

Revival Ministries
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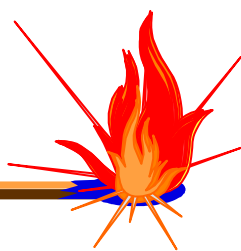
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Being Active in the Anointing

REVIVAL



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The ministry is based upon a **strong foundation of prayer**, and a **dependency upon God the Holy Spirit**.

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CONTENTS

Introduction: Revival Comes

1a & 1b The Church of the Last Days: A Study in Ephesians

2. Returning to Our First Love: What are the First Works?

3. The Breaking of Bread in Scripture.

4. The Assurance of Zion's Salvation: the Role of Consistent Committed Prayer based on the Word of God.

5. Salvation for the Gentiles: My House Shall be Called a House of Prayer for All Nations.

6. The Great Commission: a Plan for Evangelism.

7. Entering the Gates of the Holy City.

INTRODUCTION – REVIVAL COMES

On the evening of April 6, 1997, Diane Pearce of Spearhead Ministry International was scheduled to speak at Rangeville Uniting Church in Toowoomba where I was a minister on staff. Diane had arrived back in Australia two days previously from Brownsville, Pensacola in Florida, USA, and from Toronto, Canada. At both these centres there had been remarkable and sustained outpourings of the Holy Spirit. I was very interested to hear from someone direct from Pensacola. I sensed God had something in store for me. But first some background.

In November 1996, we had a season of focussed prayer for three weeks at Rangeville church seeking the Lord for lost souls and how to reach them. We had been enjoying a great blessing of the Holy Spirit at our church for two years (this blessing was part of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that had become well known through the Toronto church). Some of us on the seminar teams [I lead a ministry team that travelled to various centre to minister] had been able to minister in a number of places in the power of the Spirit, sharing the blessing. However we always felt that what God had given us was a refreshing in His Spirit, preparing us (His church) for revival. We also have understood that the Lord had shown us His love in wonderful, intimate ways (*Song of Solomon 2:4*) that prepared us for the ongoing visitation of the Lord in our lives. "Wave upon wave" of His anointing bringing revelation, repentance, increased faith, dreams, visions and prophecies (*Acts 2:17*) have come from the presence of the Lord (*Acts 3:19-21*).

It was during this time of focussed prayer in November 1996, that God released the ALPHA course to us and it ran three times in our church in 1997. [ALPHA is a very good introductory course to the Christian faith.] Many were saved, many were renewed in their faith, many have come into functional leadership through leading and helping in the small groups.

Secondly, the Lord taught us to pray for the lost by name and this has been new for us, to constantly pray and intercede for people by name.
for us, to constantly

Thirdly, some of us began to look at housechurches, studying the Scripture and meeting together to explore the differences between home groups and housechurches. We continued to develop the housechurches in 1998 not only in Toowoomba but across the nation. Not only us but we hear of people in various places beginning to form prayer fellowships and housechurches that cut across denominational lines and barriers. The reality of house churches is that they are churches, operating in a local area, providing a full ministry as some of the members may belong to no other church, not being able to be part of the Sunday gathering for a variety of reasons, or the house church may be the Sunday gathering.

Early in 1997 I felt our mission for the year was to go around the country calling the church to prayer for revival in Australia. This changed on April 6, 1997. Diane Pearce brought **an impartation in the Spirit of God of revival from Pensacola. The Lord touched my life deeply through the anointing that He sent** with His servant. Others were touched too. I believe I came into a measure of revival; the Spirit of God released me into revival personally and gave me an understanding of it. Two days later I met in a small ministers' retreat with Diane and we viewed together a video from Pensacola. The Spirit spoke to me again, showing me that I could now move in the ministry of revival. Amazingly the Lord confirmed what was on my heart and more through a prophetic word that Diane spoke over me that day in the presence of witnesses.

Since then the emphasis of our ministry has changed. The emphasis has been more on repentance, receiving forgiveness and healing, and then being empowered for service. The Spirit of Holiness is calling us to Himself. The church all over this nation is being prepared for revival.

Repentance → Forgiveness and Healing → Empowered for Service

The revival that is coming and has already begun in some nations is the harvest at the end of the age, spoken of so often by Jesus in His teaching. Right now God is restoring the apostolic ministry to the church and men and women with vision are rising up to work in the harvest. Those with the apostolic mantle on them are actively training workers for the harvest and some have already begun significant church-planting operations.

In this manual and through the sessions that will come out of the manual we will be exploring some of teachings that the Lord has released.

SOME ASPECTS OF REVIVAL:

1. **The reality of repentance** from all sin and the confession of all sin to God and to another person where that is required (**James 5:16**). *“Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord”*, **Rom.6:11**. God is calling His church to holiness today.
2. **Living by the Spirit and walking in Him, learning to stay focussed on Jesus** and His word to us, to receive and respond to His love, and serve Him in prayer and ministry as He directs. **Gal.5:16-25**, speaks of overcoming the flesh life by living in the Spirit, demonstrating the nine fruits of the Spirit. [**Col.3:1-4**]
3. **Insights of the ministry at work in the lives of people**: how the Lord is shortening ministry time as He births people into the new thing He is doing. An effective deliverance ministry is part of this process, as well as the sovereign moving of the Holy Spirit in the lives of His people.
4. **The key role of God the Holy Spirit in the church**, and unquestioning obedience to Him in revival ministry. The Holy Spirit is the Lord in the midst, **2 Cor. 3:17**, and it is through worship in Him that we are transformed, **v.18**; and it is through Him that we are made to be able ministers of the New Covenant, **v.5-6**. *“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God”*, **Rom.8:14**.
5. **Teaching from the Scripture concerning the apostolic church**, its emergence and the practice of apostolic ministry in the book of Acts, especially Paul's practice of establishing a teaching centre, around which and out of which mighty revivals grew and flourished, and many workers went out into the harvest (**Acts 19:8-10**).
6. **Prayer as a key foundation for all that God is doing**. We practise regular group prayer and also have been led by the Lord into travelling prayer. Many quote **Romans 8:28** without noting the context of **v.26-27** which shows the vital place of prayer and intercession by the Spirit to bring God's will to bear.
7. **Returning to the gospels to hear the teaching of Jesus again**, with an ear to hear what He is saying to the church today. It is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ (**Mark 1:1**) in

His own words. In the gospels Jesus tells us what to do! In the book of Acts, the apostles show us how to obey the Lord's commands; and in the epistles the apostles tell us why? In other words they teach the doctrines of the word.

8. **A willingness to move with God according to His Word**, not being bound by tradition or control. The cost is opposition and persecution!

THE CHURCH OF THE LAST DAYS:

A STUDY IN EPHESIANS – PART A

WHAT IS THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH?

It is the church that Jesus said He would build in *Matthew 16:18*:

"And I also say to you that you are Peter

[Peter is a small rock (Strong's Concordance, Greek 4074, *petros*, a piece of rock larger than a stone; translated: Peter, rock)]

and upon this rock {upon revelation faith in Jesus Christ}

[a large rock = Christ (S.C.Gr.4073 *petra*, a mass of rock, lit. or fig.)]

I [Jesus] will build My church;

and the gates of Hades [hell] shall not overcome it."

God's spiritual house is built of living stones (**1Pet.2:5**). We become living stones through faith in Jesus Christ!

Jesus is the Apostle, appointed by God to build the church, the house of God (*Hebrews 3: 3-6*).

Peter is an apostle of Jesus Christ, appointed to lay the foundation of the church. *Matthew 16:19*:

"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you shall bind [forbid] on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose [untie, destroy] on earth shall have been loosed in heaven."

Peter specifically used the keys on the day of Pentecost to release 3,000 Jewish men into the kingdom of God; he used them in Samaria to release the Holy Spirit to the Samaritans; and he used them in the house of Cornelius to release the first Gentiles into the kingdom.

The apostolic church is the New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no other church in reality in the New Testament. Jesus gave authority and power to His church. He promised that the "*gates of hell*", all the authority and power of Satan and the demons (**Luke 10:19**), would not be able to withstand the church. It is the church that Jesus commissioned to preach the gospel to every nation (**Mark 16:15-20 & Matthew 28:18-20**). It is the church whose foundation Jesus laid in training the twelve apostles, the seventy witnesses (**Luke 10:1**) and the 500 (**1 Corinthians 15:6**) who saw Him alive from the dead. It is "*God's household, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord*" (**Ephesians 2:19-21**).

GOD'S PLAN FOR THE CHURCH

The book of Ephesians gives a very full picture of the church. It is in the letter to the Ephesians that Paul presents the full ascension ministry gifts (**Ephesians 4:8**). The gifts that the ascended Lord gave are: the apostle, the prophet, the evangelist, the pastor and the teacher (**verse 11**). Christ went to great lengths (death, descension and ascension - **verses 9-10**) to give gifts to men so that the church could be built to fulfil God's purposes. The church in Jerusalem was initially founded by the 12 apostles and later, was led by apostles and elders (**Acts 15:6**). The evangelist, Philip, (**Acts 21:8**) first preached in Samaria (**Acts 8:5**) but then he left the revival in the hands of the apostles Peter and John (**verse 14**). The church at Antioch was led by prophets and teachers (**Acts 13:1**), of whom Saul (Paul) was one. It is only in the letter to the church at Ephesus that the full ministry of the church is revealed and its role clarified.

The book of Ephesians has much teaching on the church, intensive revelation that shows us God's plan for the church. Paul says (**2 Corinthians 12:1-4**) he was caught up to the third heavens and

received much revelation, some of which he could not utter in the earth. Did he, like Moses before him, see the heavenly pattern of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ?

EPHESIANS 1 - WHO WE ARE IN CHRIST

Verse 1: Paul writes this letter as an **apostle** of Jesus Christ but some would say he is also a prophet in that he speaks forth the revelation of God and thus Paul is a foundational apostle and prophet of the New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ. He writes to the **saints** in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus. Saints are true believers, holy ones of God, made holy by God through His salvation.

Verse 2: Paul sends real greetings of GRACE and PEACE from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord wants us to receive from Him daily grace and peace. This grace and peace is real every day - receive it by faith and thank God for His grace and peace which He gives us.

THE CHURCH IS BLESSED WITH HEAVENLY BLESSINGS

Verse 3-14: Paul addresses us corporately, setting down many of the heavenly blessings we have received in Christ. He says God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places!

What are some of these blessings?

1. **Verse 4:** He **chose us in Christ**
 - a. before the foundation of the world;
 - b. that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love;
2. **Verse 5:** He predestined us to **adoption as sons** by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will;
3. **Verse 6:** **by grace** He made us acceptable in the Beloved;
4. **Verse 7:** in Christ we have **redemption, the forgiveness of our sins**, according to the riches of His grace.
5. **Verse 8:** His **grace abounds** to us in all wisdom and prudence;
Verse 9: so that **we know** the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself;
Verse 10: that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might **gather together in one all things in Christ**, both which are in heaven and on earth – in Him.
6. **Verse 11:** In Him we also have obtained **an inheritance** ...
Verse 12: that we who first trusted in Christ should be **to the praise of His glory**.
7. **Verse 13:** we are **sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise**, having believed in Christ after hearing the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation;
Verse 14: the Holy Spirit is the **guarantee of our inheritance** until the redemption of the purchased possession (**Romans 8:23**: the redemption of our body).

There are 7 major blessings given with sub-points in some. This passage of Scripture, beginning with verse 2 is an important passage to know by memory.

1. chosen from the beginning;
2. adopted;
3. made acceptable;

4. redemption - forgiveness;
5. know the mystery;
6. have an inheritance;
7. sealed with the Holy Spirit.

PAUL'S PRAYER FOR US: *Ephesians 1:15-20*

Verse 15 is based on our **faith** in the Lord Jesus and our **love** for all the saints;

Verse 16 is offered with **thanksgiving** and we are to **pray for the saints** by name!

Verse 17 Paul asks the **Father of glory**, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give to us the **spirit of wisdom** and of **revelation** in the knowledge of Him (Christ),

Verse 18 and that the eyes of our understanding will be enlightened to know:

- i. what is the **hope of His calling?** Compare with Paul's own prayer in ***Philippians 3:10-14***;
- ii. what are the **riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints** - God has an inheritance of glory in us, His saints, "Christ in us!" (***Colossians 1:27***);
- iii. **Verse 19:** what is the **exceeding greatness of His power** toward us who believe (because we believe this mighty power is ours in Christ): it is according to the working of His mighty power

Inheritance only comes after someone dies. God wants to put us to death so He can receive His inheritance, that is, Christ in us. We die so He can live in us, His glory in us for all to see. Can we say, 'if you have seen me you have seen Jesus?'

Verse 20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places.

WHERE IS CHRIST? Seated in the heavenly places at the Father's right hand!

Verse 21 **far above all principality** (rule) and power (authority) and might (power) and dominion, **and every name** that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

Remember, this is where Christ is!

Verse 22 God put all things under His feet (all things) and gave Him to be **head over all things to the church** (as head over all things Christ is given by God to the church),

Verse 23 which is **His body** (we are His body) (we are) **the fullness** of Christ who fills all in all. As His body we are the present real representation of Christ in the earth: can we say "if you have seen us you have seen Jesus!"?

What do we learn about the church in chapter 1 of Ephesians?

- We are chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that is, the church has always been God's eternal idea - a people made holy and blameless,
- adopted into God's family
- having been redeemed and forgiven
- and sealed with the Holy Spirit.

It is to the church that God reveals His eternal purpose, the mystery, that is, to gather together in one all things in Christ. So that the church will understand His purpose and plan, God readily gives to us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Jesus Christ and He wants us to know three important things (***Verses 18-20***).

WHERE IS THE CHURCH IN CHRIST?

The church is the body of Christ who is seated in the heavenly realm far above the powers of the opposition. We begin to learn of our position in Christ.

Ephesians Chapter 2: More On Our Position In Christ

- Verse 1** We were dead in trespass and sin (for the serious student, *Leviticus 5:1 - 6:7* sets out the law of trespass and the offerings to be made)
- Verse 2** in which we once walked according to the course of this world, (this is) according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,
- Verse 3** among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind and were by nature children of wrath.
(How many Christians are still seeking to fulfil the desires of the mind, insisting that they need to understand everything in their minds before they will be involved, not discerning the mind of the Spirit?)
- Verse 4** But God, who is rich in **mercy**, because of His great **love** with which He has loved us,
- Verse 5** even when we were dead in trespasses, **made us alive** together with Christ [**by grace** we have been saved],
- Verse 6** and **raised us up** together, and made us **sit together** in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

GOD'S GRACE REVEALED

- Verse 7** that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding **riches of His grace** in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus (God will demonstrate His grace in us).
- Verse 8** For by grace we have been **saved through faith**; it is the gift of God,
- Verse 9** not of works.

God extends GRACE to us and gives us the faith to accept His grace and thus we are saved. Grace is what God gives to us; His divine enablement without which we are condemned. Grace is what God has done; faith is our response!

- Verse 10** we are **His workmanship**,
created in Christ Jesus for **good works**,
which **God prepared beforehand** that we should **walk in them**.

MERCY <i>Verse 4</i>	LOVE <i>Verse 4</i>	MADE ALIVE <i>Verse 5</i>	BY GRACE <i>Verse 5</i>		
RAISED UP <i>Verse 6</i>	SEATED IN CHRIST <i>Verse 6</i>		RICHES <i>Verse 7</i>	OF HIS <i>Verse 7</i>	GRACE
	SAVED THROUGH FAITH <i>Verse 8</i>		HIS WORKMANSHIP, GOOD WORKS PREPARED, WALK IN THEM <i>Verse 10</i>		

Eph.2:10. We have been brought near to God by the blood of Christ (*Verses 11-13*); we were strangers from the covenants of promise and aliens from the commonwealth of Israel = Gentiles in the flesh, without Christ, having no hope and without God in the world.

Verses 14-17 He is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the wall of separation, abolishing in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances (that we could not keep), so as to create in Himself one new man, ... thus making peace, reconciling us all to God in one body through the cross (we all can only come through the cross; there is no other way; there is only one body, therefore only one church). He comes to us who are afar off and preaches peace to us. HALLELUJAH!

Verse 18 For through Him we have **access by one Spirit** to the Father.

THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD Eph.2:19-22

v.19 *“Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.”* The saints are citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem which is coming down to earth to be manifest and the saints are members of the household [house] of God.

v.20 *“Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.”* The apostles and prophets are essential ministries who found the church properly on the Rock who is Christ. Jesus Christ is both the foundation stone and the cornerstone. Once the foundational ministries of apostle and prophet are in place then the building of the saints into Jesus Christ the cornerstone can happen effectively – this is the structure of the church.

v.21 *“In whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.”* The church is being built world-wide to be the temple of God.

v.22 *“In whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.”* The world-wide temple of God is made up of many local churches [fellowships] where the saints experience the presence of God in the Spirit.

THE CHURCH OF THE LAST DAYS:

A STUDY IN EPHESIANS – PART B

EPHESIANS 3: THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH

- Verse 2** Paul received a special dispensation of grace
- Verses 3-4** so that by revelation he received knowledge of the **mystery of Christ**;
- Verse 5** this mystery had not been previously known but was revealed to the foundational apostles and prophets of the New Testament.
- Verse 6** It is the **mystery of the body**, made up of Jew and Gentile, that **we are all fellow heirs and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel.**
[that God is raising up a body of believers to be His people]
- Verse 7** Paul was a minister of the gospel according to the gift of the grace of God given to him by the effective working of His power.
- Verse 8** This grace is available [to us as well] to preach **the unsearchable riches of Christ among the Gentiles** (unbelievers);
- Verse 9** and to make all see what is the fellowship (stewardship or dispensation) of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages had been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ;
- Verse 10** to the intent that now the **manifold wisdom of God** might be made known **by the church to the principalities and powers** in the heavenly places,
- Verse 11** according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Mystery Revealed Deals with the Opposition

The preaching of Christ is opposed in the heavenly realm by the principalities and powers. They seek to hold their positions of control based on deception and fear. The preaching of the gospel (the mystery revealed) is powerful and authoritative to expose their deception and break their strongholds over the minds of the unbelievers (*study these verses in 2 Corinthians 10:3-6 this*).

- Verse 12** this is because we have **boldness and access** (we come openly to God) with confidence through faith in Christ.
- Verse 13** This great gospel is worth suffering tribulation for, as it works glory in us and through us.

PAUL'S SECOND PRAYER FOR US: EPHESIANS 3:14-21

Verse 14 Paul bows his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (we are to bow our knees too).

Verse 15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named (we have received a new name, the name of our God); and we belong to His family.

Verse 16-19 that He would grant us, according to the riches of His glory,

1. to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man; (*Acts 1:8*)
2. that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith; (*2 Corinthians 13:5*)
3. that we will be rooted and grounded in love, and able to comprehend with all the saints, what is the width and length and depth and height - to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge;
4. that we may be filled with all the fullness of God (*John 3:34, Luke 4:18-19*).

MEMORY VERSE Ephesians 3:20-21 “*Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.*”

The Mystery

God has revealed the mystery and its purpose and He gives us the power of His Spirit, faith in Christ and a deep experience of His love, filling us with His fullness so that this mystery will be revealed for all the world to see through His church.

Jesus Christ is the mystery!

EPHESIANS 4: WALKING OUT THE MYSTERY

1. The Family Is One And To Remain In Unity

- Verse 1* as members of God's family, called by Him, we are to walk worthy of that calling;
Verse 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love;
Verse 3 endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
Verse 4 THERE IS ONLY ONE BODY AND ONE SPIRIT, JUST AS WE WERE CALLED IN ONE HOPE OF OUR CALLING;
Verse 5 ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM;
Verse 6 ONE GOD AND FATHER OF US ALL, WHO IS ABOVE ALL, AND THROUGH ALL, AND IN YOU ALL.

2. Building The Body, The Church

Verse 7 to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Each one has a portion (measure) in Christ's gifts: apostolic, prophetic, evangelist, pastoral, teaching. These gifts are not for a few select ones but for all (each one). There is a special grace released through each gift ministry to the people who receive that ministry.

Likewise the gifts of the Spirit are made manifest to each one (*1 Corinthians 12:7*)

God has dealt to each one a measure of faith; (*Romans 12:3*) and in *Verse 6* we have received the Father's gifts according to the grace given to us individually.

All the gifts listed in the New Testament are available to **each one and to all**, according to grace and faith. Many have not as yet understood the ministry gifts that Christ gave to us. As Paul teaches in *1 Corinthians 12:28* there are people appointed by God to exercise specific gifts in the church. This means that such people have that specific ministry emphasis, but it does not mean that others do not have a role to play in a number of ministries and giftings. Also consider the nature of both Jesus' ministry and Paul's ministry. There can be apostolic companies or teams and prophetic companies or teams and so on. As well the gift ministries can overlap so an apostle may travel with an evangelist or a prophet. One well-known healing evangelist, William Branham, always was accompanied by a strong teacher of the word for many years. When he began to do the teaching himself he went into error.

Ephesians 4:8: Clearly these gifts are given after Jesus ascended; that is why they are called ascension gift ministries. Those who argue that there are no apostles after the original apostolic era have not understood Paul's teaching here.

3. The fivefold ministry gifts given to the church are for:

- A. the purpose of **equipping the saints for the work of ministry**: is that work of ministry to be part of one of these gift ministries specifically? In the context it would appear to be so. (equipping from Strong's Concordance Greek 2677, means a making fit, preparing, training, perfecting, making fully qualified for service.)
- B. the **edifying of the body of Christ**: building up the church to be that which God intended.

(edifying fr. S.C. Gr.3619, means architecture, a structure, used figuratively as confirmation; and is translated building up; Vines,p.357-8, literally, to build a home, and in New Testament, the promotion of spiritual growth, applied to individuals, churches, and the whole body of Christ.)

4. The ministry will be complete when the church comes to:

- Verse 13**
- the unity of the faith
 - and (the unity) of the knowledge of the Son of God,
 - to a perfect man,
 - to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

While ever churches accept the doctrines of men rather than the full revelation of God's word as given in the Scriptures (*2 Timothy 3:16-17*) we will not come to this maturity.

- Verse 14**
- we should no longer be children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.

Because of the lack of biblical discipleship which is to be disciples of the Word, "teaching them to observe everything Jesus commanded us" (*Matthew 28:20*), many people do not have strong foundations in the Word and hence they are prone to follow every wind of doctrine or some persuasive minister!

- Verse 15**
- speaking the truth in love,
- This is difficult to do because of the immaturity in all of us!
- growing up in all things into Him who is the head - Christ;

- Verse 16**
- This growth is the result of the whole body being joined to Christ as the head and joined and knit together in joints that supply ministry to other parts of the body. Joints suggest small groups, ministry teams who not only minister in their own group (church fellowship) but reach out in ministry service to the whole body. This ministry supply is dependent on each member doing his or her share. The body then grows, being built up in more and more love as effective ministry takes place.

5. Walk In The New Man; Do Not Grieve The Holy Spirit

Ephesians 4:17-32

- Verse 17**
- Do not walk as the unbelievers walk, in the futility of their mind,
The human mind without Christ is futile.

- Verse 18**
- having their understanding darkened, [until they know God they are in darkness] being alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their heart; [when we come to Christ we are restored to the tree of life].

- Verse 19**
- who being past feeling have given themselves over to lewdness to work all uncleanness with greediness.

- Verse 20**
- But you have not so learned Christ:

- Verse 21**
- i. you have heard Him,
 - ii. you have been taught by Him,
 - iii. as the truth is in Jesus:

- Verse 22**
- you put off : concerning your former conduct,
the old man which grows corrupt according to deceitful lusts,

Verse 23 and be renewed in the spirit [attitude] of your mind
Verse 24 that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true **righteousness and holiness.** [read 2Cor.5:17]

God's creation plan is that we are made like Jesus. He has predestined us to be conformed to the image of His Son.

Verse 25 put aside lying, "*let each one of you speak truth with his neighbour*" for we are members of one another.

Verse 26 "*Be angry and sin not*"; do not let the sun go down on your wrath, Deal with anger; resolve the root cause of it; seek the Lord – ‘Lord why do I get angry so easily?’ Exercise self control; know how to contain anger without sinning with your mouth and with violent actions!

Verse 27 nor give place to the devil; if we do not control anger we will sin and give the devil an opportunity.

Verse 28 steal no longer, but rather work, so you will have enough for yourself and some to help others. Believe God for a job! Begin to help others.

Verse 29 The Lord is concerned to purify what comes out of our mouths: does our speech edify and bring grace to the hearer?

Verse 30 **Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God!** Sin grieves the Holy Spirit.

Verse 31-32 **put off**
 bitterness
 and wrath
 anger and clamour
 evil speaking and
 malice

put on and be
 kind to one another
 tenderhearted
 forgiving
 one another,
 even as God forgave you

EPHESIANS 5: WALK

Verse 1 "*Be imitators of God as dear children*".

Verse 2-7 WALK IN LOVE, as Christ walked setting the example, in selfless giving of Himself, avoiding all gross sins of the flesh. The opposite of walking in love is walking in the sins of the flesh; the sins of the flesh come out of a motivation of selfishness and self-gratification.

Verse 8-14 WALK IN LIGHT, manifesting the fruit of the Spirit, having no fellowship with darkness. The opposite of walking in light is active involvement in witchcraft and satanism, "*the unfruitful works of darkness*".

Verse 15-21 WALK IN WISDOM, understanding the will of the Lord, being filled with the Spirit, accountable to one another. The opposite of walking in wisdom is be "*drunk with wine*", which leads to all kinds of excess in behaviour.

Ephesians 5:22-33: The Mystery Of Christ And The Church

The marriage pattern :

1. Christ is the head of the church.
2. Christ is the Saviour of the body.
3. The church is subject to Christ in everything [the church ranks under Christ].
4. Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her.

5. Christ sanctifies (sets apart) the church and cleanses her with the washing of water of the word.
6. Christ intends to present the church to Himself, not having any spot or wrinkle, but that she should be holy and without blemish.
7. The Lord loves the church; He nourishes and cherishes us.
8. We are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones; compare with *Genesis 2:23*.

Verse 31 is a direct quote from *Genesis 2:24*

Verse 32 This is a great mystery! The Lord is calling us out of any man-made church into the bride church. The Lord is longing to reveal and manifest His great love to us individually and corporately. Once we are released into His love He is able to come to us easily and readily and we respond and flow with Him, achieving His purposes and plans.

CONCLUSION

Chapter 6 speaks briefly of parent-child relationships and briefly concerning employees (bondservants) and masters. Then in *Verses 10-19* are the well known Scriptures on the armour of God (which we teach on in the "Power of Prayer" manual). Note that the teaching on the armour of God and the spiritual struggle against the evil powers comes after five chapters of solid, line upon line teaching of:

1. who we are in Christ,
2. living in (or putting on) the new man,
3. the position and inheritance of the church,
4. the mystery of the church revealed,
5. a fully operational ministry bringing the body to maturity (perfection),
6. and the revelation of the bride church.

This is the church! These are the people who are fully armed to stand against the enemy and proclaim the word of God.

Paul's final greeting expresses his desire to communicate freely by sending both the letter and a faithful brother to share with the saints in Ephesus. He greets them with peace and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul portrays an intimacy with God the Father and Jesus that is available and real for all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

RETURNING TO YOUR FIRST LOVE

DOING THE FIRST WORKS

REVELATION 2: 4-5

This is a part of Jesus' letter to the church in Ephesus. History records that the Ephesian church was a very strong church.

John saw Jesus in the midst of the seven golden lamp-stands (*Rev.1:13*). The seven lamp-stands represent the seven churches (*Revelation 1:20*).

In *verses 2 and 3* Jesus commends the church because they have not been deceived by the false apostles and they had not become weary in serving the Lord. The lesson for us is that we only become weary when we are doing things in our own strength. When we are doing God's work, He anoints us for that work.

In *verse 6* they are also commended for hating the deeds of the Nicolaitians (ie. those who conquer the people). This refers to the unbiblical division between "clergy" and "laity" and the belief and practice wherein clergy are given certain "ordained" offices and ministries to fulfil and are trained to do so, only allowing the people to function within a very limited sphere of ministry, rather than equipping them and releasing them into ministry and raising up the people of God.

Verse 7 is the promise "to him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God". This is a promise for now. Jesus is saying if you will move into what I am saying, this is what you will experience now.

Verses 4 and 5: "Nevertheless, I have this against you, that you have left your first love, remember therefore from where you have fallen, repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lamp-stand from its place unless you repent."

There are four things to note out of these verses:

1. You have left your first love – We first need to recognise that we have left our first love.
2. Remember from where you have fallen – We have fallen from somewhere, a place which is called our first love. The first fall happened in the Garden of Eden and Adam and Eve were sent out of the garden. To return to first love gives access again to the tree of life, where there is that joy of being able to walk with God and hear His voice, in Paradise.
3. Repent and do the first works. Repent means to change, **to turn away from what you are not doing and do the first works again**. If there is no repentance, Jesus will come and remove the lamp-stand from its place.
4. Jesus threatens to remove the lampstand.

WHAT IS THE LAMPSTAND?

1. A lamp-stand gives light – Jesus is the light. **John 1:4-5:** “*In Him was life and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.*”
John 8:12: Jesus said, “*I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.*”
Jesus is saying: “I will remove My presence!”
2. The light comes from burning oil, by lighting a wick which goes into the oil. The burning oil giving light represents the ministry of the Holy Spirit who sheds light on our understanding.
Ephesians 1:18-19: The Holy Spirit sheds light so “... *the eyes of your understanding may be enlightened to know*
 - a. *the hope of His calling*
 - b. *what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and*
 - c. *that we might know the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe*”.The Holy Spirit removes the veil from our hearts so we can understand Scripture.
2 Corinthians 3: 15-16: When a person turns to the Lord the veil is taken away.
2 Corinthians 4:6 God has shone His light into our hearts and revealed all we need to know of God reflected in Jesus.
If Jesus removes His presence, the Holy Spirit will not be present either.
3. The lamp-stand, full of oil, speaks of the saints being prepared to meet the Lord on His return.
Matthew 25:1-13: In this parable the wise virgins had plenty of oil; they were prepared for the Lord’s return. The foolish virgins were not prepared; they did not have any oil with them to keep their lamps burning.
The foolish virgins lost His presence.
4. The lamp-stand represents the church spiritually. **Revelation 1:20** “*the seven lamp-stands are the seven churches.*” **Revelation 1:13** tells us that Jesus is in the midst of the lamp-stands. He is enthroned in the midst of His church. It is through the church that Jesus Christ is enthroned in earthly and heavenly places, bringing heaven and earth together. If Jesus removes the lampstand, the ‘church’ that remains is no longer His church! **The light and life has gone!**

The first mention of the lamp-stand is in Exodus 25:31-40 where God is giving to Moses instructions regarding the tabernacle.

1. It was to be made of pure gold. This represents divinity. The pure in heart shall see God (**Matthew 5:8**). Pure faith reveals God. [**Exodus 25:31**]
2. It was made out of one piece of beaten gold. God’s intention is that there is only one church, refined by fire, based on the pure Word. [**Exod.25:31**]
3. It was decorated with almond blossoms. The almond blossoms are a reminder of Aaron’s rod that budded, (**Numbers 17:1-10**) a dead branch that came alive again, representing the anointing, resurrection life. {also **Jer.1:11-12**} [**Exod.24:33-34**]
4. The lamp-stand had bowls to hold the oil, the anointing is to reside in us. [**Ex24:33**]
1 John 2:20, 1 John 2:27 The anointing is to abide in us.
5. [**Exod.25:37**] The lamp-stand gives light. The light of Christ is in the church, which is a light that is to shine in the darkness of the world. **Isaiah 60: 1-3:** “*Arise shine for your light has come.*”

6. The lamp-stand was to be made exactly according to the heavenly vision. God is preparing His church according to the heavenly vision. **Ephesians 3:8-12** “According to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Verse 11)

We are living in the days of restoration. The church has not yet been recreated in the heavenly pattern. Returning to our first love and doing the first works are steps that the church must take to fulfil the heavenly pattern.

A church without a lamp-stand is a church having a form of godliness but denying its power (2 Timothy 3:5).

How can a church avoid becoming loveless toward the Lord? Repent quickly! Return to the first works, turn away from loveless, duty bound works.

WHAT ARE THE FIRST WORKS?

- (a) They are the expression of our first love that Jesus requires.
- (b) This first love is not a continuing of an emotional high that may have been experienced when first saved.
- (c) This love is *Agape* in the Greek. It is sacrificial love, that is, a commitment to love, not romantic or emotional love.

A definition of first love is:- a strong irrepensible desire to serve the Lord, to tell everyone about salvation, to read the word and to pray. **First love equals first works.**

What did the first church do that so pleased the LORD? The first church was born on the Day of Pentecost.

Acts 2:42 reveals to us the first works. The first church continued steadfastly in four things:

- 1. the apostles’ doctrine;
- 2. fellowship;
- 3. breaking of bread;
- 4. prayer.

1. Teaching the Apostles’ Doctrine

This is the pure word of God. Jesus commanded His disciples to teach the word. **Matthew 28:20:** “... Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you.” The teaching of the word is vital to church life. People of God have often not been taught the word of God.

The apostle Paul taught the word of God daily (**Acts 19:9-10**), and from house to house (**Acts 20:20**). It is clearly a first work to teach the Scripture. Every believer is to be a disciple of the Word of God. We have to know the Word of God so we can teach it!

2. Fellowship

Greek: *Koinonia* (S.C. Gr. #2842) means : sharing, unity, close association, partnership, participation, communion, contributory help.

This kind of fellowship is only brought about by the Holy Spirit. This is New Testament fellowship. “Koinonia” cements the believer to the Lord Jesus Christ and to each other. It results in what is described in **Acts 2:44-45:** “Now all who believed were together and had all things in common and sold their possessions and goods and divided them among all as anyone had need.”

3. Breaking of Bread

There are instances of breaking of bread apart from the Lord’s Supper both before and after the resurrection of Jesus: **Matthew 14:19**, the feeding of the five thousand; **Luke**

24:30, where Jesus broke bread with the two who walked from Emmaus; **Acts 20:7 and 11**, the breaking of bread was part of a meal.

In **1 Corinthians 10:16** Paul talks about the breaking of bread as being a communion of the body of Christ. So by this time it appears that the breaking of bread was recognised as being part of the Lord's Supper. Paul also gives instruction on the Lord's Supper in **1 Corinthians 11:23-26**.

We are to come around the table of the Lord regularly and remember Jesus. The early church broke bread daily (**Acts 2:46**).

4. **Praying**

This refers mainly to group or corporate prayer. Public prayer meetings - Acts 3:1: in the church building (Temple at that time); Acts 16:13: in the park.

The church needs to be meeting together regularly to pray; it is a participatory event, vital for church life. People meeting together to seek the face of God, hear from God and pray the will of God.

This kind of prayer will

- release the light of Christ into a situation;
- release the anointing;
- release the revelation of God's word;
- release salvation to the lost.

There are some powerful prayer meetings recorded in the book of Acts.

Acts 4:23-31: The result of the prayer meeting was an outpouring of the Holy Spirit and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Acts 12:5: Prayer was offered for Peter when he was in prison; this resulted in a supernatural release from prison for Peter.

Acts 12:12: many were gathered in prayer

Acts 13: 1&3: The Holy Spirit was directing the prayer meeting, resulting in the ordination of new apostles.

In **1 Timothy 2:1-2** we are told that supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks should be made for all men, also for kings and all in authority. **Verse 8**: "*I desire that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting.*"

What is the expected result of the church returning to its first love and doing the first works?

Commitment to the first works saw the development of a brand new community. The manifest presence of God was in the midst of this community, (v.43) mighty signs and wonders; (v.44-45) a level of sharing and mutual care that lead those outside to say, "*how they love one another*". This community was often together and the breaking of bread was central to their communion with the Lord Jesus.

Acts 2:47: The result is a praising people who have found favour in the community. This is the church to which the Lord will add daily those who are being saved. The plumb line that we are to measure up against as we return to the first works is: are people being saved? **The outcome should be the salvation of many souls.**

THE BREAKING OF BREAD IN SCRIPTURE

According to *Acts 2:42* the early church continued steadfastly in four things:
the apostles' doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer.

In this session we are looking at what the Scripture says about **the breaking of bread**. The breaking of bread specifically refers to what Jesus did on the night He was betrayed, "*He took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it*" (1Cor.11:23-24). It does not refer to taking a meal together only. This is clear from Acts 2:46 that mentions both breaking bread and the eating of food, and Acts 2:42 that lists the breaking of bread as one of the four specific practices of the early church. There is nothing peculiarly Christian about people sharing a meal in their homes but there is something powerful, Scriptural and Christ-centred about breaking bread together in remembrance of Jesus.

1 Corinthians 10:16: "The cup of blessing which we bless is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which break is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

The word communion here is the Greek word "Koinonia" which also means fellowship or sharing.

When we are communing with the body and blood of Christ we are having fellowship with or sharing in the body and blood of Christ. *1 Corinthians 11:24:* Jesus said that the bread that we break is His body broken for us. He said, "*do this in remembrance of me.*"

Verse 25: "*The cup is the cup of the new covenant*"; His blood shed for us.

Verse 26: Every time we partake of communion we proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

We are remembering Jesus' death and we are looking forward to Jesus' return.

We acknowledge His sacrifice for all sin and through His sacrifice we receive His forgiveness and cleansing in our own life.

We are drawing on His ascended resurrection power to fulfil the word of God in this present church age.

THE FIRST COMMUNION

The first communion in the Bible is recorded in *Genesis 14:18-20*. Abram returning from a battle where he had defeated the king of Sodom, was met by Melchizedek. Melchizedek brought out bread and wine. He was king of Salem and a priest of God Most High.

He blessed Abram and said, "*Blessed be Abram of God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.*"

Abram gave him a tenth of all he had.

Melchizedek is again mentioned in *Hebrews 7:1-3*. We are told that his name means "*king of righteousness and king of peace*". He is without father or mother, without genealogy, but is made like the Son of God and remains a priest continually. The King/Priest ministers bread and wine to the man of faith! Abraham, the man of faith, receives bread and wine from the King of righteousness, the King of peace, who is a priest of the Most High God.

THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT & ANOTHER SPECIAL MEAL

In *Exodus 24* another special meal is recorded. Israel affirms the Covenant that God made with them and said, "*All the words which the Lord has said we will do.*"(v,3).

Moses took blood and sprinkled half of it on the altar and the other half on the people saying, (*verse 8*) “*This is the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you according to all these words.*”

Then in *verses 9-11* Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and seventy elders of Israel went up the mountain and saw God. They had just been covered by the blood and so the veil was lifted and they were able to see God and the Scripture says they ate and drank with Him. We are not told what they ate but we know they were participating in a special, intimate meal with the LORD Himself.

THE TEACHING REGARDING DAILY OFFERINGS

EXODUS 29:38-46

Verse 38 and 39 Two lambs were to be offered daily as a sacrifice, one in the morning and one in the evening. The key portion of the daily offering was to be the lamb.

Verse 40: In the morning they added to the offering grain, wine and oil.

Verse 41: In the evening they added grain and wine only.

Oil represents the anointing of the Holy Spirit. It is significant that we can come to the table of the Lord and receive an anointing for healing, for blessing, for freedom, for ministry.

Jesus has become the lamb offering, so we no longer have to sacrifice a lamb, but he has left us with the grain (bread) and wine.

Verse 42: The offering was to be made at the door of the tent of meeting and the Lord said that is where I will meet with you and speak with you. When we come to commune with Him in bringing the daily offering, He fulfils His word to meet with us and speak to us.

His presence comes and we can expect Him to speak to us.

Verse 43: When God comes down to meet with His people His glory is there. God will pour out His glory upon holy people.

Verse 44-46: God promises that He will dwell with the children of Israel and be their God.

On what basis will God dwell in His church and say we are His people? It is because we participate in **the daily offering of the body and blood of Jesus as the Lamb sacrifice** that brings us salvation. It shows we have come out of the world and are separating ourselves to God. We are sanctified by His glory as we meet with Him daily and commune with Him. We are to come to Him morning and evening acknowledging what He has done and giving thanks for our salvation. Many churches have not celebrated the Lord’s Table regularly, and yet the daily offering of the lamb under the Law was twice daily. From this typology we see that communion is to be celebrated regularly, even daily!

When believers return to the practice of regularly breaking bread and remembering Jesus as He commanded us, we will experience His saving Presence among us much more powerfully, and people will be saved. **John 12:32-33**, “*And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to Myself.*” *This He said, signifying by what death He would die.*” In the breaking of bread, we are preaching who Jesus is and why He died on the cross.

PASSOVER

Exodus 12:1-28 records the first Passover. The lamb was the main component of the sacrifice. It had to be a lamb without blemish. The people were to eat the flesh and put the blood on the doorposts and on the lintel of the house. The shedding of that blood protected them from death as the angel of death passed over the land. They were to eat the flesh of the Lamb and walk out of Egypt. **The body [flesh] of the lamb sustained them in their journey from Egypt and the blood of the lamb protected them from the destroyer!**

It was at the annual Passover meal that Jesus instituted the Lord's supper. When Jesus died on the cross He shed His blood and His blood becomes a covering for us.

"This is my body broken for you

This is the blood of the new covenant which is shed for the remission of sins."

(Matthew 26:26 and 28)

John 1:29: *"Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world."*

Jesus is the Lamb sacrifice who takes away our sin; **He is our Passover!**

In communion we take the bread and eat it remembering Jesus, and receiving healing "by His stripes" (1Pet.2:24); the Lamb slain for us; and we take the cup, representing His blood shed for our sin.

THE TABLE OF SHOWBREAD

One of the three furnishings in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle of Moses was the Table of Showbread. On it were placed twelve loaves of bread and there were "pitchers and bowls for pouring" Exod.25:29. There was wine on the table along with bread: **bread and wine together** in the Holy Place, pointing to the New Testament Table instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ.

THE EARLY CHURCH BROKE BREAD DAILY

Acts 2:46 *"continually daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house"* The early church broke bread daily in their homes as part of fellowship.

The Lord is restoring to His church the communion of the body and blood of Jesus. Scripturally there is no restriction on **how often** we celebrate communion. It is a time when we focus on Jesus, bring Him into remembrance as we fellowship with Him. The breaking of bread can happen in homes or anywhere that two or three or more gather in His name (**Mt.18:20**). Some churches have added many rules to the breaking of bread; it is time to return to scriptural practice. This is vital to revival and restoration.

1 Corinthians 11:28 we are to examine ourselves before partaking of the bread and the cup because he who eats or drinks in an unworthy manner brings judgement on himself.

Verse 30 says that for this reason many are weak and sick among you and many sleep.

We are to judge ourselves by the word of God so that we may be healed.

Allow His light to shine into our hearts and expose any sin hidden there that we can receive His forgiveness and be cleansed.

It is time to return to the first works!

Jesus said in **Jn.12:32**, *"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself."* He was speaking of His crucifixion (v.33). When is Jesus specifically lifted up by His disciples? When we come to His table and take the bread and wine! We have often under-estimated the power of communion. We are to remember Jesus in His death and His resurrection. We are to behold the Lamb God who took away the sin of the world and is still doing so today as souls come to God through Him.

ASSURANCE OF ZION'S SALVATION

THE ROLE OF CONSISTENT, COMMITTED PRAYER

BASED ON THE WORD OF GOD

ISAIAH 62

GOD IS SPEAKING

Isaiah 62: Verse 1:

“for Zion’s sake I will not hold my peace¹ and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest² until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burns.”

[¹ NASB. “keep silent”, SC. 2814 “hush, keep quiet”] [² NAS “will not keep quiet”]

Who is speaking here?

God is speaking to the prophet. God says, “*I will not keep quiet.*” God is speaking prophetically, revealing His purpose and intention. God’s intention is righteousness and salvation through the church. This is what He will bring to pass.

RIGHTEOUSNESS AND SALVATION

Righteousness precedes salvation! Jesus Christ is the righteousness of God. He has already come (*Jeremiah 23:6*: Yahweh Tsidkenu – The LORD our RIGHTEOUSNESS will come.) *2 Corinthians 5:21* “*For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*”

Righteousness goes forth as brightness. Our commission is to preach Jesus Christ. Peter, on the day of Pentecost quoted from the prophet Joel saying that in the last days God would pour out His Spirit on all flesh. One of the signs would be that sons and daughters would prophecy. This prophecy is the testimony of Jesus (*Revelation 19:10b*). Every believer will prophecy about Jesus. Every believer is able to speak of Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Salvation is “as a lamp that burns” : able to be seen

Isaiah 60: 1 “*Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.*”
Light has come and God’s glory is poured out.

Isaiah 62: Verse 2a:

“The Gentiles shall see your righteousness and all kings your glory.” Cf. Isaiah 60:3

The Gentiles, representing the unsaved nations, shall **see** your righteousness, kings and rulers shall **see** your glory. They shall come to this light, this demonstration of God’s righteousness and glory.

It is God’s desire that all should be saved and come to a knowledge of God.

1 Timothy 2: 1-4: We are to pray for all men and for kings and all in authority.

Matthew 6:10: We are to pray “*Thy kingdom come!*”

A NEW NAME

Isaiah 62: Verse 2b:

“You shall be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord will name.”

Revelation 2:17: “... a new name...” *Revelation 3:12:* “It is the LORD’s new name”

In some cultures the practice in marriage has been that the woman takes her husband's surname. Likewise we are to take the name of the LORD upon ourselves. We are not to confess our own man-made church or any other name, but to confess our allegiance to Jesus Christ and His church. The LORD is committed to perfecting (maturing) His church. (*Ephesians 5:26-27*)
“Let your light shine ... glorify your Father in heaven” (*Matthew 6:16*). The Father is glorified when His people are shining bright with the light of salvation which is the Holy Spirit poured out on us. When people are truly saved, the presence of the LORD is reflected in their lives in real ways that can be seen.

A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

Isaiah 62: Verse 3:

“You shall be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.”

- Diadem: S.C. Heb. 6797, a head-dress (piece of cloth wrapped around):- diadem, hood, mitre.
Theological WordBook of the Old Testament (TWOT) 1940, it was the distinctive headgear of the high priest.
- Hand: S.C. Heb. 3027, the hand; means by which a work is accomplished; strength, power.
- a figure of speech: coming into the hands of, being rescued out of the hands of.
 - “yadah” meaning thanks, praise, comes from this Hebrew word, and probably originally meant “lifting up the hands”.

If the diadem does refer to the high priest's headgear, there is a picture here of the king/priest. This then refers to the “*priesthood of all believers*” (*Revelation 1:6*) and the order of priests Jesus has made us to be: the order of Melchizedek. It is through this order of priests that God reflects His royal glory and covers the earth as He has promised (*Numbers 14:21*). In other words, we are used by the LORD to show forth who He is.

THE CALL TO FRUITFULNESS – MANY SONS!

Isaiah 62: Verse 4:

“You shall no longer be termed, Forsaken, nor shall your land any more be termed, Desolate, but you shall be called Hepzibah [My delight is in her] and your land Beulah [Married] for the Lord delights in you.”

This picture presents a wonderful change coming over God's people. No longer forsaken and desolate but married, delighting in the goodness of God. This is a picture of what God and Jesus are doing in the church all over the world currently. The church is responding, to become the bride; coming out of desolation, out of forsakenness. A new and real hope is arising. The hope of glory! (*Colossians 1:27, Ephesians 5:22-32*)

Isaiah 62: Verse 5:

“For as the young man marries a virgin so shall your sons marry you”

- without marriage there can be no fruitfulness, no legitimacy. God is speaking to the church here. When we know the Lord as the Lord knows us we will bring forth many children.
- Marriage is a covenant. The fruit of our covenant (marriage) with God is many faithful sons.
- ***Hebrews 2:10*** Jesus is fruitful; He is leading “*many sons*” to glory.
“and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.”

- We underestimate God's desire and plans for His people. He is calling us into a covenant relationship that will be fruitful and cause us to multiply.

What God has provided for us

Ephesians 1:17-19 – the hope, the riches of His glory, the power!

Ephesians 3:16-21 – the power, the love, the fullness of God in His people.

THE CALL TO PRAYER

Isaiah 62: Verse 6:

“I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day or night. You who make mention of the LORD, do not keep silent.”

Watchmen: S.C. Heb. 8104, shamar, to hedge about (as with thorns) [cf. Hosea 2:6] ie. guard, to protect, attend to:- beware, be circumspect, take heed, keep, mark, look narrowly, observe, preserve, regard, receive, save, wait (for), watch (man).

Ezekiel 3:17 “...a watchman for the house of Israel ... give them warning from Me”

We know the message – how many people have we **not warned?**

Verse 17-21: warn the wicked; warn the righteous.

2 Thessalonians 1:8,9 Those who do not know God and those who know the gospel but do not obey it will be punished.

Isaiah 52:8-12 The Lord is restoring Jerusalem. He is raising up His church in the earth.

Jeremiah 6:17 Ezekiel 33:1-11 The watchman was warning the people to listen to the trumpet, that is, the word of God. For those who don't listen and obey, judgement will come. Prayer is to be based on the word of God because it is the will of God.

The watch must be kept day and night.

By whom?

God is looking for prayer intercessors who will hedge people about in prayer (as Hosea had to hedge his wife, *Hosea 2:6*)

- who will guard the flock in prayer
- who will protect the people of God in prayer
- who will attend to someone's need in prayer
- who will give Him no rest until He ...

Isaiah 62: Verse 7:

“And give Him no rest till He establishes and till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.”

BASED ON THE WORD OF GOD

God has committed Himself in *verses 1-2*. Now we are to do our part: persistent, consistent, committed prayer. We are to give Him no rest. God is going to do it through his people giving Him no rest until He does.

The goal: the church of Jesus Christ, a praise in all the earth.

Look at some of the characteristics of this church.

Ephesians 1:3-6; Ephesians 1:7-12; Ephesians 1:13-14

Such a church is to the praise of His glory.

The watchmen are not to hold back – but to be persistent in prayer until we get what He says we will have, not what we want. Notice the place of prayer, intercessory prayer, spoken prayer, maybe even agitated, violent prayer. (*Matthew 11:12*)

We are labouring for souls. The Lord Jesus Christ is inviting all who are willing to be part of the army to bring in the harvest.

WE WILL REJOICE IN THE PREPARATION TIME

Isaiah 62: Verse 8:

“The LORD has sworn by His right hand [JESUS] and by the arm of His strength. ‘Surely I will no longer give your grain as food for your enemies; and the sons of foreigners shall not drink your new wine for which you have laboured.’

Isaiah 62: Verse 9:

But those who have gathered it shall eat it, and raise the LORD. Those who have brought it together shall drink it in My holy courts. [Fruitfulness/harvest/food in the house]”

No longer will our ministries be robbed; no longer will we be plagued by frustration, our fruit being aborted.

New wine is of the Spirit – joy in the Holy Spirit. Come and drink your fill.

Isaiah 55:1 John 7:37-39; Rev. 22:17

WHO WILL PREPARE THE WAY?

Isaiah 62: Verse 10:

“Go through, go through the gates! Prepare the way for the people. Build up, build up the highway! [a vanguard movement/Gideon’s army] Take out the stones [the things that cause people to stumble]. Lift up a banner for the peoples.”

Gideon’s army had the privilege of delivering the whole nation. 10,000 men drank at the river, but there was a test at the river. Only 300 passed the test. Only 300 heard what God was saying, and obeyed.

The river of God is flowing, and many have come to drink at the river, but have turned back. God is inviting us to prepare the way. Go through the gates. The gates are the place of authority. God is calling people who will go through the gates and rescue whole nations from darkness, to prepare a way for the people.

God is always calling for those who are prepared to deliver the whole world, to smash the strongholds of the evil one, and who will pray their way into nations, cities, towns.

THE LORD COMES

Isaiah 62: Verse 11:

“Indeed the LORD has proclaimed to the end of the world: “Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Surely your salvation is coming; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work [recompense] before Him.’”

This verse speaks about the Second Coming. The church is being mobilised for this right now. Jesus brings His rewards and His recompense with Him.

CHURCH! Surely your salvation is at hand! Behold He is coming!

Time is short – the Judge is standing at the door (**James 5:9**). Use every opportunity to preach the gospel of salvation.

THE CHURCH IS MADE PERFECT

Isaiah 62: Verse 12:


“they shall call them The Holy People, The Redeemed of the Lord. And you shall be called Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken.”

The peoples of the earth will recognise the church as it emerges as the glorious bride.

CONCLUSION

The most wonderful question you can be asked is “How can I get saved?” God has made the way. It is not His will that any should perish. We are called to be persistent in prayer and obedient to His word.

The goal is worldwide evangelism (*Matthew 28:18-20*), the preaching of the gospel to every person (*Mark 16:15*). We cannot rest until we, the church, have fulfilled the Great Commission.



How beautiful
upon the mountains
are the feet of him
who brings good news,

who proclaims peace,
who brings glad tidings of good things,
who proclaims salvation,
who says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

Isaiah 52:7

SALVATION FOR THE GENTILES

“MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL NATIONS”

A STUDY OF ISAIAH 56:1-8

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In *Matthew 21:13*, Jesus quotes from *Isaiah 56:7* after He had driven out the *traders (verse 12)*. Then in *verse 14*, "*the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them*". When the temple was cleansed and declared to be the Father's house of prayer as He had intended, immediately there is prayer for the blind and the lame and they are healed! The church operated as it was meant to, according to the word of God.

However there was opposition from the chief priests and the scribes (*verses 15-16*). Whenever people strongly desire to return to New Testament Christianity and take action to that end, there will be strong opposition and blindness to the good works being accomplished through the power of the Spirit.

To accomplish God's purpose according to the Scripture we are faced with ongoing change. The religious systems that exist will oppose that change. Until we throw off the yoke of religion and religious practice and control, and seriously question the way we do things called "church", we will not see the blind and the lame healed.

IS YOUR CHURCH A HOUSE OF PRAYER?

My house is to be a house of prayer: to what extent, if at all, is the church we belong to a house of prayer?

As soon as the people of God return to consistent, committed prayer based on the Word of God, we will see more and more miraculous answers to prayer.

John 15:7-8: Jesus said if we abide in Him and His words (rhema words, i.e., quickened words, the hearing of faith, *Romans 10:17*) abide in us, we will ask what we desire and it will be done for us. By this our Father is glorified, we bear much fruit and are truly His disciples.

Prayer is the key to fruitfulness; prayer is the way of discipleship.

SALVATION FOR THE GENTILES

Isaiah 56:1 “*Keep justice and do righteousness, for My salvation is about to come, and My righteousness to be revealed.*”

God's righteousness was revealed in His Son Jesus Christ; God's salvation came to us in Jesus Christ, so that whoever believes in Him is saved.

Isaiah 56:2: “*Blessed is the man who does this, and the son of man who lays hold of it.*”

Who does what? And lays hold of what? - the man who believes in Jesus Christ for His salvation and trusts in Him for righteousness.

Also "*who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, and keeps his hand from doing any evil*". God is after a holy people, without spot or blemish. If we desire to inherit His full salvation, if we desire to be clothed in His righteousness, there is required a whole-hearted commitment to His word and His way.

HOW DOES ONE KEEP FROM DEFILING THE SABBATH?

The fourth commandment says "*Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.*" (**Exodus 20:8**) Often in the Old Testament, the people of God are chastised for defiling the Sabbath. How is this vital doctrine and command of the Lord fulfilled in Christ?

Exodus 20:11: "*For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.*"

Genesis 2:2-3: "*And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.*"

THE REST OF GOD

God Himself set apart the seventh day and blessed, making it special for Himself and His creation. In **Exodus 20:11** Moses refers to the "*rest*" of God, quoting from Genesis. God set the seventh day apart for His rest and invited His creatures, man, to enter that rest.

The six days of creation specifically had an evening and a morning, to mark the day. No mention is made of the seventh day having an evening or a morning. This suggests that it is an eternal day, God's day, a very special and complete or perfect day!

Colossians (2:16-17) teaches us that Sabbaths and new moons etc were a shadow of what was to come, i.e., Christ, Who is the substance. Christ is the eternal Son of God, begotten, not made. He comes from eternity and through His resurrection, overcomes death, and thus overcomes the limitations of this world, introducing to us "the rest of God". He is the creator (**John 1:3**) who opens a way for us to come into God's Sabbath rest; to cease from our own labours (**Hebrews 4:10**). Through faith we have become partakers with Christ (**Hebrews 3:14**), and through faith we are able to enter His rest (**Hebrews 4:3,11**).



Man originally entered God's rest on the seventh day but left His rest through sin (disobedience). Through faith (obedience) we enter God's rest through Christ and His finished work. Therefore keeping the Sabbath in the New Covenant is to do with faith, obedience and abiding in Christ. Every day is the Lord's day and we are to be holy unto the Lord every day.

THE SON OF THE FOREIGNER

Isaiah 56:3: "*Do not let the son of the foreigner who has joined himself to the Lord speak saying, 'The Lord has utterly separated me from His people';*"

The son of the foreigner, a non-Jew, who is either a proselyte or maybe even a circumcised believer, is to be accepted fully as the Lord accepts him. However under the New Covenant, there is no separation in the Lord between Jew and Gentile, but rather one new man.

THE EUNUCH

Isaiah 56:3b "*Nor let the eunuch say, 'Here I am, a dry tree.'*" [referring to his inability to father children; also eunuchs were excluded from the assembly of the Lord under the Law of Moses

(Deuteronomy 23:1)] *For thus says the Lord: 'to the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, and choose what pleases Me, and hold fast My covenant, even to them I will give in My house and within My walls a place and a name better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off.'* (verses 4,5).

This promise of God was literally fulfilled in **Acts 8:26-39**. In this story the Ethiopian eunuch is saved through faith and is baptised. He already was a believer in God and had joined himself to the Jewish worship of God. God has given a eunuch a name in His word that will last forever!

THE SONS OF THE FOREIGNER

Isaiah 56:6 No longer the son, singular, but “sons”, suggesting many.

“many sons of the foreigner” joining themselves to the Lord.

“to love the name of the Lord” (whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved, **Joel 2:32, Romans 10:13**),

“to be His servants” - everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath (who is faithful to "rest" in Christ, worshipping God in spirit and in truth)

“and holds fast My covenant” (**Matthew 28:20** "teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you") -

Isaiah 56:7 "Even them I will bring to my holy mountain,"

(Zion is the holy mountain; who can ascend Zion? see **Psalms 15** and **Psalms 24:3-6**)

"And make joyful in My house of prayer" (the church, God's house is the house of prayer;

"for the bringing in of many nations and people to His house" (see **Isaiah 2:1-3** and **Micah 4:1-3**)

"Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on My altar";

What are the burnt offerings and sacrifices? See **Leviticus chapters 1 - 7**. Jesus Christ offered Himself as a sacrifice for sin once and for all, fulfilling all the righteousness of the law (**Hebrews 10:12**). As we come to God through faith in Jesus Christ, acknowledging His sacrificial death on the cross and repenting of and confessing our sin we are forgiven, cleansed and accepted by God.

"For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations"

God's house is the church (**Ephesians 2:19-22, Hebrews 3:1-6**).

The church is God's house for all nations; the gospel is to be preached to all nations; the effective preaching of the gospel with signs and wonders begins with and is sustained by prayer.

Isaiah 56:8 "The Lord God, who gathers Israel, says, Yet I will gather to him [Messiah] others beside those who are gathered to him."

God has always intended to gather believers from every nation, tribe, kindred and tongue. His word regularly refers to His eternal purpose in Christ.

In this passage from Isaiah we have a profound call from the Word of God to return to prayer. Prayer was one of the first works of the church in the book of Acts (**Acts 2:42**). Jesus set the example for us in the way He constantly gave Himself to prayer. He said, "I do nothing that I do not see My Father doing."

Right now God is calling His church to prayer and evangelism. Evangelism comes out of prayer. Right now God is raising up workers and thrusting them out into the harvest. The ones who are being most successful are those who have a strong prayer base. God is also calling people sovereignly into His kingdom. People who have only known the Buddhist way or the Muslim

way, are receiving sovereign visitations from the Lord. Jesus is appearing to people in vision and revealing Who He Is.

WORKSHOP

1. Spend time getting right with God, dealing with sin, lukewarmness and whatever is heavy upon you.
2. Spend time in His house, ie., in His presence praising and worshipping God.
3. Spend time praying for the nations, ie., the people who do not know God! Call the nations to Jesus Christ! Plead God's mercy upon the lost!

THE GREAT COMMISSION

A PLAN FOR EVANGELISM

Matthew 28:18-20 “And Jesus came and spoke to them saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’”

In **Matthew 24:14** Jesus gives a summary of the Great Commission: “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.”

Mark 16:15-20 records the Great commission again. **Verse 16** condemns those who hear but do not believe. **Verses 17 and 18** speak of the signs that will follow those who believe: “... In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues, they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

The Scripture goes on to say in **verse 20**, “they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs”. It is the Lord who confirms the word with signs and wonders.

Luke 24:44-49 is Luke’s account of the Great Commission. **Verse 44** says that “all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me”. Many of these things have not yet been fulfilled.

Psalm 2:8: “Ask of Me and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance.”

Psalm 110:1 “... I will make Your enemies Your footstool.”

These prophecies are yet to be fulfilled.

Luke 24:47: “... repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name to all nations...”

This is the gospel message that is to be preached to every nation, that sins repented of are remitted. This authority was also given to the disciples (**John 20:23**).

Nations are to receive the gospel message. Every individual is to receive the gospel message. The kingdom of God grows one by one, soul by soul.

Bearing witness

Telling people about Jesus does not bear witness to the gospel. To bear witness indicates that there is something to see.

There has to be a **demonstration of power** with the word. What do people see?

In **Acts 8:17-19** Simon saw something happen when the apostles laid hands on people. He offered money to buy that power.

Luke 7:18-22: John the Baptist sent a message to Jesus asking, “Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?” Jesus said, “Go back and tell John the things you see, the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the poor have the gospel preached to them.”

There has to be a witness to the gospel, a demonstration of the power of the gospel.

Acts 1:8 promises power to be witnesses. The apostles in the early church saw this power at work.

Acts 14:3: “... the Lord ... bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands...”

Mark 16:17 says “these signs will accompany those who believe”. The witness to the word that has been spoken will be that demons are cast out, people speak in new tongues, people touch serpents and drink poison without being harmed, and the sick are healed.

1 Corinthians 4:20: “For the kingdom of God is not in word but in power.”

1 Corinthians 2:1-5 Paul came with a demonstration of the spirit and of power, that faith would not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

Romans 1:16-17 The gospel is the power of God to salvation.

1 Corinthians 1:18 The preaching of the cross is the power of God.

Rom 15:18-19 The gospel was preached to the Gentiles with mighty signs and wonders.

A gospel without signs and wonders is not a complete gospel.

Hebrews 2:4: “God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will.”

Jesus was anointed by God with the Holy Spirit and with power and performed many miracles, wonders and signs (Acts 2:22, Acts 10:38).

If we do not have the anointing of the Holy Spirit and power, how do we know that God is with us? Jesus said to Nicodemus, “Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness.” (**John 3:11**)

In **John 14:11** Jesus says, “Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.” He also said in **verse 12** that those who believe in Him would do greater works than He did.

Where is Jesus today?

He is organising the great harvest and calling workers to the harvest.

John 15:14 If we love Him we will obey Him and keep His commands.

John 15:16 He chose us to bear fruit that remains.

John 17:18 He has sent us into the world.

John 17:20 Jesus prays that others will believe the word of God.

Hebrews 4:12 tells us what the word of God is like. It is living and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword, dividing between soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart.

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

Mat. 3:15 Jesus was baptised to fulfil all righteousness. What does God require of you?

Matt 3:16 The Holy Spirit descended upon Him.

Matt. 4:1 Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness where he was tempted by the devil.

Romans 8:14 tells us that we are the children of God; the Spirit of God will lead us as He led Jesus.

Mat 4:11 Jesus overcame and was ministered to by angels – expect angelic help!

Luke 4:14: Jesus returned from the wilderness in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 4: 23-24: Jesus went about teaching, preaching, healing all kinds of sickness and disease and those tormented by demons.

What Else Did Jesus Do?

1. He trained twelve apostles, with three receiving extra training. Who is training you?
2. He equipped seventy witnesses to go out as labourers to preach, heal the sick and cast out demons. (**Luke 10**)
3. He was in pastoral relationship with over five hundred people (**1 Corinthians 15:6**).
4. Jesus travelled from place to place. **Mark 1:38, John 6:15**. He did not allow Himself to be controlled by man.
5. He was always accompanied by many disciples. He did not minister alone.
6. He had women in His team who ministered to Him and supported His ministry. (**Luke 8:1-3, Matthew 27:55**)
7. His commission was to the lost sheep of Israel (**Matthew 10:6**). His command to His disciples was to go to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the end of the earth (**Acts 1:8**).

We are sent to every town, every village, every city, every hamlet, every rural area.

THE GREAT COMMISSION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The first mention is in **Genesis 1:26-28**. God told Adam and Eve to fill the whole earth. **Ephesians 2:10** shows that we are the new creation who are to fulfil the commission given to Adam and Eve.

Psalm 2:6-12 talks about asking for the nations as our inheritance and the ends of the earth as our possession.

Psalm 110:1-3 and 5-6: The Lord is going to judge nations.

Nations and Gentiles refer to those who do not know God.

Isaiah 2:2-3: God will call the Nations. This same prophecy is repeated in **Micah 4:1-3**.

Isaiah 49:1 and 7-9: Those who are prisoners are called to “Go forth”. We are to go forth in the anointing and say to the people who do not know God, “Come forth, show yourself, there is no longer any need to live in fear, come out of the darkness!”

Isaiah 49:9-12: The Lord will lead them and guide them and call them from afar.
Strong’s Concordance, Hebrew 5515, ‘sinim’ is a distant oriental region.
God is calling China.

Isaiah 55:5: We are to call the nations.

Isaiah 60:7 The flocks of Kedar and the rams of Nebaioth are called into the house of God – these are the sons of Ishmael.

Now is the time for church planting. Now is the time for a powerful witness in every people group.

Isaiah 56:7-8: The Lord says, “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.”

What will be the result of having a powerful witness in every place?

Those who believe will form a church which will be fruitful. The church will continue steadfastly in teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer (**Acts 2:42**). Expect signs and wonders and the Lord will add to the church daily those who are being saved (**Acts 2:43-47**).

Haggai 1:14: God stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel to rebuild the house of God.

Zechariah 4:6-10: Do not despise the day of small beginnings.

How does it work? Ephesians 4:11-12

The Apostle and Prophet are the foundation of the New Testament church. For the church to grow the Pastor, Evangelist and Teacher are needed to build on the foundational ministries of Apostle and Prophet. The goal is maturity and perfection. All five gifts are needed to bring maturity. The whole body ministering, every part being joined together and contributing to the building up of the body in love.

Right now we are entering into the time of the last days great harvest. ***John 4:35*** says the fields are already “*white for harvest*”. ***Matthew 9:37-38*** tells us that “*the harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest*”.

God is calling for people right now to be raised up and to be whole-hearted in their commitment to fulfil the Great Commission.

Matthew 24:14: “*This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations and then the end will come.*”

ENTERING INTO THE GATES

OF THE HOLY CITY

“SHE [the holy city] HAD TWELVE GATES AND NAMES WRITTEN ON THEM WHICH ARE THE NAMES OF THE TWELVE TRIBES OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL”

Revelation 21:12

John had already seen "the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God", **verse 10**, "having the glory of God", **verse 11**, and had been told that this city is "the bride, the Lamb's wife", **verse 9**.

Gates are entry points! One cannot climb over the walls. Thieves and robbers cannot enter the holy city (**John 10:1**).

Jesus said, "I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture." (**John 10:9**)

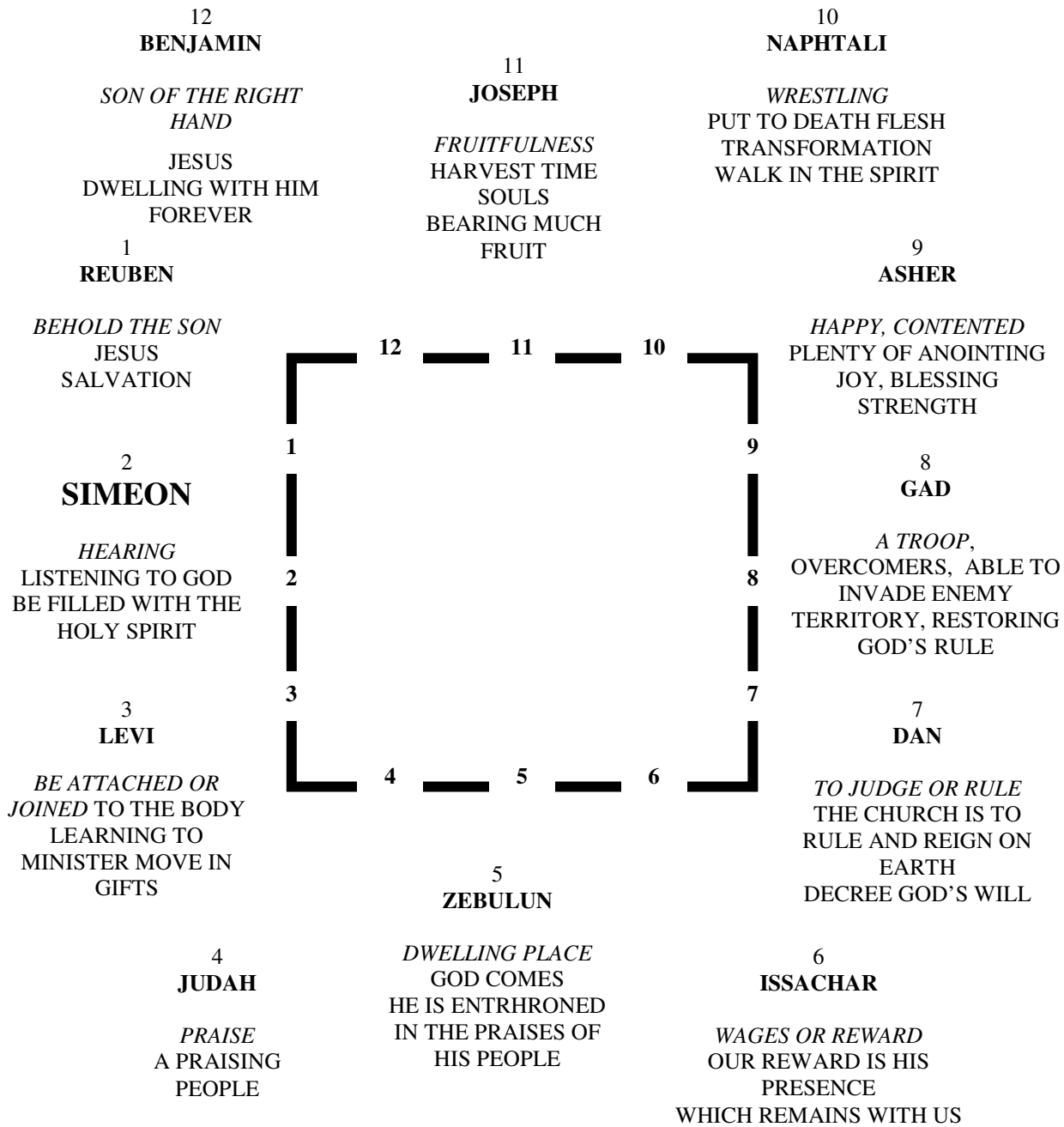
Gates in the ancient cities were also places of authority: the elders sat in the gates and made decisions concerning the populace (**Ruth 4:1-2**). Jesus spoke of the "gates of hell" not prevailing against the church (**Matthew 16:18**); the church would overcome the power and authority of hell as represented in its gates.

If the gates are the entry points, what opens the twelve gates of the holy city? Can one enter through any gate at any time? **Revelation 21:25** says the gates are open all the time, all day and there is no night there. How do we enter into the experience of this city? "The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple" (**Revelation 21:22**). So entering the holy city is the same as coming into God's presence. How do we enter more fully into His presence?

If we follow the order of the names of the twelve tribes as prophesied by Jacob in **Genesis 49** we find a progressive experience from one gate to the next, based on the meaning of the names. It is as if the experience of the first gate prepares us for the experience of the second gate, right through to the culmination of the twelfth gate.

The name meanings are taken from the text of the Scripture and marginal notes of the Spirit Filled Life Bible, New King James Version, and from Strong's Concordance. The interpretation of the names prophetically is derived in part from the prophetic words of Jacob in **Genesis 49** and of Moses in **Deuteronomy 33**, as well from the teaching of the whole Bible. This is by no means an exhaustive study but only an introduction.

THE GATES TO THE HOLY CITY



GATE NUMBER ONE: REUBEN

Reuben means "behold the son" or "see, a son" (*Genesis 29:32*). Reuben was Jacob's firstborn; he is the first gate.

When a person beholds Jesus, the Son of God, and believes in Him they are saved. Gate ONE is salvation. One cannot enter the holy city unless one is saved.

John 14:6: *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."*

Mark 16:16: *"He who believes and is baptised will be saved."*

John 3:16: *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."*

We first enter the holy city through salvation: beholding the Son! We must be born again to enter the kingdom of God (**John 3:3**).

GATE TWO: SIMEON

Literally means "heard", God heard Leah, (*Genesis 29:33*); a hearing. Gate two is all about hearing God; listening to His voice. To hear God clearly we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit;

John 14:26: He will remind us of all Jesus said;

John 16:13: *"whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell of things to come."*

We are saved to enter gate one; we become citizens of heaven above (*Philippians 3:20*); our names are written in the Lamb's book of life when we are saved (*Revelation 21:27*). However to go on for the Lord we need to receive the Holy Spirit (*Acts 1:8, Acts 8:17, Acts 9:17, Acts 10:44, Acts 19:6*).

GATE THREE: LEVI

Literally means: to be attached, to be joined (*Genesis 29:34*). The Holy Spirit, whom we received at gate two, baptises us into the body of Christ (*1 Corinthians 12:13*). We are joined to the body as members (*verse 12*). Once we are joined to the body, having been filled with the Holy Spirit, we begin to minister; Levi was the ministering tribe under the Law of Moses. (see *Deuteronomy 33:8-11*: he moves in the gifts of the Spirit [the Thummim and Urim]; he puts the priorities of God above family, *verse 9*; he teaches the Word of God, *verse 10*; God provides for him [substance] and protects him, *verse 11*).

GATE FOUR: JUDAH

Judah is derived from the Hebrew word "yadah", meaning to lift one's hands in praise and thanks. Judah means praise (*Genesis 29:35*). Jacob said Judah will stand out from among his brethren (*Genesis 49:8*); he will be like a lion and take the prey; he will be the ruler and the lawgiver (*verses 9-10*). The fourth gate to the holy city is Judah: praise unto our God. A people who are saved, spirit-filled, and joined together as a ministering body come to the Lord in praise and begin to discover the power of praise. Let us offer the sacrifice of Praise (*Hebrews 13:15*).

GATE FIVE: ZEBULUN

Zebulun means a habitation, a dwelling place, a haven; God comes to a praising people or a praising people are given entry into God's presence. God is "*enthroned in the praises of Israel*" (*Psalms 22:3*); God inhabits His people (*Psalms 132:13-14*).

As priests of God we learn to come into His presence and minister to Him; we come into the sanctuary where God dwells; we come to Zion (*Hebrews 12:22*).

GATE SIX: ISSACHAR

Genesis 30:18: Issachar means wages, or reward. The reward of a praising people is the presence of God, being indwelt by His presence. The reward is that the presence goes with us; we carry His presence as priests of the true God (**Numbers 4:15, Deuteronomy 31:9, 1Chronicles 15:2**). **Ephesians 1:6** says we are chosen in Christ "to the praise of the glory of His grace". "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (**Colossians 1:27**).

GATE SEVEN: DAN

Dan means to judge, to rule (**Genesis 30:6**). We are to rule and reign in life through Christ Jesus! (**Romans 5:17**) We shall reign on the earth (**Revelation 5:10**). Do you not know we will judge angels! (**1 Corinthians 6:3**) Be wise, O kings, be instructed you judges of the earth (**Psalms 2:10**).

Through prayer this ruling and judging begins: we call the kingdom (rule and reign of God) into the earth, we decree in prayer and through the speaking forth of His word the will of God (**Matthew 6:10**, the Lord's prayer).

GATE EIGHT: GAD

Gad means "a troop" (or fortune); Leah said, "a troop comes" and called his name Gad (**Genesis 30:11**). Jacob says Gad "will triumph at last" (**Genesis 49:19**). Moses said, "He dwells as a lion, and tears the arm and the crown of his head" (**Deuteronomy 33:20**). There is a sense that Gad invades; Moses says, "He [Gad] provided the first part for himself, because a lawgiver's portion was reserved" for him.

This follows on from gate seven, to judge or to rule. At the gate of Gad we learn to exercise, and dwell in, this judgment role; as a troop we invade the enemy's territory, restoring the rule of Christ. See **2 Corinthians 10:3-6** for the New Testament outworking.

GATE NINE: ASHER

Asher means happy or contented, blessed! (**Genesis 30:13**). Asher is a gate of reward: Jacob said "Bread from Asher shall be rich, and he shall yield royal dainties" (**Genesis 49:20**).

Moses said, "Asher is most blessed of sons; let him be favoured by his brothers, let him dip his foot in oil" (**Deuteronomy 33:24**). Oil speaks of the anointing. By gate nine the saints have been through much experience in their walk with God. There is a reward, a blessing of Asher: the anointing.

Asher is also strong and stands in a place of judgment (**Deuteronomy 33:25**). Wherever he walks (sandals), he is strong like iron, but also brings God's judgment (bronze).

GATE TEN: NAPHTALI

Naphtali means "my wrestling"; Rachel wrestled and prevailed (**Genesis 30:8**). Jacob wrestled with God and prevailed (**Genesis 32:24-32**). What happened when Jacob wrestled with God? He overcame the old nature (Jacob means supplanter or deceitful) and was changed (transformed) into a new man, named Israel (literally, a man who prevailed over God, hence, prince of God). At the gate of Naphtali we are to be transformed fully from the old nature (man) to the new man in Christ, a Spirit-led man (**Romans 8:14, Galatians 5:25**).

Jacob said of Naphtali, "a deer let loose [or set free]; he uses beautiful words" **Genesis 49:21**. Moses says, "satisfied with favour, and full of the blessing of the Lord, possess the west and the south" (**Deuteronomy 33:23**).

Naphtali is a gate of great change in our lives, a transformation, a setting free from the old to possess the inheritance God has for us.

GATE ELEVEN: JOSEPH

Joseph means "He will add" (*Genesis 30:24*), fruitfulness. Finally through many paths, pitfalls, experiences and change, God brings us to gate eleven where great fruitfulness is released. *John 15:16*: "I appointed you to go and bear much fruit". We are called and chosen by the Lord to bear much fruit. People who have wrestled with God and overcome will be very fruitful, being led by the Spirit and obedient to Christ, whose fruit it is.

Genesis 49:22: "Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well [well of salvation, *Isaiah 12:3*]; his branches run over the wall." Jesus is the vine; we are the branches that are to bear fruit (*John 15:5*).

Moses' words over Joseph are also very strong with many blessings and great fruitfulness promised: thousands and ten thousands! (*Deuteronomy 33:13-17*)

It is time for fruitfulness right now in the church of Jesus Christ. Joseph is gate eleven: we are the end of this age; it is time for the great harvest at the end of the age. Expect times of multiple fruitfulness as the Lord thrusts us out into the harvest.

GATE TWELVE: BENJAMIN

Genesis 35:18 Benjamin was Jacob's last son and was born to his beloved Rachel who died in giving birth. She named him Benomi, meaning "son of my sorrow", but Jacob renamed him, "Son of the right hand". Benjamin is the final gate into the holy city. To be at the Father's right hand with Jesus is our ultimate goal. That is the highest we can attain to. Jesus promised such a reward to the Church at Laodicea in *Revelation 3:21*, to actually sit down with Him on His throne.

Benjamin is hungry for the prey and shall be rewarded with the spoil (*Genesis 49:27*). In *Isaiah 53:12*, Jesus is rewarded with the spoil because of His death for us. Are we hungry for the prey? Will we rise up and serve the Lord as overcomers?

Moses calls Benjamin, the beloved of the Lord, who dwells in safety by Him; in other words at the right hand. *Deuteronomy 33:12*: He dwells between His shoulders which is the place of government according to *Isaiah 9:6*.

THE TWELVE GATES TO THE HOLY CITY REVIEWED:

1. Reuben, behold the Son - get saved;
2. Simeon, hearing - receiving the Holy Spirit;
3. Levi, being joined to the body of Christ to minister;
4. Judah, becoming a people of praise;

5. Zebulun, a dwelling, God inhabits our praise;
6. Issachar, reward, His presence is our reward;
7. Dan, to judge or rule, we begin to reign in Christ;
8. Gad, a troop, we rise up to invade (conquer);
9. Asher, happy, blessed, we are anointed to go on;
10. Naphtali, a wrestling, dealing with the old man, being transformed, walking by the Spirit;
11. Joseph, fruitfulness, it's time for harvest;
12. Benjamin, Son of the right hand; we first entered the holy city by meeting Jesus; finally we sit with Jesus in His Father's throne.

CONCLUSION

Deuteronomy 33:26: *“There is no one like the God of Jeshurun (Israel), who rides the heavens to help you, and in His excellency on the clouds.”*

God will give us all the grace and spiritual power we need to overcome and sit in His throne.

Verse 27: *“The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms; therefore He will thrust out the enemy from before you. and will say, ‘Destroy!’”*

He protects us, keeping us safe in His arms, and removes the enemy from before us.

Verse 28: *“Then Israel will dwell in safety, the fountain of Jacob alone, in a land of grain, [bread, word] new wine [joy of the Spirit]; his heavens will also drop dew [fresh water].*

The dew is fresh every morning and waters the earth (even as the mist did, **Genesis 2:6**).

God provides His word to feed us, His Spirit to release His joy in us, and fresh water every day.

Verse 29: *“Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the Lord, the shield of your help and the sword of your majesty! Your enemies shall submit to you, and you shall tread down their high places.”*

ISAIAH 12

1 *“And in that day you will say: “O LORD, I will praise You; though You were angry with me, your anger is turned away, and You comfort me.*

2 *Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; 'For YAH, the LORD, is my strength and song; he also has become my salvation.”*

3 *Therefore with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.*

4 *And in that day you will say: “Praise the LORD, call upon His name; declare His deeds among the peoples, make mention that His name is exalted.*

5 *Sing to the LORD, for He has done excellent things; this is known in all the earth.*

6 *Cry out and shout, O inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in your midst!”*

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