23). In the original Greek, “firstborn” is *plural*. It is a group of people who receive the double portion. This double portion is referring to a double portion of the Spirit of God, like Elisha asked for (2 Ki. 2:9). Again, the cry for the double portion is something that must be *birthed* within us by God. We cannot be satisfied with the anointing and ministry that we have. We cannot be content even with the depths that we have attained thus far. We are not crying for a double portion of what *we* already have, but a double portion of what our “Elijah,” the Lord Jesus Christ, had. Jesus said, “Greater works shall ye do because I go to my Father” (Jn. 14:12). We must realise that nothing less than a double portion will meet the needs of so many nations of the earth; nothing else will satisfy us if we are the church of the firstborn.

“Spirits of Just Men Made Perfect”

Zion is the residence of those whose spirits have been made perfect. We are to be as these heavenly inhabitants of Zion, whose spirits have been perfected by God, for that is what He wants. A number of years ago, I saw in a vision the Second Coming of Christ. I saw the Lord descend with His Church from heaven, and the Church on earth ascending to meet the Lord. I observed that the heavenly Church that was descending and the earthly Church that was ascending were both alike. Both groups were filled with glory, and the spirits of them all had been made perfect. Thus, our spirits must be made perfect.

Zion—Place of Awesome Deliverance and Power

For a moment I would like to contrast Hebron with Zion. *“And he will destroy in this mountain [Zion] the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations”* (Isa. 25:7). You will remember that Samson took the gates of the city to Hebron. Hebron is associated with taking the gates of the city. Hebron’s power is for the taking of *cities* for Christ. But Zion’s power is for the taking of whole *nations*. That is the difference between the power in Hebron and the power in Zion. There is a power in Zion that can sweep a nation unto God.

In Obadiah 1:17-21, we are told clearly that deliverance comes from Zion, *“But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house*

of Jacob shall possess their possessions. And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them; and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the LORD hath spoken it. And they of the south shall possess the mount of Esau; and they of the plain the Philistines: and they shall possess the fields of Ephraim, and the fields of Samaria: and Benjamin shall possess Gilead. And the captivity of this host of the children of Israel shall possess that of the Canaanites, even unto Zarephath; and the captivity of Jerusalem, which is in Sepharad, shall possess the cities of the south. And saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the LORD'S."

Saviours (or deliverers) come from Mount Zion. There is a great difference between being a *preacher* and being a *deliverer*. Our generation needs deliverers. Notice also in this passage in Obadiah, that those in Zion take what the "Esaus" have forfeited. In other words, the children of Zion will lay claim to the possessions surrendered by those who have sold their birthrights.

Zion Is the Place of God's Glory

Psalm 102:16 says, "*When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.*" The Ark of the Covenant had lain abandoned in a field for many years (Ps. 132:6) but when David took Zion, he erected a tent upon Mount

Zion, known as “David’s Tabernacle” and placed the Ark in it. The Ark, of course, represents the literal presence and glory of God, for the shekinah glory of God covered the Ark of the Covenant.

There was no veil in David’s Tabernacle (like the one in the Tabernacle of Moses) to prevent everyone except the High Priest from going into the Holy of Holies and seeing the glory of God. David had open access to go into God’s presence, to sit before the Ark, and to experience His glory. Therefore, the visible glory of God is associated with Zion.

God has chosen to manifest His glory at different times throughout history, but in these last days the Lord is going to cover His Church and people with His visible glory. We read in Isaiah 4:5 that the glory of God will come upon Zion and every church or assembly that dwells in spiritual Zion, *“And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence.”* Therefore, if you want to experience the full glory of God, attend a church that has a vision for Zion and God’s best.

The promise of the visible glory of God is reiterated for the believer in the Last Days in Isaiah 66:1-2, *“Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath*

mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.” Therefore, let us be encouraged; glorious days await all those dwelling in spiritual Mount Zion!

Zion Is a Place of Prayer

If we do not have a desire to pray and seek God’s face, then we need to earnestly seek God to **birth** this desire and passion in our hearts. Psalm 24:1-4 gives some of the qualifications for dwelling in Zion, God’s holy hill. Psalm 24:6 says that those who dwell in Zion are those who are committed to seeking God’s face, *“This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.”*

We need to be willing to commit to respond to the drawing and Word of the Lord. We read in Isaiah 56:7, *“Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.”* Mount Zion became a place of prayer and seeking God’s face.

King David was a man of prayer, saying in Psalm 109:4, *“For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer.”* In Psalm 27:8, David shows us the importance of responding when God draws us to seek Him: *“When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.”* A hunger and thirst

for the Lord is one of His great blessings; we should humbly ask Him to give it to us. Our lives can then fulfil the admonition of Paul found in 1 Thessalonians 5:17, “*Pray without ceasing.*”

Zion Is the Place of God’s Law

We read in Isaiah 2:3, “*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.*” The essence of the New Testament is that the Law is to be written upon the fleshly tables of our hearts. This is effectuated as we come to spiritual Mount Zion.

Zion Is the Place of the Latter Rain Outpouring of God’s Spirit

Joel 2:23 says, “*Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.*” Israel is dependent upon the early and the latter rains. This typifies the early outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost and the mighty latter day outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the fulfilment of the spiritual Feast of Tabernacles. It will bring the Church to maturity (Jas. 5:7).

Zion Represents the Holy of Holies

In the days of David, the Tabernacle of Moses was located at Gibeon (1 Chr. 16:39; 21:29). However, David took the Ark of the Covenant to Mount Zion and placed it inside a tent, known as the Tabernacle of David.

Therefore, the Outer Court and Holy Place were still at Gibeon, but the Ark of the Covenant and the Holy of Holies were at Zion. The Outer Court and Holy Place worship took place at Gibeon, but the Holy of Holies worship took place at Zion.

We read in 2 Chronicles 1:3-6: *“So Solomon, and all the congregation with him, went to the high place that was at Gibeon; for there was the tabernacle of the congregation of God, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness. But the ark of God had David brought up from Kirjathjearim to the place which David had prepared for it: for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem [on top of Mount Zion]. Moreover the brazen altar, that Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made, he put before the tabernacle of the LORD [at Gibeon]: and Solomon and the congregation sought unto it. And Solomon went up thither to the brazen altar before the LORD, which was at the tabernacle of the congregation, and offered a thousand burnt offerings upon it.”*

When Jesus died on the cross, the veil was rent in the Temple, signifying that He had opened the way into the Holy of Holies for mankind. *“And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth*

did quake, and the rocks rent” (Mt. 27:51). Thus, we can now go within the veil. Hebrews 10:19-20 says, *“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.”* Therefore, coming and worshipping on spiritual Mount Zion is equivalent to coming within the veil into the Holy of Holies with Jesus Himself.

3. Being Born in Zion

Three times in Psalm 87 the psalmist mentions being *born* in Zion. *“And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her”* (Ps. 87:5). There has to be a spiritual birthing into Zion. We cannot define it, but something is birthed within. It is something that is conceived in us by the Holy Spirit whereby we know that we are made for Zion.

When God births this vision in us, Zion is our home and our destination in life. We cannot get away from it and we cannot stop short of it because we are born for Zion. We cannot rest, for our rest comes only when we reach Zion. All our thoughts are toward Zion.

Right attitudes qualify us to be birthed in Zion. Otherwise, we only have a vision for one of the other dwelling places of Jacob, or maybe even for a land on the other side of Jordan. Therefore we must cry out to God and say, “Oh Lord, birth me into Zion. Oh, Lord, that I might have that birthright.”

Yet in this matter of being birthed into Zion, there is still the sovereignty of God. It is clear from Scripture that God elects into Zion whom He deems worthy. Paul said, “*Therefore leaving the [elementary] principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection.*” But then he says, “*This will we do if God permit*” (Heb. 6:1-3). Paul is saying that we can only go on to perfection if God sovereignly shows us grace.

The issue of God’s sovereignty (God supremely having the final word) is true concerning salvation, too. Though He longs for everyone to be saved, He does not grant the gift of repentance to everyone. Some are not counted worthy. There has to be a sovereign act of new birth from God in order to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Unless God grants this gift, no one can come (Jn. 6:44,65). No matter what a person does, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven unless it is birthed within him. To carry it further, no man can come to Zion (to perfection) unless it is birthed within him. It is an enigma of Scripture that God would call and desire everyone to have eternal life and to have His best, yet it is His own sovereignty that determines whether they enter into it or not.

In Hebrews 12:18-21, Paul is making reference to Mount Sinai, “*For ye are **not** come unto the mount that might be touched.*” In verse 22 he says, “*But ye are come unto Mount Zion.*” Paul is saying that our call is *not* to Mount Sinai; we are not to remain in the wilderness. And our call certainly is not to remain at Shiloh. It is not even to remain at Hebron,

although the message of Hebron must become a reality in us in order to qualify for Zion. David was at Hebron first and he had to *wait* for those anointings before he could move on. Our ultimate call is to Mount Zion.

I believe that God will show us where we are on our journey if we ask Him in all sincerity. Irrespective of where we are in our journey, God does not only want to give us a vision of Zion, He desires to *birth* it within us now! The fact that it is repeated three times in Psalm 87 draws our attention to the fact that we must be *born* in Zion.

The vision of Zion can be summarised by the words of King David, the founder of Zion, in Psalm 27:4, “*One thing have I 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.*” It is about having a wholehearted desire and love for the Lord. It causes us to desire to seek Him, to behold His beauty, and to dwell with Him in Zion. If you are pursuing that kind of relationship with Christ, then you are headed toward Zion!

The Apostle Paul said in Philippians 3:8, “*Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.*” The vision of Zion is about having an ever-increasing relationship with Christ. It is about winning Christ and delighting the heart of our Heavenly Bridegroom, as stated

in Song of Solomon 7:10, “*I am my beloved’s, and his desire is toward me.*”

It is not enough to minister for Christ, to teach the nations of the earth, to have right doctrine and good discernment, to have great church programs, to live an upright life, or to perform good works. The Ephesian church had all of these things, but they had lost the most important thing—their first love for the Lord (Rev. 2:1-4)!

As you have been reading this book, if the Lord has touched your heart through the message of Zion and you would like to be born in Zion, stop right now and pray. Just as you said the sinner’s prayer and asked Jesus into your heart, ask God to birth the vision of Zion in your heart so that you never settle for second best.

Pray this simple prayer or a similar prayer that the Holy Spirit inspires you to pray: “Lord Jesus, I love you with all of my heart and want to be born in Zion because that is where You dwell. I embrace it by faith and confess that it is what I want for my life. Lord Jesus, I want Your best for my life and Zion is Your absolute best. Develop Your character and nature in my heart so that I can dwell with you in Zion for all of eternity.”

The vision of Zion is progressive, just as the Christian walk is progressive. Therefore, if God has now birthed the vision of Zion in your heart, it is only the beginning. You must study and experience the message of Zion from Scripture so that it is fully developed in your life.

4. Feast of Tabernacles

The Feast of Tabernacles will take place as the Church comes to Mount Zion in these last days. We read in Isaiah 33:20, *“Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities [or feasts]: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.”* The New International Version reads, *“Look upon Zion, the city of our festivals; your eyes will see Jerusalem, a peaceful abode, a tent that will not be moved; its stakes will never be pulled up, nor any of its ropes broken.”*

In Scripture, Mount Zion and Jerusalem are specifically associated with the Feast of Tabernacles. King David took the Ark of the Covenant up to Mount Zion and placed it in the tent he had prepared for it. However, his desire was for God’s presence to have a more permanent dwelling place. God spoke to David that he would not build Him a temple, but that his son, Solomon would (2 Sam. 7:1-13). Solomon began the construction of the Temple in the fourth year of his reign and completed it seven years later.

First Kings chapter 8 describes the dedication of the Temple of Solomon during the Feast of Tabernacles in the seventh month. We read in 1 Kings 8:1-2, *“Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem, that they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion. And all the men of Israel*

assembled themselves unto king Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month.”

In 1 Kings 8:5-8, the priests took the Ark of the Covenant from Mount Zion down to Jerusalem and placed it in the Holy of Holies in the Temple of Solomon: *“And king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel, that were assembled unto him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor numbered for multitude. And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims. For the cherubims spread forth their two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above. And they drew out the staves, that the ends of the staves were seen out in the holy place before the oracle, and they were not seen without: and there they are unto this day.”*

The staves of the Ark of the Covenant were taken off for the first time. The Ark had come to its final resting place. Then the glory of the Lord filled the Temple and it was so powerful that the priests could not even stand up to minister, as seen in 1 Kings 8:10-11, *“And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD, So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD.”*

David brought Israel into rest, unity, and glory. Solomon brought that glory down to Jerusalem for the nations of

the earth to experience it. Nations came to witness the wisdom and see the glory that resided in Solomon's Temple (1 Ki. 10:1-9; 4:29-31). The goal of our spiritual journey is to come to glory, maturity, and rest. However, we must then take the glory of God to the nations.

The seventh and final feast of Israel was the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:34-44). It was a seven-day feast that began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, five days after the Day of Atonement. Booths were constructed on the first day of the feast and the Israelites lived in these booths for seven days. It was a time of celebration when the children of Israel gathered their harvests and thanked God for the ingathering.

Dispensationally, the Feast of Tabernacles represents the coming Millennial Age, which will be the final and greatest age as Christ rules over the nations of the world for 1,000 years. This is confirmed by Zechariah chapter 14, which begins by describing the final siege of Jerusalem by the Arab armies in verses 1 and 2. Verses 3 through 15 describe the Second Coming of Christ. We then read about the Millennium in verse 16, *“And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.”*

This tells us that every year during the Millennium, each of the nations of the world will send a delegation to Jerusalem to worship King Jesus. This will happen at the yearly

celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles. Zechariah 14:17-19 also goes on to tell us that if a nation does not send a delegation to keep the Feast of Tabernacles, it will be punished by receiving no rain that year. Thus, it is clear that the millennial reign of Christ will be centred around the Feast of Tabernacles. This feast will also have a spiritual fulfilment in the Church before the Second Coming of Christ. Just as the nation of Israel is being prepared naturally by God to take its place in the coming Millennium, so the Church is being prepared spiritually. This final outpouring of the Spirit upon the Church in the last days is prophetically revealed to us by the Feast of Tabernacles. There are seven main aspects of the Feast of Tabernacles:

1. Feast of Revival and Restoration
2. Feast of Ingathering
3. Feast of Joy
4. Feast of Glory
5. Feast of Unity
6. Feast of Rest
7. Feast of Christ's Appearing

1. The Feast of Revival and Restoration

The name *tabernacles* come from the Hebrew word *sukkah* which means “a booth or tent.” This name was given to the feast because God commanded in Leviticus 23:42 that the Israelites were to dwell in tabernacles or tents for seven days as they celebrated the feast: “*Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths.*” The

root word of “sukkah” is “suk” which means “to cover with oil; to anoint.” Therefore, the spiritual meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles is that the Church in the last days will dwell under the anointed covering of the Holy Spirit.

We read in Isaiah 25:7 that from Zion the Lord will destroy *“the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations.”* This signifies the breaking of the power of the Satanic principalities that govern the nations. The Church has seen glimpses of this in previous revivals. During the Welsh revival, the anointing did not just fall on the church services, but on entire communities. In the early part of this century, the Lord gave a revival in Sweden where the conviction of the Spirit of God fell upon the entire nation. These glimpses are what we will see in greater measure in the coming revival.

Many people have had visions of the coming revival in which whole communities, cities, and nations will be blanketed by the Spirit of the Lord. People will be falling down in the streets, crying out to God and asking for forgiveness. In these last days, not only will the Church dwell under the anointed covering of the Holy Spirit, but the Spirit of God will also cover whole nations.

The Feast of Tabernacles will also be a time of the restoration of the backslider. During the days of Ezra, the Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated in the gate of Ephraim, as seen in Nehemiah 8:16, *“So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof*

of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water gate, and in the street of the gate of Ephraim.”

Ephraim was the backsliding tribe of Israel. However, God is going to restore many backsliders in the last day revival. The Feast of Tabernacles is a time of release and freedom, as seen in Deuteronomy 31:10, “*And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles.*”

2. The Feast of Ingathering

The Feast of Tabernacles is also called “*the Feast of Ingathering*” in Exodus 23:16, “*And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field.*” It is mentioned as being “*at the end of the year.*” The explanation of this is found in the two calendars that the Israelites followed. One was for their religious year, and the other was for their civil or agricultural year.

According to their religious calendar, this feast was in the seventh month; but according to their civil or agricultural year, it was at the end of the year. It was the time when the fullness of the year’s harvest was gathered in.

Just as this feast took place at the end of the year for Israel, the spiritual fulfillment of this will take place at the end of

the age for the Church. There will be great revival at the end of the age that will gather in the fullness of the abundant harvest of the Church. There will be a mighty ingathering of souls (Mt. 13:37-40,47-50, Isa. 60:1-7, Jas. 5:7-8).

3. The Feast of Joy

The Israelites were told in Leviticus 23:40 that they were to “*rejoice before the Lord their God for seven days*” during this feast, a symbol of entering into the fullness of joy which is found in God’s presence (Ps. 16:11). During the time of Ezra and Nehemiah when the temple was restored (which is prophetic of our days), the people of God were exhorted not to weep or be sorry (Neh. 8:9-10). It was during the setting of the Feast of Tabernacles that the timeless words “*for the joy of the Lord is your strength*” were given. There was great joy and gladness among the people at this time (Neh. 8:17).

Deuteronomy 16:13-14 says, “*Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine: And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates.*”

Corn is a type of bread that strengthens the heart. This Feast took place just after the harvest of the oil and the new wine, which speak of the peace and joy of the Lord (Lk. 15). The Lord wants to give those who mourn in Zion the oil of gladness. He wants to fill us with the new wine

of His Spirit. The pure joy of Jesus will be seen throughout the Church, and will give us the strength to fulfil God's will in these last days.

4. The Feast of Glory

Another aspect of the Feast of Tabernacles is that it is prophetic of the glory of the Lord that will cover the Church at the end of the age. We read of this in Haggai chapter two. Verse one reads, *“In the seventh month, in the one and twentieth day of the month, came the word of the LORD by the prophet Haggai...”* This was on the last and greatest day of the Feast of Tabernacles. As we read in verse 9, the message given for this day was, *“The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former.”*

The glory of the Church in the last days will be greater than the glory upon the Early Church. The Early Church had the blessing of Pentecost, which is the baptism of the Holy Spirit; but the Church in the last days will experience the blessings of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Second Chronicles 5:3 tells us that the Temple of Solomon was dedicated during this time. We then read in verses 13 and 14 that as the temple was dedicated, the glory of the Lord filled the temple, *“It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the*

LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD; So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God.” The priests could not even continue to minister because of the glory that was revealed.

We also read in Isaiah 4:5, “*And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence.*” Just as the glory of God filled Solomon’s Temple on the Feast of Tabernacles, the glory of God will be seen in these last days upon the churches that are dwelling in spiritual Zion.

I have been taken in the Spirit to see what God is going to do in the coming revival in China, in Africa, and in many other countries. I have seen the glory of God revealed upon the Church. I have seen God supernaturally protecting His people by the glory of God, just as He protected the Israelites before they crossed the Red Sea. When will the glory of the Lord arise upon His people? Isaiah declared that it would happen when darkness shall cover the earth (Isa. 60:1-3). We are like stars; and we know that the stars are seen when it is night. The darker the night, the brighter the stars appear to glow. So while deep darkness is coming to the world, we can rejoice that the glory of God is also coming to the saints.

5. The Feast of Unity

During this feast, all of Israel was to gather to Jerusalem and dwell in booths. They all had one common purpose in mind, to celebrate this feast together. This was a time to forget about differences and rejoice in the Lord as one unified nation and body of devout believers for all of His goodness to them.

A notable occurrence of this feast being celebrated with great unity was during the Restoration Era. In Nehemiah 8:1 we read that all Israel “*gathered themselves together as one man.*” There was such widespread unity among the Jews at this time that they were as one man. Nehemiah chapter 8 goes on to tell us how they celebrated this feast as Ezra the scribe expounded the Word of God to them. They dwelt together in harmony in booths (Neh. 8:16). When this feast was held during the time of Solomon, it was also marked by tremendous unity.

We read in 2 Chronicles 5:13, “*It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord ... that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord.*” As it was unity in the days of Solomon that brought God’s glory, so it will be unity in our days that will bring the glory of the Lord to His Church.

The Feast of Tabernacles will be the primary feast during the Millennium (Zech. 14). It is during this time that Ezekiel’s

prophecy of Israel and Judah becoming as one stick in the Lord's hand will be fulfilled (Ezek. 37:16-28). The Lord promised in Ezekiel 37:22, *"And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all."*

There must be a spiritual fulfillment of this for the Church, and it will take place during the Feast of Tabernacles. In the last day revival, people will overlook denominational differences and flow together for the glory of the Lord to fulfill His purposes. Isaiah 52:8 promises that the people of God who dwell in spiritual Zion will see eye to eye and worship the Lord together, *"Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion."*

6. The Feast of Rest

Rest is essentially associated with this feast. The number *seven* speaks of rest, even as the Lord rested from all His works on the seventh day (Gen. 2:2). This feast is the seventh feast of the year, celebrated in the seventh month of the year for seven days. It speaks of coming into complete spiritual rest. Another unique feature of this feast is that the first day of the feast and the eighth day, the day after this feast ended, were both Sabbaths—days of rest when they were not to do any physical labour whatsoever (Lev. 23:35-36). The Jews entered into rest during this feast after their labours in the harvest fields were completed, and they were able to see the fruit of their labours.

Noah's ark rested in the seventh month during the time of the Feast of Tabernacles (Gen. 8:4). This was a significant prophetic sign depicting the rest that the saints of God will enter into during the last day Feast of Tabernacles. In addition to this, the Ark of the Covenant came into its final resting place during this feast in the time of Solomon.

The Apostle Paul said in Hebrews 4:9, "*There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.*" Paul lived during the time when God poured out His Spirit upon the Church on the day of Pentecost. Even though this was a great move of God, there is still something more that God has in store for His Church. The Body of Christ will come to rest and cease from its own labours during the last day revival when this feast will be spiritually celebrated.

7. The Feast of Christ's Appearing

This feast is also a time when the Lord Jesus will reveal Himself to His people in new ways. When Jesus was glorified on the Mount of Transfiguration, it was a type of what will occur in the Church during the fulfilment of the Feast of Tabernacles. Peter wanted to build tabernacles so that they could stay there and enjoy the glory of Christ along with Moses and Elijah. In Revelation chapter 11, we see that in the last days these two witnesses, Moses and Elijah, will be revealed again. But more importantly, we await the revelation of the glorified Christ among His saints!

Before our Lord physically returns from heaven in His Second Coming, He will reveal Himself in and through His Church in much greater ways. In John 7:2 we read, “*Now the Jews’ feast of tabernacles was at hand.*” It continues in verse 10, “*He went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.*” Then in 7:14 it says, “*Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.*” Finally, we read in John 7:37, “*In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out.*” Christ progressively revealed Himself in a greater and greater way throughout the days of the Feast of Tabernacles as a sign of what He will do in the Church during these last days.

I have had a little foretaste of what this is going to be like. A number of years ago, I was sitting on a platform with several other ministers at a convention. We were listening to another minister preach. Suddenly the Lord appeared, and He walked up onto the platform. Then He walked right into me as I was sitting there. When I then looked down, I did not see my own hands, but only His nail scarred hands. I did not see my clothes, but only His white garments.

As I watched the speaker, I was watching him through the Lord’s eyes and hearing him with His ears. I even felt in my heart what the Lord was feeling about this minister. That only lasted for about two minutes, but I understood in a new way what it means to have *Christ in you*. Let us believe that we can experience what the Word of God says, “*that you may be filled with all the fulness of God*”

(Eph. 3:19). **In these last days Christ and His fullness will be seen and demonstrated *in and through* His people.** Praise the Lord!

5. Qualifications for Dwelling in Zion

Fifteen qualifications to dwell in Zion are described in Psalms 15 and 24. In Psalm 15:1, David asked the Lord who could dwell in Zion, His holy hill, “*Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?*” In Psalm 15:2-5, the Holy Spirit answers David’s question by listing 11 qualifications to dwell in Zion: “*He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not. He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.*”

There are four more qualifications in Psalm 24:3-4: “*Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.*” These psalms were written when David took the Ark of the Covenant up to Mount Zion (2 Sam. 6:1-16, 1 Chr. 15:1-16:6). David placed the Ark of the Covenant on this little hill after he took the hill away from the Jebusites. From that time onward, that little hill became holy, for God

dwelt there (2 Sam. 5:6-7, 1 Chr. 11:4-9; 16:1). The literal presence of God in His fullness is on Mount Zion, His dwelling place.

David's cry, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall stand in His holy place" is heard through the prophets, too: "*Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?*" (See Isa. 33:14). Who among us can stand on the stones of fire; and who can abide that consuming fire? David answers this question in Psalm 24:4 with some very important qualifications, "*He that hath **clean hands** and a **pure heart**, who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity.*" Verse 5 says, "*He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and **righteousness** from the God of his salvation.*" It is not our righteousness; it is a righteousness that is given to those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (Mt. 5:6).

Psalm 24:6 goes on to say, "*This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob.*" Thus, righteousness and purity must be sought after diligently. Ezekiel brings it out so succinctly, saying, "*A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them*" (Ezek. 36:26-27). But then he goes on to say, "*I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them*" (Ezek. 36:37). These things do not come automatically; they must be sought after. We must repeatedly enquire of God.

These blessings do not come to those who run from them, but to those who earnestly cry out to God, “O God, show me Thy glory.” It is for a generation that seeks Him. It is to a generation who opens the gates of their hearts for the King of Glory to enter.

The Fifteen Qualifications to Dwell in Zion

1. To walk uprightly
2. To work righteousness
3. To speak the truth in our heart
4. To not backbite with our tongue
5. To not do evil to our neighbour
6. To not take up a reproach against our neighbour
7. To despise vile people
8. To honour those who fear the Lord
9. To keep our word even when it hurts
10. To not charge interest on money we lend
11. To not accept a bribe against the innocent
12. To have clean hands
13. To have a pure heart
14. To not lift up our soul to vanity
15. To not practice lying

CONCLUSION

1. Press on to Win Christ

To conclude this book on the journey from Egypt to Zion, I would like to recount a vision I was given at the commencement of my ministry over 40 years ago.

I was sitting on the platform of a small church in one of the suburbs of London, England whilst waiting to be called on to speak. At that precise moment, I did not have a message from the Lord, and was earnestly seeking one. As I was praying, the following vision was granted to me.

I saw a man walking down a path which led into a beautiful valley, seemingly filled with such joy. The sun shone, birds were singing, and everything seemed so *alive*. It was glorious. Then the path came to the bottom of a mountain, and the man started to climb the path up the mountain. It was steep but the man persevered, and eventually the path came to a plateau.

To the left there was another glorious valley, much more beautiful than the first. Multitudes were in that valley and they cried out when they saw the man, “Come down into our valley for we have the blessing of the Lord.” Then a voice sounded from on high, “What they say is true, but go down into that valley and *there* thou shalt remain. Thou, come up higher.”

I saw the man continue to walk up the path, which by this time had become very steep. Eventually he came to another plateau,

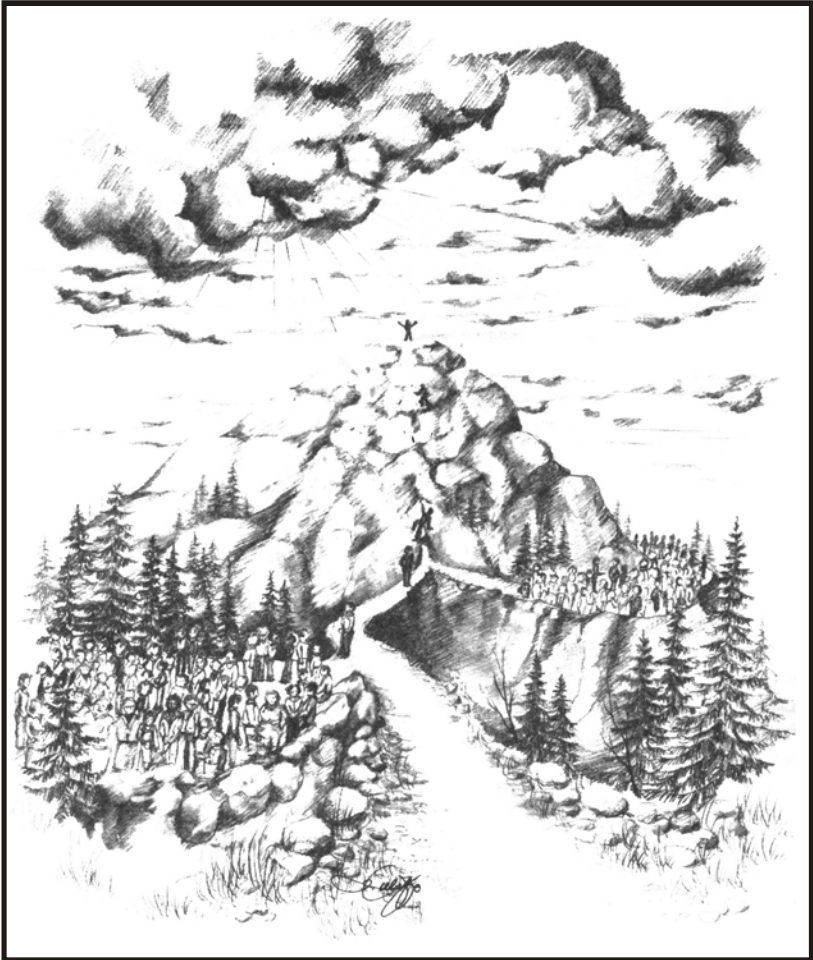
which had another valley more glorious than the previous two. A multitude also was in this valley, and they likewise, beholding the pilgrim, cried out, "Come down into our valley for we truly have the blessing of the Lord." But again that voice from on high sounded, "What they say is true, but go down there, and *there* thou shalt remain. Thou, come up higher."

I then saw our dear pilgrim start on the onward, upward climb again. This time, however, the going was considerably more difficult. It involved, at times, going on all fours. The path became almost indiscernible; yet he persevered. Finally, after much effort, he arrived at the top of the mountain. There, only barrenness greeted him. But as he patiently waited, The Lord Himself came.

As I have contemplated that vision over the years, the Lord has most graciously given me further light. The first valley was the valley of salvation, filled with joy and light. It is as King David described, "The joy of Thy salvation." The second valley was the experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. But we must not make that our resting place or goal. It is analogous to Mount Sinai, where the Lord spoke unto the children of Israel saying, "*Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount*" (Deut. 1:6). The third valley is that of the final feast, the Feast of Tabernacles or the glorious latter day revival. This likewise must not be our goal or resting place; we must press on to higher ground and reach, by the grace of God, the mountaintop. There we shall find Jesus.

Oh, beloved, let Christ be our goal, and not just His blessings. May we be among that number who "win Christ," as Paul

says in Philippians 3:8. We trust that this little vision, which has been such a personal blessing and encouragement to my wife and myself over the years, will give you strength and inspiration to press toward the mark of the high calling of God—*intimate fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ*.



Reaching the Summit

2. Where Are You on Your Journey?

The question we should all ask ourselves is: “Lord, where am I on my spiritual journey and what are the next steps You want me to take?” Stop right now and ask God to reveal to you where you are in your own personal journey.

If you do not know the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, confess your sins, ask Him to come into your heart, to forgive you and cleanse you of your sins, to give you eternal life, and to be your Lord and Saviour. Romans 10:9-10 says, *“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”* If you know Christ as your Saviour, but are not walking with Him as you know you should be, take this opportunity to rededicate your life to Him.

If you know Christ as your Saviour, but have never been water baptised, then ask your pastor to baptise you in water. *It is never too late.* If you do not have a church, find a good Bible-believing church in your area and ask the pastor to water baptise you.

If you have never been baptised in the Holy Spirit, today is the day to receive it. Speaking in tongues is a gift of the Holy Spirit, but there is also the human element involved. We have to do the speaking with our vocal chords. This is our part. However, the words are given by the Spirit. Acts 2:4 says,

“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

The Holy Spirit wants to come into us and flow out through us. It is a good idea to start by praising the Lord and worshipping Him in our native language. Then by faith we yield our vocal chords unto the Lord and begin speaking in a new language. We do not have to think about what to say, or formulate the words in our minds because it is a language that we cannot understand. The Holy Spirit bypasses our minds and intellect and speaks through us. We should not try to make up the words or copy someone else’s tongues.

If you are Spirit-filled, but have rarely or never operated in the gifts of the Spirit, ask God for a fresh release of the spiritual gifts in your life. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 14:1, *“Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but [especially] that ye may prophesy.”*

If you are in the wilderness right now, do not complain or give up. Perhaps you are going through a bitter experience as when the children of Israel encountered bitter water at Marah, or you are experiencing a financial or physical need.

Continue thanking God and glorifying Him in the fires (Isa. 24:15). Trust in the Lord with all of your heart and do not lean on your own understanding (Prov. 3:5-6). As you do, God will bring you through your wilderness trial victoriously and you will be more than a conqueror (Rom. 8:37).

Perhaps you are mature in the Lord and may even be a minister, but you still need a work of cleansing and circumcision in your heart. Then you are at the Jordan River. Allow God to circumcise your heart (Deut. 10:16; 30:6). Deal with all of the enemies in your life, both inward and outward, so that you can have complete victory in your life.

Perhaps you are experiencing a time of revival in your own personal life or in your ministry. Do not forget that revival is not an end; it is only a means to an end—Christ. Keep pressing on until you win Christ!

Perhaps you have even gone within the veil and experienced the manifest presence of God and know the Lord intimately. Even now, this is not the end of your journey. You must take the glory of God to the nations of the earth.

If you are already doing this, you still have not reached the end of your journey, even as Paul said in Philippians 3:12-13, *“Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before.”* You must continue pressing on in your own personal life to know Christ more intimately each and every day! The key to moving on with God is to always say “yes” to Him when He deals with issues in your life.

God wants to bring you and the Church in these last days to spiritual Zion. The journey of Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land should have only taken two years, but the children of Israel disobeyed at Kadesh-Barnea. Therefore, God can help us progress in our journey very quickly *if* we walk in obedience to Him.

Wherever you are in your spiritual journey, God wants you to keep pressing on. Do not settle on a plateau, become discouraged, or become complacent in your Christian walk. ***Keep pressing on!*** Your spiritual journey on earth does not end until you reach heaven. This is the underlying theme of this study on the journey of Israel.

I pray that this study on the journey of Israel and the spiritual journey of believers has been a blessing to you and has inspired you to continue pressing on toward Mount Zion until you win Christ. May the Lord richly bless you, dear reader!

APPENDIX

Extended Outline of the Journey of Israel

I. Life of Moses

A. His early life

1. His genealogy (Ex. 2:1)
2. His birth (Ex. 2:2)
3. Raised in Pharaoh's court (Acts 7:22)
4. Refusal of Egyptian sonship (Heb. 11:24)
5. Defense of his people (Ex. 2:11)
6. Flight from Egypt (Ex. 2:15)

B. Sojourn in the Arabian desert

1. Help for Jethro's daughters (Ex. 2:17)
2. Marriage to Zipporah (Ex. 2:21)
3. Purpose of the wilderness (Ex. 3:1)
4. Being chosen by God (Rev. 17:14)

C. Return to Egypt

1. Burning Bush (Ex. 3:2-4:17)
2. Circumcision at the inn (Ex. 4:24-25)
3. Meeting Aaron (Ex. 4:27-28)
4. Gathering of the elders (Ex. 4:29-31)

D. Ministry in Egypt

1. Initial rejection by Pharaoh (Ex. 5:1-4)
2. Increase of burdens (Ex. 5:5-19)
3. Rejection by Israel (Ex. 5:20-21)
4. Israel's refusal to listen (Ex. 6:9)
5. Being made as god to Pharaoh (Ex. 7:1)
6. Confrontation of the magicians (Ex. 7:10-13)
7. Ten plagues (Ex. 7:14-12:29)
8. Institution of the Passover (Ex. 12:1-29)

9. Journey to the Red Sea (Ex. 14:2)

10. Pharaoh's pursuit (Ex. 14:5-12)

E. Journey from the Red Sea to Sinai

1. Crossing of the Red Sea (Ex. 14:13-31)

2. Song of Moses (Ex. 15:1-21)

3. Bitter waters (Ex. 15:22-23)

4. The Lord our Healer (Ex. 15:26)

5. Elim (Ex. 15:27)

6. Need for food (Ex. 16)

7. Need for water (Ex. 17:1-7)

8. War against Amalek (Ex. 17:8-16)

9. Delegation (Ex. 18)

F. Mount Sinai

1. Trip to Mount Sinai (Ex. 19:1)

2. Being called into God's presence (Ex. 19:3)

3. Sanctification of the people (Ex. 19:9-25)

4. Receiving the Law (Ex. 20-23)

5. Confirming of covenant with Israel (Ex. 23:20-33)

6. Forty days and nights on the Mount (Ex. 24:12)

7. Tabernacle pattern (Ex. 25-31)

8. Golden calf (Ex. 32)

9. Response of Levites to the call (Ex. 32:26-28)

10. Intercession of Moses for Israel (Ex. 32:30-32)

11. God speaking to him face to face (Ex. 33:11; 34:6)

12. Second period of forty days and nights on the mount
(Ex. 34:28)

13. Building of Tabernacle (Ex. 36-40)

14. Consecration of Aaron as the high priest (Lev. 8)

15. Numbering of the people (Num. 1)

16. Passover is kept (Num. 9)

17. Enlisting the aid of Hobab (Num. 10:29-31)

G. Journey from Mount Sinai to Kadesh Barnea

1. God's fire consumes murmurers (Num. 11:1-3)
2. Mixed multitude lusts for food (Num. 11:4-6)
3. Crying out to the Lord (Num. 11:11-15)
4. Appointing of seventy elders (Num. 11:16-25)
5. Moses' generous attitude toward other prophets (Num. 11:25-30)
6. Those who lusted for meat are buried (Num. 11:31-34)
7. Enduring the criticism of Aaron and Miriam (Num. 12)
8. Purpose of the wilderness (Deut. 8:2)

H. Kadesh Barnea

1. Sending of the twelve spies to view the land (Num. 13-14)
2. Evil report of the ten spies (Num. 13:27-33)
3. Attitude of Joshua and Caleb (Num. 14:8)
4. The Lord's seeking to destroy the unbelieving (Num. 14:11-12)
5. Pleading for the honour of God (Num. 14:15-20)
6. Reviewing of the ten trials of the wilderness (Num. 14:22)
7. Return of Israel to the wilderness to die (Num. 14:21-38)
8. Contending with the presumptuous (Num. 14:39-45)

I. Journey from Kadesh Barnea to Pisgah

1. Rebellion of Korah (Num. 16)
2. Rod of Aaron (Num. 17)
3. Death of Miriam (Num. 20:1)
4. Provoked to sin (Num. 20:2-11)
5. Refusing Moses and Aaron entry into the Promised Land (Num. 20:12)

6. Edom refusing Israel passage (Num. 20:14-21)
7. Death of Aaron (Num. 20:23-29)
8. Israel becoming discouraged (Num. 21:4)
9. Brazen serpent (Num. 21:9)
10. Well of springing water (Num. 21:16-18)
11. Wickedness of Balaam (Num. 22–25)
12. Numbering of new generation (Num. 26)
13. Choosing of a new leader (Num. 27:15-17)
14. Choosing of an inferior inheritance (Num. 32)
15. Repeating the Law to the new generation (Deut. 4–11)
16. Death of Moses (Deut. 34)

II. Crossing over to Canaan

A. Joshua the new leader

1. His early life (Num. 13:16)
2. Leading Israel against Amalek (Ex. 17:8-16)
3. Servant of Moses (Ex. 24:13)
4. Lingering in God's presence (Ex. 33:11)
5. His immaturity (Num. 12:25-30)
6. He and Caleb bring back good report (Num. 14:6-10)
7. A foretaste of his inheritance (Num. 13:16-27)
8. Withstanding popular opinion (Num. 14:10)
9. Consecration as the new leader (Num. 27:18-23)
10. Continued to obey Moses (Num. 32:28-29)
11. Distribution of the land by Joshua and Eleazar (Num. 34:17)
12. Encouragement of Moses (Deut. 1:38)
13. Assurance for the congregation concerning new leader (Deut. 31:3-8)
14. Change of command (Deut. 31:14-15)

15. God speaking directly to him (Josh. 1:1-9)

B. Crossing of Jordan

1. Significance of the Jordan river (Josh. 3:15-16, Rom. 6)
2. Importance of circumcision (Josh. 4:19-5:5, Rom. 2:28-29)

C. Thirty-One Kings

- King 1: Self-will
- King 2: Self-indulgence
- King 3: Self-seeking
- King 4: Self-complacency
- King 5: Self-glorying
- King 6: Self-confidence
- King 7: Self-consciousness
- King 8: Self-importance
- King 9: Self-depreciation
- King 10: Self-vindication
- King 11: Self-sensitivity
- King 12: Self-seeing
- King 13: Self-introspection
- King 14: Self-love
- King 15: Selfish affections
- King 16: Selfish motives
- King 17: Selfish desires
- King 18: Selfish choices
- King 19: Selfish pleasures
- King 20: Selfish possessions
- King 21: Selfish fears and cares
- King 22: Selfish sorrows
- King 23: Selfish sacrifices and self-denials
- King 24: Selfish virtue and morality

- King 25: Self-righteousness
- King 26: Selfish sanctification
- King 27: Selfish charity
- King 28: Selfish Christian work
- King 29: Selfish prayers
- King 30: Selfish hopes
- King 31: Our whole life

D. Incomplete Victory

1. Slackness in possessing the land
2. Book of Judges
3. The Lord's rebuke
4. Alliances

III. Inheriting Mount Zion

A. Shiloh

1. History of Shiloh
2. Departing of the glory from Shiloh
3. Lessons of Shiloh for believers

B. Hebron

1. Introduction to the life of David
2. Spiritual significance of Hebron

C. Mount Zion

1. History of Zion
2. Spiritual significance of Zion
3. Being born in Zion
4. Feast of Tabernacles
5. Qualifications for dwelling in Zion

D. Conclusion

1. Press on to win Christ
2. Where are you on your journey?

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