

AN INTRODUCTION TO
The Elijah ministry
in the time of the end

VICTOR HALL
WITH PETER HAY AND DAVID BAKER

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THE ELIJAH MINISTRY IN THE TIME OF THE END

Victor Hall

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Preface

The manifestation of the sons of God – An ode

I can believe to see, what He has already worked for me;
Manifest as a son on earth, through Christ revealed by me.
The fruit that I bear, Christ has already borne,
When in offering He died for me.
The Spirit now leads in the path pioneered;
I am the fruit that He bore.
The works that I do He has already done;
Christ manifest in me.
The whole Christ, His corporate body,
Every member a son;
In one Spirit baptised, sealed and revealed.
Part of His church, also His bride,
Bringing forth others, fruit for God.
Let this word burn as a fire in you;
Let faith rise up enabling your fruit.
Be born each day, as you rise to serve,
By water and Spirit, overcome through His word.
A table prepared in the presence of foes,
The Father's *agape* that perfects all my woes;
Released from my bondage to self and despair,
Made free in Christ, a son and an heir.

We introduced the book, *The mystery of Christ and the Church*, with this ode, which was written under the unction of the Spirit as He directed my attention to the subject of the revealing of the sons of God in the time of the end.

Rom 8:19. I registered both the urgency of His initiative, as well as the anointing of grace for our participation in the fulfilment of God's purposes in the earth. This grace is available to all those who have an ear to hear what the Lord, the Spirit, is presently saying to the churches. Rev 2:7.

Since the 2023 National Bible Seminar, the Spirit has continued to unfold to us this central theme of the prophetic Scriptures. He is doing this so that those with an ear to hear what He is saying to the churches may be ready for the time when the Father takes His seat, which marks the commencement of the time of the end. In particular, through the proclamation of the gospel of God and the mystery of Christ and the church, we are being awakened from our carnal, religious slumber as we hear the Spirit declare, 'Behold, the Bridegroom is coming; go out to meet Him!' Mat 25:6.

Inherent in this call is the direction to buy a double portion of oil so that, in the time of the end, we can minister the light of the gospel to the whole world, in the spirit and power of Elijah. We will do this as a company of sons revealing the Father, in the same way that Christ Himself revealed the Father as the Son of God during His 3 ½-year ministry. Joh 14:9-10. Jesus explained that this would be the expression of the sons of God, as the mortal members of His corporate body, saying, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, he who *believes in Me*, the works that I do *he will do also; and greater works than these he will do*, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.' Joh 14:12-14.

This is, indeed, a high calling! Php 3:14. Those who *choose* this calling are the *elect*; they are part of the remnant church who are being made comparable to Christ as a helper in the bringing forth of a great multitude of sons of God in the time of the end. Having received the same spirit of faith through the gospel, they are believers *because* they are joined to the finished offering of Christ. They are glorifying the Father by bearing the fruit of righteousness that Christ bore on their behalf through His offering and suffering journey.

2Co 4:13. As we now consider this implication of the New Covenant, and make ourselves ready for the coming of the Father, 'Let this word burn as a fire in you; let faith rise up enabling your fruit.'

The New Covenant of the Spirit

In the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit dwells *with* us and *in* us, making our body a temple of the Holy Spirit. 2Co 3:6. Joh 14:15-17. 1Co 6:19. As a temple for the Holy Spirit, we are not to 'self-worship'. Rather, we are to sanctify the Lord

God in our heart and let Him be our 'dread'. Isa 8:13. We must also sanctify ourselves to do the works of the Father, which the Holy Spirit initiates and enables. 1Pe 3:15. Fulfilling these works by the Spirit, in Christ, is the implication of sanctifying the Lord God in our heart.

The manifestation of the sons of God in mortality is possible because each son of God is a temple of the Holy Spirit. As a temple of the Holy Spirit, our work is to reveal Him as He reveals us to the world as sons of God. The world does not know us, or the Spirit, at this present time. At this time, people are being saved out of the world and brought into the church. We are not of this world; yet, we are the face of God to the world through the Holy Spirit. We are in the world as men and women who are of 'like passions' with those to whom we speak. Act 14:15. However, because we have the ministry of Elijah, given to us by the Holy Spirit, we have become 'a sign and a wonder' to them. Isa 8:18.

It has been given to us to reveal the sign of the prophet Jonah. As Jesus Himself declared, 'This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it *except the sign of Jonah the prophet*. For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation.' Luk 11:29-30. That is, our work, through the power of the Holy Spirit, is to show forth Christ's death and life until He comes. 1Co 11:26. We do this as members of Christ's body. We reveal Christ's life in the same way that the branches on a vine reveal the life and identity of a vine, the life of which is contained in its root. Noting this principle, Jesus said, 'I am the Vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.' Joh 15:5.

In the parable of the sower and the seed, our heart is likened to 'the soil'. We hear and receive the word of God through messengers who are sent to us by Christ, as they preach the gospel by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. 1Pe 1:12. The Holy Spirit germinates the life of God that is in the word of God, when it is planted as a seed in our heart. Luk 8:11. 1Pe 1:23. By this means, we are born again of the Father's life as it becomes flesh and Spirit within us. The Holy Spirit then anoints us with power, enabling us to do the works that Christ accomplished for us when He completed our pilgrimage on earth, and in the age to come, on His offering journey from Gethsemane to the cross.

We are being given a double portion of the oil of the Spirit so that we can become messengers who belong to the Father's kingdom when He comes and takes His seat to rule the world. Through Christ and His church, the Father will gather a multitude from the nations into His kingdom, to become His sons and daughters. Our work as sons and daughters of the Father will be to shine forth as the light of God among the nations, as the sun shines its light upon the earth, bringing life to the natural world. As Jesus proclaimed, 'Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.' Mat 13:43.

The double portion of oil that the virgin churches receive is so that their lamps, which are a symbol of their ministry and overcoming testimony, may be revealed to the world as they are manifest as sons of God in mortality.

Mat 25:4. This work was described to us by the apostle John in Chapter 12 of the book of Revelation. The woman portrayed in this revelation is the church, the bride of Christ, shining forth as the sun in the kingdom of her Father. We note that she is in travail and in pain to give birth, revealing that she is still in mortality. Rev 12:1-2. Through her testimony, she brings forth a numberless multitude who are born again as sons of God. These sons are caught up to God, and to His throne, where they find protection and deliverance from the mouth of Satan, the dragon, who rules the seventh world kingdom. Rev 12:5.

The Father will protect this great multitude by spreading His tabernacle over them. Describing this event, John wrote, 'Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne *will dwell among them* [equally translated, 'will spread His tabernacle over them']. They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.' Rev 7:15-17. Christ will feed and nourish them, as He leads them to the river of life that flows from the sanctuary of the true temple. They will neither hunger anymore, nor thirst anymore, because they will have entered into God's rest.

The manifestation of the sons of God now

The apostle John declared, 'Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God! Therefore, the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.' 1Jn 3:1. We all need to be illuminated to behold the love of the Father that has been bestowed upon us in relation to our calling to be a son of God in this world. We are born as a son of God when the seed of our name, which is from the Father, and in Christ, is proclaimed to us by a messenger. As we have already considered, the life of this seed germinates in our heart by the Holy Spirit. 1Pe 1:23. As sons of God, we must then be built upon Christ as living stones in His temple, which is the body of Christ. 1Pe 2:4-5.

John rejoiced, saying, 'Beloved, *now we are sons of God*, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.' 1Jn 3:2. When John said that 'it does not yet appear what we shall be', he was primarily referring to the physical second coming of Christ on the day of resurrection. On that day, we will receive an incorruptible and immortal resurrection body, which will be clothed with the glory of our heavenly body, giving to us a spiritual body. Our spiritual

body will be like Christ's spiritual body. However, even though we have not yet reached the day of *anastasis*, we are progressively attaining to an *exanastasis* in our mortality.

The apostle Paul testified that the goal of his earthly pilgrimage as a son of God was to 'know Him and the power of His resurrection [*anastasis*] and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection [*exanastasis*] from the dead'. Php 3:10-11.

Exanastasis is the power of Christ's resurrection life that outflows to us in our mortality, because we are walking with Him as members of His body, in the fellowship of the seven wounding events that He experienced from the garden of Gethsemane to the cross. We are the mortal members of His immortal body. As we have considered, He is the Vine, and we are the branches of the Vine who are sustained by His life. Joh 15:1-2,4.

What does the manifestation of the sons of God look like? John said, 'Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.

Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.' 1Jn 3:4-6. Jesus Christ was manifested as the Son of God to take away sin. He did this when He became our great High Priest in the garden of Gethsemane, and then, as the Son of God and Son of Man, He progressively destroyed our sin in His own physical body by learning our obedience and fulfilling the works of our sonship. Jesus Christ fully completed the work of atonement for every son of God on His offering journey from the garden of Gethsemane to the cross.

The apostle John defined sin as lawlessness. Lawlessness is disobedience. Even though Christ became the body of sin in the garden of Gethsemane when we were all joined to Him, He did not commit or practise sin on His offering journey. His offering journey was the manifestation of *perfect obedience* to the Father's will. The pathway that Christ has pioneered for us as a son of God, defines our obedience to the Father. The key point is that, if we *abide in Christ*, we will be progressively overcoming sin, and becoming blameless, as we learn the obedience that Christ has already learnt for us on His offering journey. We *abide in Christ* by embracing our participation in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings within the context of the true temple, which is the body of Christ.

John continued by saying, 'He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God. In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest; whoever does not practise righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not

love his brother.' 1Jn 3:8-10. The apostle John was clear that there is a manifestation of the sons of God, now! Sons of God are manifest because they practise righteousness; that is, they are learning obedience as they give themselves to serve their brethren. Sons of God are also manifest because they love their brethren who are in the fellowship of the body of Christ.

Two kinds of seed

The apostle John declared that there is a manifestation of the sons of God, and there is also a manifestation of the sons of the devil. 1Jn 3:10. This is the case because there are *two kinds of seed* that may be sown into our heart. It is helpful to remember that, in the parable of the sower and the seed, we are not 'the seed'. We are the soil, or the dirt, that receives the seed. This distinction between 'the seed' and 'the soil' is important, because it highlights that we have *a choice* in relation to the word that is proclaimed to us. The 'good seed' is the word of our name that is proclaimed to us by a messenger of Christ. The life that is in this seed progressively becomes our life, through the Holy Spirit, as we *keep choosing* to walk with Christ, in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings, each day.

The parable of the wheat and the tares develops this principle further by highlighting that we have a choice in relation to *two kinds of seed*. Jesus said, 'The kingdom of heaven is like a man who *sowed good seed* in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and *sowed tares* among the wheat and went his way. But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared.' Mat 13:24-26. 'The enemy' in this parable is the devil. 'The tares' are the sons of the devil because they have chosen to receive and believe his word. In practice, the enemies of Christ are all of those who promote another gospel, or another way, that is contrary to the word of Christ that is proclaimed by the presbyteries in His right hand. Php 3:18.

We learn from this parable that, because of the dignity of choice that God has given to every person, there will always be a conflict between the two kinds of 'seed', in every extended family and in every congregation that belongs to Christ. We need to accept that this will be our reality. In every extended household, there will be vessels for honour and vessels for dishonour. This is particularly true in a great house like the church. Paul wrote to Timothy, 'In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honour and some for dishonour. Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honour, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.' 2Ti 2:20-21.

In his letter, the apostle John explained that if a person chooses to receive and believe the word that is sown into their heart by an enemy of Christ, it will become evident that they are of *the spirit of antichrist*. The spirit of antichrist

is manifest as lawlessness. As we have already noted, lawlessness is simply disobedience. Such a person will not believe that they need to be obedient to the word of Christ that is publicly proclaimed to them by the messengers of Christ in His right hand. Furthermore, a person who has become a son of the devil, or 'a tare', will not believe that they need to keep walking with Christ in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings in order to learn the obedience that He has already learned for them.

One of the major differences between a son of God and a son of the devil, within a family or a congregation, will be the nature of their conversation. We know that this will be the case because it is 'out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks'. Mat 12:34. A son of God will be growing in their capacity to speak from the faith that they have received from the word of Christ. 2Co 4:13. Their faith will be demonstrated by their desire for fellowship. In contrast, the speech of a son of the devil will often be characterised by *complaint* because they view themselves as the victim of their circumstances, and of others. Similarly, their own *judgements*, regarding the veracity of the word of God and the integrity of their brethren, will progressively inform and permeate their conversations.

It is the word of God, which is proclaimed by Christ's messengers, that progressively polarises 'the wheat' and 'the tares' within a family or a congregation, until the nature of every individual's choice in relation to the word becomes manifest. It is important to remember that 'a son of the devil' *can be converted* to become a son of God if they do not resist the conviction of the Holy Spirit when the word of God is proclaimed to them. The apostle Paul is a wonderful example of a man who was formerly a son of the devil and an enemy of Christ, who then became a son of God and an obedient slave of Christ. However, at the same time, we must soberly recognise that this conversion is only possible when the Lord Himself is speaking to a person, by the Holy Spirit, and that every person must respond in the season of their visitation.

A person who is a 'son of the devil' may choose to remain in the community of a certain congregation because of their history, friendships, or family relationships. In this case, they will dwell among the community of the church with deceit, and in hypocrisy. Jude described such people as, 'spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves'. Jud 1:12. At the same time, many will choose to depart from the fellowship of the body of Christ while they look for another gospel. Paul said to Timothy, 'For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.' 2Ti 4:3-4.

The apostle John identified the end of the matter when he said, 'Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.' 1Jn 2:18-19. We know that *the Antichrist* will come out of the church and then become manifest in the world during the time of the end. However, John's point was, that there have been many antichrists who have come out of the church during the entire church age. There has been a manifestation of both sons of the devil and sons of God in every generation!

The final separation between the wheat and tares will occur when the Father takes His seat to bring a great multitude into the kingdom of God, and to judge the world. Jesus concluded the explanation of the parable of the wheat and the tares by saying, 'The Son of Man will send out His angels [messengers], and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practise lawlessness [disobedience] and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!' Mat 13:41-43.

In our present season, as we are approaching the time when the Father will take His seat to initiate the harvest that belongs to the end of the age, the Holy Spirit is urging us to test ourselves to ensure that we are in the faith. We know that there is a conflict between the 'two seeds' in every extended family and in every congregation. This is an uncomfortable point, but we need to accept that this is the reality. The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians saying, 'Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? - unless indeed you are disqualified.' 2Co 13:5.

The apostle Paul then continued, 'I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified.' 2Co 13:6. Paul knew that he was not disqualified because the faith and obedience of Christ was evident in his life as he received Christ's resurrection life in his mortality. 2Co 13:4. We know that there will be a great manifestation of the sons of God in the world when the Father takes His seat. However, we can also believe to be manifest as sons of God in this world, *now*, as we embrace our participation in Christ's offering and sufferings. We can live an overcoming Christian life *now*, gaining victory over the devil and sin, as the Holy Spirit leads us on the journey that Christ has pioneered for us. We need this faith to burn in our hearts. 'Beloved, *now* we are the sons of God!' 1Jn 3:2.

Chapter I

A prophetic overview of the Elijah ministry

The Old Testament ends with *a promise* and *a warning*. The prophet Malachi declared, 'Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.' Mal 4:5-6. The *promise* is that Christ will send the Elijah ministry, which is His messenger administration, before the beginning of the great and terrible day of the Lord. The *warning* is that, unless the Elijah ministry is received, He will come and strike the earth with a curse.

The Elijah ministry is, firstly, a prophetic, fathering ministry that has been given the authority to seek and find worthy households. The Elijah ministry brings the message of reconciliation with God to a house, and then ministers the peace of God to those who receive this ministry. We recall that Jesus said to the seventy-two disciples, 'Whatever house you enter, first say, "Peace to this house". And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it.' Luk 10:5-6. The grace and power of the Holy Spirit bring rest upon those within a house who receive the word that is proclaimed by the Elijah ministry. As the house is cleansed from its uncleanness through repentance and faith, familiar spirits are compelled to depart so that healing and wholeness may come to each member of the household.

In the prophetic book of Deuteronomy, Moses described the Elijah ministry that would replace the legal administration that he had established for the nation of Israel from Mount Sinai. Moses testified that the Lord said to him, 'I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.' Deu 18:18-19. Having received this word from the Lord, Moses said to the people, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear.' Deu 18:15.

Moses prophesied that Jesus Christ would come as the Messenger of the Covenant. Mal 3:1. Joh 1:14. Even though John the Baptist ministered in the spirit and power of Elijah, the prophecy of Moses was not fulfilled by John the Baptist. When John the Baptist came, he readily confessed that he was not the Christ. He also declared that he was not Elijah, and that he was not the Prophet. Joh 1:19-21. John described himself as being the voice of one crying in the wilderness to prepare the way of the Lord. Joh 1:23. The apostle Peter proclaimed that Jesus is *the Prophet*. He is the Word of the Father and the source of the prophetic word. He is the source of the Elijah ministry!

Peter's sermon after healing the lame man

When Peter and John, on their way into the temple, healed a lame man, a great crowd gathered in Solomon's Portico to hear them. Act 3:11. Peter began by stating that the lame man had not been healed by their own power or because of their own godliness. Act 3:12. In making this statement, Peter clearly understood that they were functioning as part of the Elijah ministry and that Jesus Christ was the source of this ministry. He proclaimed to the crowd that it was the name of Christ and, more specifically, *the faith that had been given* to the lame man, through the name of Christ, that had healed the man. Act 3:16.

In this sermon, the apostle Peter variously described Jesus as the suffering 'Servant', 'the Holy One and the Just', and 'the Prince of life'. Act 3:13-15. All these designations are significant. As the author of our salvation, Jesus Christ is the Prince of life, who has learned our obedience and fulfilled the works of our sonship on His offering journey from the garden of Gethsemane to the cross. Heb 2:10. Heb 5:9. Peter explained that the suffering death of Christ fulfilled the word that was spoken by the prophets, and that the apostles had become the witnesses of His resurrection.

Speaking about the resurrection of Christ, Peter then directly quoted the words of Moses that are recorded in the prophetic book of Deuteronomy. Act 3:22-23. He proclaimed that Christ was the Prophet who had been

raised up by God to continue speaking from heaven to His people. It is important to recognise that Jesus Christ was *raised up by God* as the source of the Elijah ministry when the Father raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand. Having been seated at the right hand of God, Jesus Christ now speaks from heaven through the apostolic administration that proclaims His word in, and then through, the presbyteries in His right hand. Eph 4:8-11. Rev 1:20. Heb 12:25.

Peter continued, 'Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days.' Act 3:24. Following Moses, the nation of Israel was led by the judges. It is interesting that Peter identified Samuel as being the first man who belonged to a new order of prophets. Samuel was a Levite, although he was not a descendant of Moses, nor of Aaron. While he was still a young boy serving in the temple, he was called by God to be a prophet to the house of Eli the priest, and to the nation of Israel. 1Sa 3. Beginning with Samuel, the prophets became an order whose ministry was to restore the fatherhood of faith that God had established in the earth through Abraham.

Notably, Peter said to the crowd, 'You are sons of the prophets, and of the Covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, "And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed".' Act 3:25. Peter made it clear that we need to be birthed by the word of the prophets before we can become *sons of the Covenant* that God made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. That is, we need to receive Christ, by receiving the word of a messenger, before we can come into Christ to become the sons of Abraham as members of Christ's body. Gal 3:29. Jesus also referred to these two steps when He said that we must be born from above to see the kingdom of God, and then be born of water and of the Spirit to enter the kingdom of God. Joh 3:3-5.

The purpose of the Elijah ministry is to turn the hearts of the children to the fathers - to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob - so that the blessing of Abraham will come to all the families of the earth. Mal 4:6. The blessing of Abraham is the blessing of peace that the messengers who belong to the Elijah ministry bring to a house. Peter declared that Christ had been raised from the dead and was sent *to bless us* by turning every one of us from our iniquities. Act 3:26. Our 'iniquity' is our own rebellion and self-righteousness. We know that Christ was bruised for our iniquities in the court of Caiaphas. We receive the first dimension of blessing from Christ when we meet Him eye to eye and become bankrupt in spirit. Mat 5:3.

The nurture and admonition of God that belongs to the household of Abraham is *sound doctrine*. The apostle Paul documented the content of sound doctrine in his pastoral epistles to Titus and Timothy. 2Ti 4:1-3. Tit 2:1. Likewise, the letter of James and the two letters of Peter contain this same

sound doctrine. The mandate to proclaim this sound doctrine has now been delivered to the Elijah ministry within a presbytery. It is the word that must be kept spotless by the presbyteries of lampstand churches until the coming of Christ in the end of the age. 1Ti 6:14.

The fervent prayer of Elijah

In the Scriptures, the prophet Elijah is the exemplar of the messenger administration that Christ has raised up to be His representative to the nations. Elijah came from the region of Gilead. 1Ki 17:1. He probably came from one of the schools of the prophets that originally had been established by Samuel. 1Sa 19:20. We have considered that Samuel was *the first prophet* in this messenger administration, which was a forerunner to the ministry of Christ and the messengers in His right hand. The Elijah ministry is now found in the presbyteries that belong to lampstand churches. The fatherhood that belongs to a presbytery is then expressed by the elders who live among local congregations.

Speaking about the Elijah ministry that is expressed by the presbytery of a lampstand church through the elders who live in local congregations, James wrote, 'Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.' Jas 5:13-15. In this instance, James was referring to the kind of sickness that befalls a person because they are not participating in the fellowship of the *agape* meal in a worthy manner. We are reminded that the apostle Paul said, 'For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep [have died].' 1Co 11:30.

As an aside, it is necessary to discern the difference between a physical infirmity that is part of our fellowship in Christ's sufferings; and a spiritual sickness that is caused by the oppression of unclean and familiar spirits. Jas 5:13-14. In many cases, the oppression of an unclean spirit will lead also to physical ailments. In relation to making this distinction, it is helpful to remember that a tree will be known according to its fruit. Mat 12:33. A testimony of repentance and faith, along with the manifestation of resurrection life, will be seen in the life of a person who is suffering as a member of Christ. They will be *growing* in their capacity to participate in the *agape* meal and in their capacity to minister life to others. The opposite kind of fruit will become increasingly apparent in the life of a person who is sick because they are oppressed by an unclean spirit.

James continued to liken the ministry of a presbytery in our day to the ministry of Elijah the prophet, by saying, 'Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he *prayed earnestly* that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the

land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.' Jas 5:17-18. James described Elijah as being a man with a nature like ours because he had the same fallen propensities that we have. However, his earnest prayer was not the expression of his carnality. It was not the prayer of a religious zealot. The earnest prayer of Elijah was the manifestation of his passion that was motivated by the anointing of the Spirit of God upon him.

The first example – judgement upon the nation

The *first example* of Elijah's earnest prayer was in relation to judgement. He prayed that it would not rain upon the land of Israel for a period of three and a half years. In this regard, he prayed earnestly for the judgement of God upon the nation of Israel so that they would turn back, with repentant hearts, to believing in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The purpose of the famine in the land was to 'turn the hearts of the children to the fathers'. Notably, when Elijah confronted and defeated all of the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, he prayed, 'Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel [Jacob], let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that You are the Lord God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again.' 1Ki 18:36-37.

The second example – the widow's house

The *second example* of Elijah's earnest prayer was in the house of a widow in Zarephath. During the great famine in the land, the Lord directed Elijah to go to this widow's house in the region of Sidon. 1Ki 17:9. It is notable that this woman was a Gentile. Jesus particularly drew our attention to the significance of this account when He said, 'I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was great famine throughout all the land; but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow.' Luk 4:25-26.

When the widow obeyed the word of Elijah, the Lord miraculously provided for the woman and her entire household. During the famine, she continued to provide for Elijah while he stayed in an upper room in her house.

1Ki 17:15-16. The Scriptures recorded that, after some time, her son became seriously ill and then died. 1Ki 17:17. The woman said to Elijah, 'What have I to do with you, O man of God? Have you come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to kill my son?' 1Ki 17:18. It is evident that the conviction of the Spirit had brought the woman's sin to her remembrance. Regarding her

sin, she recognised that her failure to walk in the light with Elijah had resulted in the death of her child.

Elijah asked the woman to give her son to him. He took the boy to his own room and began to *pray earnestly* for him. He stretched himself out on the child three times, effectively anointing him with the oil that belonged to his own prophetic mandate. 1Ki 17:19-21. Elijah prayed earnestly for the resurrection of the widow's son so that the sin of this woman could be brought to the light and forgiven. The Lord answered his prayer of faith by raising the boy from the dead. The soul of the child came back to his mortal body and he revived. 1Ki 17:22. This was the first recorded resurrection from the dead in history!

The widow's fellowship with Elijah established her house as a worthy house. The widow's house was cleansed as she learned to walk in the light with Elijah. We know that the woman already possessed a testimony regarding the miraculous provision of the Lord for her household. However, as she learned to walk in the light with Elijah, she also obtained the testimony of resurrection life within her family. She came to know and believe that the salvation of her household depended upon her fellowship with Elijah as the messenger of God to her. She confessed her faith by saying to Elijah, 'Now by this I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is the truth.' 1Ki 17:24.

The third example - praying for rain

The *third example* of Elijah's earnest prayer was that God's provision of rain be given to His people as they repented from their idolatry, and returned to God. At the end of the three and half years of famine, Elijah presented himself to Ahab and confronted all of the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. 1Ki 18:1-19. Having defeated these false prophets in a great test of power, he slaughtered them all beside a brook. 1Ki 18:20-40. Elijah then went up to the top of Mount Carmel to pray. He bowed down to the ground and put his face between his knees. Elijah earnestly prayed *seven times* in this manner. 1Ki 18:43.

After the seventh time, Elijah's servant saw a cloud, as small as man's hand, coming up out of the sea. 1Ki 18:44. The man's hand rising out of the sea represented an ascension-gift administration, in the right hand of Christ, that the Lord will raise up from the sea of the nations during the time of the seventh world kingdom. It is this ascension-gift administration that will minister in the spirit and power of Elijah to usher in the period of the latter rain that will bring forth the great harvest from the earth in the time of the end. Hos 6:3. James said, 'Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming

of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain.’ Jas 5:7.

The failure of Elijah – not praying for a double portion

As soon as it began to rain heavily in the land of Israel, King Ahab travelled in his chariot from Mount Carmel to Jezreel. Remarkably, the hand of the Lord came upon Elijah so that ‘he girded up his loins and ran ahead of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel’. 1Ki 18:46. Having contended with the footmen on Mount Carmel, Elijah was also enabled by the Lord to run with horses and not grow weary. However, he had not yet learned to negotiate the floodplain of the Jordan. Jer 12:5.

We know that Elijah had not yet negotiated the floodplain of the Jordan because he was still fearful regarding his own life. When Ahab reported to Jezebel all that had happened, she vowed to kill Elijah. 1Ki 19:2. Even though he had just defeated all the prophets of Baal, Elijah was afraid of Jezebel and fled for his life. This is a stark reminder that it is possible to successfully fulfil the works that God has prepared for us to do on one day, and then to draw back in unbelief on the very next day. Elijah fled from the city of Jezreel all the way to the Beersheba. Having left his servant in Beersheba, he went another day’s journey into the wilderness. 1Ki 19:3-4.

Elijah sat down under a tree and prayed that he might die, because he considered that he was no better than his fathers. 1Ki 19:4. Evidently, Elijah had drawn back into unbelief. He made a judgement that his life was no longer worth living. If we do not continue to believe and obey the word that is proclaimed to us, we will make judgements about ourselves and others from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The fruit of this judgement becomes ‘mind chatter’, which is the voice of the accuser of our brethren in our mind. It is important to understand that self-deprecation, and judgement from the wrong tree, will never produce bankruptcy in spirit. This produces only condemnation.

After Elijah fell asleep from sorrow under the tree, the angel of the Lord awakened him and encouraged him to ‘arise and eat’. 1Ki 19:5. The angel *twice* exhorted Elijah to participate in the fellowship of the *agape* meal. The second time, the angel said, ‘Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for you.’ 1Ki 19:7. The journey was ‘too great’ for Elijah because he did not yet have the double portion of the Spirit that was necessary for him to fulfil his prophetic ministry. Rather than praying to die, Elijah should have prayed for this double portion of the Spirit!

For forty days and forty nights, Elijah travelled to the mountain of God in the strength of that *agape* meal. 1Ki 19:8. We note that the Lord did not ask him

to come to this mountain. The angel was not speaking about the physical journey to this mountain when he said, 'The journey is too great for you.' Rather, as we have already noted, the angel was referring to the remainder of Elijah's prophetic mandate. When Elijah came to the mountain of God, which was Mount Sinai, he spent the night in a cave. It is likely that this was the same place where Moses had stayed on the top of the mountain.

The Lord said to him, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?' 1Ki 19:9. Elijah responded that he had been very zealous for the Lord, but that he was now the only prophet who was left in Israel. The Lord commanded him to go out of the cave and to stand on the mountain. As the Lord passed by the cave, a great and strong wind tore into the mountain and broke the rocks in pieces. The strong wind was followed by an earthquake, and then by a fire. The Lord Himself was not in the wind or in the earthquake or in the fire. He spoke to Elijah in 'a still small voice'. 1Ki 19:11-12.

The Scriptures recorded, 'So it was, when Elijah heard it [the voice], that he *wrapped his face in his mantle* and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. Suddenly a voice came to him, and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"' 1Ki 19:13. We note that this was the second time that the Lord had asked Elijah this question, and that he answered the Lord in the same way on both occasions. Elijah's answer was not a confession of faith; it was an expression of his unbelief and fear. As we have considered, the Lord did not ask Elijah to come to this mountain; nor did the Lord ask him to cover his face with his mantle. The mantle represented Elijah's prophetic mandate. When Elijah covered his face with his mantle, it became a veil over his eyes.

The mantle that represents our mandate will become a veil over our eyes if we rely upon our own perception of our previous successes or failures, rather than meeting the Lord face to face each day. We must continue to meet Christ with an unveiled face, in order to receive the faith and grace that is necessary for us to fulfil the works that belong to our mandate in each season of our life. If we do not meet the Lord in this way, our prayer, springing from despondency, will be answered by the Lord in an unexpected manner. The still small voice of God will ask us, 'What are you doing here?' Ultimately, the Lord will take what He has given to us and will give it to another.

In Elijah's situation, the Lord instructed him to anoint Elisha in his place. 1Ki 19:16. Notably, the Lord also corrected Elijah's perception that he was 'a man alone'; the only one who had remained faithful in the nation of Israel. The Lord said to him, 'I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal.' 1Ki 19:18. Elisha became the representative of this remnant lampstand church within the nation of Israel. Rom 11:2-5. We know that this remnant was later scattered to the four corners of the earth

among the nations. In the time of the end, it will be regathered from the four corners of the earth in the fullness of the Gentiles. Rom 11:25.

The double portion given to Elisha

As we have considered, Elijah should have asked for a double portion of the Spirit so that he could fulfil his prophetic mandate. That is, Elijah should have done all of the work that Elisha ended up completing in his place. The mandate given to Elijah, symbolised by his mantle, should not have veiled his face. He needed the oil of the Spirit upon his head to enable his faith so that he could do the works that his mantle represented. He needed to rely upon the 'Lord God of Elijah', who was the source of his ministry, and who then became the source of Elisha's ministry. 2Ki 2:14.

After the Lord instructed Elijah to anoint Elisha in his place, he found Elisha ploughing a field with twelve yoke of oxen. 1Ki 19:19. Elisha travelled with Elijah as his servant and disciple. When Elijah gave Elisha the option of staying in Gilgal, he refused to stay there. 2Ki 2:1-22. Likewise, Elisha refused to stay at Bethel or Jericho. In both of those cities, Elisha silenced the prophets who encouraged him to 'graduate' beyond Elijah, rather than to continue to journey with him as a disciple. 2Ki 2:1-6. He committed himself to walk together with Elijah until the end of his life.

We are reminded that Gilgal was the place where the reproach of Egypt was rolled away from the younger generation of the Israelites when they were circumcised before they entered the promised land. Jos 5:9. We know that Bethel was the place where Jacob received the vision of the house of God as 'the gate of heaven'. Gen 28:17. Jericho was the firstfruits of the promised land. The Israelites miraculously conquered the city of Jericho after marching around the walls for seven days, and then seven times on the seventh day. When the priests blew the trumpets, the people shouted, and the walls of the city collapsed. Jos 6:1-27. However, despite the rich history, Elisha understood that he would have no life or grace if he stayed in any of these places.

Elisha knew and believed that he needed to keep walking with Elijah in the journey of present truth. This principle is true for every believer. The way in which the Lord historically has met us in previous seasons of our life will become a stumbling block to us if we do not continue to walk in fellowship with the messengers of Christ in the light of the word. For this reason, the apostle Paul declared, 'Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.' Php 3:13-14.

The apostle Paul pressed on toward the goal of knowing Christ and receiving His resurrection life in his mortal body. Php 3:10-11. In type, Elisha committed himself to following Elijah for the same reason. He committed himself to negotiating the Jordan River with Elijah, by the power of *exanastasis*. Elisha journeyed all the way with Elijah through the Jordan River, which typified the dying and living of Jesus. The anointed mantle of Elijah, when used as an instrument of ministry, gave them power over the waters of death. The waters parted 'this way and that', or 'hither and thither', allowing them both to pass through the waters to the other side, onto dry ground. 2Ki 2:8.

On the other side of the Jordan, Elijah said to Elisha, 'Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?' Elisha replied, 'Please let *a double portion of your spirit* be upon me.' 2Ki 2:9. To receive this double portion of the Spirit's anointing, the condition that was given to Elisha was that he needed to continue to walk with Elijah until he saw him taken up into heaven. 2Ki 2:10. As they continued to walk together, Elijah was separated from Elisha by an angelic chariot of fire with horses of fire. 2Ki 2:11.

This brings us to an important point. We have previously assumed that it was this angelic chariot that carried Elijah up into heaven. However, the Scripture does not say this. Rather, we read, 'Elijah went up by *a whirlwind* into heaven'. 2Ki 2:11. When Elisha saw it, he cried out, 'My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!' 2Ki 2:12. This is a significant statement. The chariot of Israel was not the angelic chariot. Elisha described *the ministry of Elijah* as the chariot, or administration, of Israel! The horsemen were the power of the Spirit by which Elijah fulfilled this prophetic ministry. That is, the horses were the power of the chariot.

When Elisha received the mantle of Elijah, he was anointed with a double portion of the Spirit. He then proceeded to anoint kings and to direct the administration of Israel as a prophetic father in the nation. When Elisha was dying, King Joash came down to him and wept over his face. The king said to Elisha, 'O my father, my father, the chariots of Israel and their horsemen!' 2Ki 13:14. The ministry of Elisha was described as 'the chariots [plural] of Israel' because he had received a double portion of the Spirit that had previously rested upon Elijah as the chariot of Israel.

On his deathbed, Elisha instructed Joash to take a bow and some arrows. He told the king to put his hand on the bow. Elisha then placed his own hands on the king's hands. In this manner, Elisha imparted an anointing to the hands of the king for a specific task. He told the king to open the east window and then to shoot the arrow. Elisha proclaimed, 'The arrow of the Lord's deliverance and the arrow of deliverance from Syria; for you must strike the Syrians at Aphek till you have destroyed them.' 2Ki 13:17.

Elisha then commanded the king to strike the ground with the arrows. The king struck the ground three times and then decided to stop. Elisha was angry with the king, saying, 'You should have struck five or six times; then you would have struck Syria until you had destroyed it! But now you will strike Syria only three times.' 2Ki 13:19. We learn from this account that it is the prophetic word of the Elijah ministry, which is 'the face of the man', that directs the kings, which is 'the face of the lion', in relation to the judgement of the nations and the deliverance of God's people.

When the Father takes His seat in the heavenly places, Jesus Christ will stand up from His throne to move the entire administration of His body into the Father's throne. The Elijah ministry will be expressed by Christ's ascension-gift administration in the middle of the presbytery, with its twenty-four courses around the Father's throne. When the apostle John saw the throne room of the Father for the time of the end, he described the ascension-gift administration of Christ as being four living ones 'in and around' the throne of the Father. Rev 4:6-8. The four living ones will direct the horsemen to take charge over the events that will happen to the nations on the earth in the time of the end.

The presbytery will reveal the face of the lion as the chariot, or administration, of the throne of David. Rev 4:4. The horsemen of this chariot are the firstfruits families who belong to the 144 000 servants of God. The 144 000 are the firstfruits believers who belong to the virgin church in the time of the end. We read in the book of Revelation that the four living creatures will hold back the four winds of heaven until the 144 000 have been sealed with the seal of the living God. Rev 7:1-4. The four winds of heaven are the power that enables the 144 000 to judge and make war with the principalities and powers that belong to the seventh world kingdom in the heavenly places.

Furthermore, when the first seal is opened, the 144 000 will be sent into the earth to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom of God as a testimony in all nations. Rev 6:1-2. When the second, third and fourth seals are opened, the judgements of God will be manifest in the earth in the form of war, famine and pestilence. Rev 6:3-8. The opening of the first four seals will release the four sore judgements of God upon the earth. One quarter of the Earth's population will perish. Significantly, during this period of God's sovereign judgement upon the world, the nations will begin to learn righteousness. Isa 26:9. The 144 000 will gather a great multitude, from every tribe, nation, people and tongue, into the kingdom of God.

The rod of God

We recall that Moses and Aaron lost the mandate to lead the nation of Israel into the promised land at Meribah, which became known as ‘the place of contention’. Deu 32:51. In that place, the Lord commanded Moses to ‘speak to the rock’ before the eyes of all of the people so that it would bring forth water for them to drink. Num 20:8. Motivated by his own frustration and agitation, Moses hit the rock twice with the rod of God. Num 20:10-11. The Lord was dishonoured by this action. It was an expression of disobedience, or lawlessness, before the eyes of the people. Num 20:12.

As messengers who are ministering the water of life, we need to ‘speak to the rock’ *as commanded by the Lord*. We must be careful to ensure that we do not ‘weaponise’ the word of God. The rod of God *is* the instrument of power and authority. It is also the symbol of our mandate to lead. However, the rod is to be used only as directed. It is not to be used to strike the Rock, which is Christ, to make the water flow. 1Co 10:4. Such an attitude is a manifestation of the sin of presumption.

The rod of God in the hand of Moses extrapolates out to a lampstand church as it buds, blossoms, and bears fruit. Num 17:8. Exo 25:31-40. Notably, it is the symbol of the Elijah ministry. This same rod was given to Jeremiah the prophet to pull down nations, and then to build and plant the kingdom of God. Jer 1:9-10. We recall that Jeremiah’s first prophetic vision was the rod of an almond tree. The prophet recorded, ‘The word of the Lord came to me saying, “What do you see, Jeremiah?” And I said, “I see a rod of an almond tree”. Then the Lord said to me, “You have seen well, for I am watching over My word to perform it”.’ Jer 1:11-12.

The ministry of the apostle Paul was part of the fulfilment of the prophetic mandate given to Jeremiah. Paul was sent by God to build and plant lampstand churches among the Gentiles. The apostle Paul laid the foundation. Then the apostolic administration of Christ, in each generation, has been called to build on this foundation in the mode of Timothy and Titus. 1Co 3:10-11. The Lord is presently cleansing and restoring His lampstand churches. When the Father takes His seat, the rod of God will be revealed to be ‘one lampstand’ before the Father’s throne. Rev 4:5. The one lampstand is the instrument through which the prophetic word that comes from the throne of God will be proclaimed to the ends of the earth.

The restored lampstand, as the rod of God, will be the instrument of judgement that the Lord will use to strike the seventh world kingdom in the time of the end. It also will be the instrument that God will use to gather the great multitude from all nations. The prophet Isaiah declared, ‘In that day the Branch of the Lord will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth

will be the pride and the adornment of the survivors of Israel.' Isa 4:2. The survivors of Israel are *the remnant church*. 'The fruit of the earth' refers to the great harvest from the nations in the time of the end.

Anointed priestly garments

Jesus exhorted us to be ready for the wedding feast which will be hosted by the Father in the time of the end, by saying, 'Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning.' Luk 12:35. We require a double portion of oil to keep our lamps burning. Likewise, we must be clothed in our priestly garments, which are also called 'robes of righteousness', to serve God as priests in His temple. Isa 61:10. Mat 22:12. It is important to recognise that our priestly garments, which define the work of our priesthood, must be anointed. The oil of anointing is the *consecrating* oil. It *sanctifies* and *enables* us to do the works of priesthood that have been ordained for us by God.

The anointing oil was poured upon the head and garments of the high priest. Exo 29:4-7,21. Without this anointing, a priest could not serve in the tabernacle. In Elisha's case, the work of his priesthood was his prophetic ministry. To try to serve God without an anointed garment is the sin of presumption. The Holy Spirit does not enable our presumption when that is the motivation for our service in the house of God. Presumption is an expression that comes from the selfish motivation that originates from our fallen condition. This motivation is the foundation of self-worship and is, therefore, the wellspring of idolatry.

The sin of presumption was demonstrated by King Saul. He had been anointed by God to serve the nation of Israel as a king, but he wanted to be also a prophet. Rather than enabling his sanctified mandate, the anointing of the Spirit of God upon him revealed the wellspring of idolatry in his heart. King Saul's presumption led to his own dishonour when he prophesied before Samuel in a most inappropriate manner. His dishonour before the eyes of the people was expressed by them saying, 'Is Saul also among the prophets?' 1Sa 19:23-24.

In contrast to King Saul, the prophet Elisha demonstrated the attitude of a disciple who was committed to walking in his own sanctification. Furthermore, Elisha exemplified the attitude of the wise virgins in the parable of the ten virgins, which is recorded in the Gospel of Matthew. Mat 25:1-13. The parable of the five wise and five foolish virgins describes the kingdom of heaven just before the time when the Father will take His seat. Jesus identified that the wise virgins had oil in their lamps and in their vessels. Mat 25:4. That is, they possessed *the double portion of oil* that was necessary for them to reveal God the Father to the world in the time of the end. Mat 13:43.

THE ELIJAH MINISTRY IN THE TIME OF THE END

The ministry of Elisha, with a double portion of the Spirit that rested upon Elijah, was a type of the ministry of the 144 000 'servants of God' in the time of the end. Rev 7:3. The 144 000 will be the firstfruits of the true Israel of God. Rev 7:1-8. The name of the Father upon their foreheads signifies that they will be sons of God who will minister in mortality by the power of *exanastasis* life. Rev 14:1. Furthermore, the 144 000 are described as 'virgins', because they belong to the wise virgins who will comprise the remnant bride of Christ when the Father takes His seat. Rev 14:4. During the opening of the seals, the virgin church will bring forth a numberless company of sons of God who will be caught up to God and His throne. Rev 12:5. Rev 7:15.

After the blowing of the seventh trumpet, the 144 000 will also support the ministry of Moses and Elijah, who are the two witnesses of Christ, for a period of three and a half years. Rev 11:3. The ministry of Moses and Elijah, supported by the 144 000, will be the final manifestation of 'the Elijah ministry' before the outpouring of the vials that contain the fullness of the wrath of God. Rev 15:1. The vials will be poured out upon Antichrist and his kingdom at the beginning of his reign, which will last for a further three and a half years, before the physical second coming of Christ. Rev 13:5. Rev 15-16.

Chapter 2

The throne of God and the Lamb

In the fellowship of Yahweh *before*, there was no time, space, nor temple. The fellowship of Yahweh *Elohim* filled all things. In that fellowship, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit said, 'Let Us make man in Our image and according to Our likeness.' Gen 1:26. In response to this word, Yahweh the Son offered Himself to the Father to become the Lamb. This offering revealed the faith of the Son to *become the temple*, or context, in which the covenant purpose of Yahweh *Elohim* for mankind would be fulfilled.

The Holy Spirit enabled Yahweh the Son to empty His glory into the Father's hands, and then to empty Himself into the Father's bosom. The Holy Spirit also enabled the Father to receive the Son into His bosom and then to *beget Him* as the Son of God. The Father declared, 'You are My SON, today I have begotten You.' Psa 2:7. This word proceeded from the throne of God. When Yahweh the Son was begotten as the Son of God by the word of the Father, He was the beginning of the new creation. Rev 3:14. This was something altogether new in the fellowship of Yahweh *Elohim*.

The Son of God became the Word of God and the Lamb of God before the creation of the heavens and the earth. It is important for us to understand both of these dimensions of the new creation - the Word and the Lamb - because the throne of God and the Lamb will be, through the bride city, the source of the new creation forever in the new heavens and the new earth. When the apostle John described the New Jerusalem as being the administrative headquarters of the new heavens and the new earth, he said, concerning the city, 'The throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it.' Rev 22:3.

The Father is the Architect and the Creator of all things. The authority that belongs to the throne of God is expressed by His word. The full authority of the Father's throne was expressed when He declared to the Son, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You.' Psa 2:7. When the Father said 'Today', He proclaimed *the end* from the beginning. The prophet Isaiah recorded that the Father 'declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure".' Isa 46:10.

When Yahweh the Son became the Son of God, He became the embodiment of the Word of the Father. The Father laid down to the Son of God the substance of everything that will ever be brought forth in this age and in the age to come. In his letter to the Colossians, the apostle Paul explained that it 'pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell'. Col 1:19. The Son of God received the capacity to create, from the substance of the word of the Father, everything that the Father had predestined would exist in heaven and on Earth.

The word of the Father established the heavens as His throne and then stretched forth the heavens as a *tent*, or a *tabernacle*, for the fulfilment of His word. The prophet Isaiah declared that God 'stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in'. Isa 40:22. The word of the Father has declared the end from the beginning. The tabernacle that has been established by His word spans from the beginning of the creation until the end of the Millenium. It has been stretched across the seventeen prophetic 'days' that belong to this present heavens and earth.

In this regard, we note that God the Father is not seated upon a throne in a temple. Rather, the heavens have been established as the throne of the Father. King David declared in the Psalms, 'The heavens declare the glory of God [the Father].' Psa 19:1. Jesus said, 'Do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for *it is God's throne*; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool.' Mat 5:34-35. Likewise, Stephen said, 'The Most High [the Father] does not dwell in temples made with hands, as the prophet says: "Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool".' Act 7:48-49. Isa 66:1.

It is important for us to distinguish between the throne of God, which has been stretched forth like a tent across the seventeen prophetic days, and the Son's temple as the Lamb of God. When Yahweh the Son was begotten as the Son of God, He became the Lamb of God. At that point, the Lamb of God became the temple. The temple of the Son is the administration through which the Lamb who was slain from the foundation of the world is made manifest in the heavens and on Earth. All of the elements of the offering of Yahweh *Elohim* are expressed through this temple.

In the beginning, the Son of God placed His own throne at the right hand of God *in the heavens* that had been stretched out as the Father's tabernacle. The temple is the administration that belongs to the throne of the Son. The most holy place of the Son's temple is also called the top of Mount Zion. Psa 48:2. Isa 14:13. It is the place of His throne. The apostle Paul also referred to the place of the Son's throne as 'the third heaven'. 2Co 12:2-4. We observe that, until the end of the present heavens and earth, when the Son hands the kingdom back to the Father so that God is 'all in all', the Son's temple operates within the context of the Father's tabernacle. 1Co 15:28.

The present heavens, as the Father's tabernacle, will come to an end at the conclusion of the Millennium and the commencement of the new heavens and the new earth. We also know that the operation of the Son's temple as the administration of His body will come to an end at the conclusion of the Millennium. The apostle John said, concerning the New Jerusalem in the new heavens and the new earth, 'I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple'. Rev 21:22. The everlasting multiplication of sonship that belongs to the new heavens and the new earth, will come from the throne of God and the Lamb through the administration of the bride city. Rev 22:1-5.

The seventeen prophetic days

We have considered that the heavens were established as the throne of the Father and then stretched forth like a tent to become the Father's tabernacle that spans seventeen prophetic days. The apostle Peter declared that each prophetic day is one thousand years long. Speaking about the preservation of the present heavens and earth by the word of God, Peter said, 'Do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.' 2Pe 3:8. God has appointed a total of *seventeen thousand years* to this present creation.

In the Scripture, 'seventeen' is the number of ordinal perfection. This means 'perfection in orderly steps'. How do we know that God has appointed seventeen prophetic days, which is seventeen thousand years, to this present creation? The Lord revealed *His appointed times* to Moses through the feasts. Lev 23:2. The Feast of Passover is the first and foremost of the feasts. As we have already considered, when Yahweh the Son was begotten as the Son of God, He became the Lamb of God. He became the temple. He also became the Lamb for the Father's house.

In his first letter, Peter said that we have been redeemed 'with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you' 1Pe 1:19-20. The Lamb of God was foreknown before

the foundation of the world in the fellowship of Yahweh *Elohim*. However, Peter also declared that there is *a manifestation of the Lamb* in time and history for our sake. It is the Feast of Passover that reveals the appointed times for the manifestation of the Lamb of God, in this present heavens and earth, as being the provision for the Father's household.

In relation to the timing of the Passover, the Lord said to Moses before they left Egypt, 'Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, "On *the tenth* of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household ... now you shall keep it until the *fourteenth day* of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.' Exo 12:3,6. We note that the lamb for a house was taken on the tenth day and was sacrificed at twilight on the fourteenth day.

We know that the Son of God, as the Word of the Father, created the present heavens and earth in six prophetic days. The first day of creation began when the Son proclaimed, 'Let there be light.' Gen 1:3. When we remember Peter's instruction concerning the length of each prophetic day, we know that each day of creation was one thousand years long. 2Pe 3:8. Adam was created on the sixth day of creation. Gen 1:26-31. Gen 2:7. The woman was also drawn from his side on the sixth day to be his wife. Gen 2:18-25. We know that God rested from the labour of creation on the seventh day. Gen 2:1-3. This was a millennial rest.

In previous publications, we have considered that when the woman was created from the rib of Adam, and then drawn from his side, she did not yet have the capacity to be a mother. She did not have this capacity until she received the name Eve, which means 'the mother of all living'. Gen 3:20. Notably, it was not possible for her to receive this name and the capacity of motherhood until the Lamb had been taken as the provision for their household. The timing of this provision had been foreordained by God from before the foundation of the world.

It is important to recognise that the timing of this provision was not impacted upon by the Fall. However, we do know that the woman was deceived by Satan, and then Adam disobeyed God by eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil immediately before the Lamb was taken for their house. Gen 3:1-19. The key point in relation to the timing is that the Lamb was taken on the tenth day, during the twilight phase of that day. Remembering that Adam and the woman were created on the sixth day, means that they were in the garden of Eden in fellowship with the Lord at the tree of life for about 4 000 years before the Fall.

When Adam sinned, death entered the world. The book of Genesis recorded that Adam lived for a further 930 years. Gen 5:5. This means that he died

within one prophetic day, which is one thousand years, after the Fall. The timing of his physical death was consistent with the word of the Lord concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, 'In the day that you eat from it you will surely die.' Gen 2:17. In relation to the appointed times that belong to the Passover Lamb, the key point is that Christ was taken by the Father to be the Lamb for His house on the tenth day, kept for four days, and then crucified as the Passover Lamb on the fourteenth day.

Bible chronologists have established that there were approximately 4 000 years between the fall of man and the death of Christ. They observe that there were approximately 2 000 years from the Fall to Abraham, a further 1 000 years from Abraham to David, and then a further 1 000 years from David to Christ. We know that Christ died as the Passover Lamb at twilight on the fourteenth day since the beginning of creation. The literal translation of 'twilight' is 'between the two evenings'. This means that it is after the time when the sun begins to go down in the sky, and before sunset. From a Hebrew perspective, sunset marked the end of one day and the beginning of the next day.

Supporting this point, we know that Jesus Christ was crucified on the fourteenth day of the month as the Passover Lamb. Paul declared, 'Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us.' 1Co 5:7. In terms of the timing, Christ breathed His last breath on the cross shortly after the ninth hour. His body was removed from the cross and laid in the tomb before sunset. This was necessary, because sunset marked the beginning of the fifteenth day, which was a high day Sabbath. Joh 19:31. The timing of the sacrifice of the Passover Lamb is important when we are considering the seventeen prophetic days that God has appointed to the present heavens and earth.

The historic diagrams that place the death of Christ right at the end of the fourteenth prophetic day are helpful as a broad overview; however, they are too simplistic in terms of the detail. The appointed times that belong to Passover teach us that the death of Christ happened a short time before the end of the fourteenth day. This is an important point, because we are not suggesting that the physical return of Christ and the commencement of the Millennium will happen exactly two thousand years after the death of Christ as the Passover Lamb.

We have suggested in previous publications that God has appointed forty jubilees, which is two thousand years, to the church age. The church age began on the Day of Pentecost and will conclude when the Father takes His seat to initiate the events that belong to the time of the end, and to establish His kingdom on Earth. We do not know the exact time when the Father will take His seat; nor do we know the exact duration of the time of the end. Mat 24:36. However, when we consider the events and the time periods that

are nominated in the book of Revelation, the duration of the time of the end may be only about twenty years long.

The prophet Hosea declared, concerning the two thousand years that has been appointed to the church age, 'After two days, He will revive us; on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His sight.' Hos 6:2. The physical return of Christ and the resurrection of all believers will mark the beginning of the seventeenth prophetic day. The seventeenth prophetic day is the millennial rest for the people of God when the believers from all ages will reign with Christ on the earth for one thousand years. Rev 20:4-6. The judgement of the great white throne at the end of the Millennium will lead to the dissolution of the present heavens and earth and the inauguration of the new heavens and the new earth. Rev 20:11. Rev 21:1.

The beginning of the creation

We read in the book of Genesis, 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters'. Gen 1:1-2. We have considered that the word of the Father stretched forth the heavens like a tent when He proclaimed the end from the beginning. However, in relation to the formation of everything that had been proclaimed by the Father, the earth was formless and void. The substance of the Father's word, described as 'the waters', was not yet seen.

The Spirit of God brooded over this first expression of the word of the Father for *an indefinite period* before it began to come into being on the first day of creation. Even though time was part of the substance of the word of the Father that declared the birth of the Son of God, it had no sphere for expression until the creation of the first day. The Son, from the substance of the word of the Father, declared the beginning of the first day when He said, ' "Let there be light"; and there was light.' Gen 1:3. As soon as the Son proclaimed, 'Let there be light', the Spirit was active to bring that word to pass!

The apostle Paul said, concerning the Son of God, 'By Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on the earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities and powers.' Col 1:16. The angels were most likely created in ranks on each day of creation to uphold the element of creation that was brought forth on that day. Lucifer belonged to the first rank of angels who were created on the first day of creation when the Son proclaimed, 'Let there be light.' The name Lucifer means 'a light bearer'. The prophet Isaiah called Lucifer a 'son of the morning'. Isa 14:12. He could not have been created before the morning that belongs to the first day of the creation.

The entire angelic host were created to serve mankind, who were predestined to be made in the image and likeness of God. The angels were given thrones and dominions under the Son to uphold the creation as it was progressively brought forth from the Father through the Son. The first manifestation of the throne of the Son of God in the heavens, on the top of Mount Zion, was in the middle of the angelic administration. We read in the Psalms, 'The Lord has established His throne in heaven, and His kingdom rules over all. Bless the Lord, you His angels, who excel in strength, who do His word, heeding the voice of His word.' Psa 103:19-20.

The prophet Isaiah described the throne of the Son in the middle of the angelic administration when he said, 'I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.' Isa 6:1. In a similar way, the prophet Ezekiel saw the likeness of a throne above the cherubim in the angelic administration. This throne belongs to *the Son of God*. He saw the likeness of a man far above the throne. Eze 1:25-26. It is important to recognise that the angels do not belong to the Son's temple as the Lamb of God. The angels belong to the administration of the Son's throne in heaven, but they do not belong to the administration of the body of Christ.

The tabernacle of Moses was a pattern of the administration of the throne of the Son of God in heaven. The Lord instructed Moses to make the tabernacle according to the pattern that was revealed to him on the mountain of God. Exo 25:40. Act 7:44. Heb 8:5. The tabernacle of Moses was established on Earth under the administration of the angels in heaven. The glory of the Son of God dwelt between the wings of the cherubim on the top of the ark of the covenant in the most holy place. Exo 25:22. The ark of the covenant represented the throne of the Son of God in the middle of the administration of the nation of Israel.

The temple of His body

It was the glory of the Son of God between the wings of the cherubim that sanctified the tabernacle of Moses, and later the temple of Solomon, to be the Father's house on the Earth. Of course, by the time that the Son of God was born in the flesh of mankind, the temple was no longer the dwelling place of the *Shekinah*. Eze 10. It was no longer the Father's house. When Jesus first visited the temple buildings in Jerusalem, He found that it had become a place of merchandise and business. He made a whip of cords to drive all the traders out of the temple, and then poured out the coins that belonged to all the money changers.

Jesus then said to all those who sold doves, 'Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a place of business.' Joh 2:16. The temple should

have been a house of prayer for all nations, but it had become a robber's den. Mat 21:13. It is notable that Jesus did not refer to the temple in Jerusalem as being His own house. Rather, Jesus proclaimed that there was *a new temple* when He said, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' Joh 2:19. The Jews assumed that He was talking about Herod's temple, but Jesus was talking about *the temple of His body*. Joh 2:21.

The physical body of Christ is the temple that belongs to the Son. We know that the disciples did not understand the words of Jesus. However, having recorded this account in his Gospel, the apostle John said, 'So when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.' Joh 2:22. We note that John referred to both 'the Scripture' and 'the word of Jesus'. Evidently, he understood that the word of Jesus concerning the temple of His body was consistent with the prophetic Scriptures.

We recall that the prophet Malachi declared, 'Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come *to His temple*; and the Messenger of the Covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming', says the Lord of hosts.' Mal 3:1. The first part of this prophecy was fulfilled by the ministry of John the Baptist. He was the messenger who was sent to prepare the Jewish nation to receive Christ as the Messenger of the Covenant.

It has often been assumed that the second part of this prophecy was fulfilled when Christ visited Herod's temple. However, as we have considered, the temple of Herod was not *His temple*. The temple of the Son was His physical body. His physical body was a completely new temple! When the Son of God, as the full expression of the Word of the Father, became flesh in the womb of the virgin Mary, it was the first manifestation of the Lamb as the temple on the earth. Joh 1:14. The temple of His body was anointed when He was baptised by John the Baptist. We recall that John the Baptist proclaimed, 'Behold the Lamb of God.' Joh 1:36.

In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus Christ became our great High Priest. He offered Himself to God, as the Lamb of God, in His own temple. From Gethsemane to the cross, He atoned for our sin in His own temple, with His own blood. In his letter to the Hebrews, the apostle Paul established that Jesus Christ, as both Son of God and Son of Man, became our great High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. Heb 8:1. Having clearly established this *main point* by the beginning of Chapter 8 in the book of Hebrews, Paul then proceeded to identify the nature of Christ's ministry *in the sanctuary of the true tabernacle* which the Lord erected, and not man. Heb 8:2.

In relation to Christ's ministry in the true temple, we read in Chapter 13 of the book of Hebrews that 'we have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle [of old] have no right to eat'. Heb 13:10. The altar that belongs to the true temple was established as the place of the soles of Christ's feet *as He walked* from the garden of Gethsemane to the cross. Eze 43:7. The altar was established and sanctified on the earth in seven progressive actions as the blood of Christ was sprinkled upon His physical body on His offering journey. Heb 13:10.

Significantly, the new temple is now the corporate body of Christ. The corporate body of Christ was first established *as one new man* when Jesus Christ was chastened with rods for our peace in the court of Caiaphas. Isa 53:5. Eph 2:14-18. On the day of His resurrection, the Father, by the Holy Spirit, raised Christ as the glorified Son of Man to be the Head of His corporate body and the Head of His bride. Jesus Christ is the Foundation Stone, the Cornerstone, and the Headstone of His temple. Eph 2:20. Isa 28:16. 1Pe 2:6-7. His physical body is now immortal and incorruptible. We are the mortal members of His immortal body.

Jesus likened the members of His body to branches on a vine. Joh 15:1-8. In the fellowship of His body, we are receiving the power of His resurrection life in our mortal bodies as we continue to embrace our participation in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. It is important to recognise that we must be members of the temple of Christ's body in order to receive His resurrection life. Having been born as a son of God, we need to come to Christ to be built upon Him as the Foundation Stone of His temple. We are also built together as living stones in His temple. 1Pe 2:4-5.

In this season, the Spirit has been drawing our attention to the point that we become members of the temple of the body of Christ *before* we become citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the bride of Christ. That is, the bride of Christ comes from the body of Christ. The bride is progressively formed by God from the blood, the water, and the Spirit that flowed from the side of Christ's body. We are individually members of the body of Christ. Rom 12:5. 1Co 12:27. However, the bride of Christ is composed of families. The ministry of families who belong to the bride of Christ is to bring forth and to nurture sons of God.

The temple in the book of Revelation

The first three chapters of the book of Revelation describe a fully active temple. Jesus Christ is presently ministering as our great High Priest in the middle of His lampstand churches. Rev 1:12-13. The seven lampstand churches belong to the true temple, which is the body of Christ, in the heavenly places. The glory of God that shines in the face of Christ is reflected

and focused by His lampstand churches so that it gives light to all who are in the temple throughout the church age. Rev 1:16.

In contrast to this, the final chapters of the book of Revelation describe the bride city as being the administrative headquarters of the new heavens and the new earth. Describing the New Jerusalem, the apostle John recorded, '*I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple*'. Rev 21:22. Evidently, the work of the temple as the administration of the body of Christ will come to an end before the new heavens and the new earth. Notably, the temple will not be shut down in a single action. It will be progressively shut down as its ministry is completed.

The first waypoint – the temple will move

The book of Revelation identifies some major waypoints in relation to the operation of the true temple in the heavenly places. The first waypoint is when the Father takes His seat to initiate all the events that belong to the time of the end. Rev 4:1-2. We have considered that the Father's tabernacle has been stretched over the entire seventeen prophetic days. When the Father takes His seat, He will place His throne within His own tabernacle for the purpose of judging the world and establishing His kingdom on the earth.

When the Father takes His seat, Jesus Christ will stand up from His throne at the right hand of God. He will move as the Lamb of God into the centre of the Father's throne. The apostle John declared, '*I saw in the middle of the throne, and of the four living creatures, and in the middle of the elders, was a Lamb standing, as having been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, having been sent out into all the earth.*' Rev 5:6. When Christ stands up, He will move the entire administration of the temple into the centre of the Father's throne.

This is a significant waypoint because it will be a major reorientation for the operation of the temple. From this point onwards, the administration of the body of Christ will no longer be the administration of the Son's throne at the right hand of God. The administration of the body of Christ will be 'in and around' the Father's throne. In the time of the end, the major focus of the members of the body of Christ will be to reveal the Father to the world. Mat 13:43. When the Father takes His seat, Jesus Christ will inscribe the Father's name upon all the overcomers from His lampstand churches. Rev 7:3. The Father will be revealed by sons of God who manifest the power of *exanastasis* life in their mortal bodies.

The second waypoint – the censer will be inverted

After the Father takes His seat, the apostolic administration of Christ, and the presbytery around the throne of the Father, will lead the entire administration of the body of Christ in a ministry of prayer and worship. The apostle John saw the elders around the throne of the Father holding harps as instruments of worship, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. Rev 5:8.

The apostle John described the ministry of the true altar of incense before the throne of God by saying, ‘When the living creatures give glory and honour and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: “You are worthy, O Lord [Father], to receive glory and honour and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created”.’ Rev 4:9-11.

This intercessory prayer and worship led by the apostolic administration of Christ and the presbytery around the Father’s throne will continue to *ascend as incense* before the throne of God during the opening of seals. Rev 8:3-4. The effective and fervent prayers of the saints in this season will ‘accomplish much’ as the gospel is proclaimed as a testimony in all nations and a great multitude come into the kingdom of God. Jas 5:16. The great multitude will join this ministry of prayer and worship. The temple in the middle of the throne of God will become the house of prayer for all nations. Isa 56:7.

When the seventh seal is opened, the censer that belongs to the true altar of incense will be inverted. Rev 8:1-5. This will be the second waypoint in relation to the temple in the time of the end. It means that the *intercessory prayers* of the saints will become the *imprecatory prayers* of the saints that invoke the judgement of God.

We know that the blowing of the trumpets will announce the judgement of God, in a third measure, upon the ungodly inhabitants of the world. However, more importantly, the trumpets also announce the final cleansing of the temple. When the seventh trumpet is blown, the cleansing of the temple will be complete. Rev 11:15. The archangel Michael will lay hold of Satan and cast him from the heavenly places forever. Rev 12:7-9.

The third waypoint – the temple and altar will be measured

The third waypoint in relation to the temple is when the temple of God and the altar are measured. Immediately before the blowing of the seventh trumpet, the apostle John was given a measuring rod. The mighty angel said to him, ‘Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who

worship there.’ Rev 11:1. When the true temple and the altar that is in the middle of the temple are measured, it will mean that the cleansing process of the temple has been completed. Furthermore, it will mean that the redeeming and sanctifying process of the altar has been completed for those who remain in the temple.

The redeeming and sanctifying process of the altar will be complete for all those believers who have continued to partake of the altar, in a worthy manner, in the fellowship of the body of Christ. Heb 13:10. The great multitude who are in the temple when it is measured will have attained the fullness of Christ’s resurrection life while still in their mortal bodies. Eph 4:13. The Lamb will continue to lead them to springs of living water while the outer court is being trampled by the Gentiles. Rev 7:17. Moses and Elijah will minister for three and a half years while the outer court is being trampled for the sake of bringing in a final harvest of martyrs into the temple. Rev 11:2-3.

The fourth waypoint – the day of resurrection

The fourth waypoint in relation to the true temple will be on the day of resurrection. On the day of resurrection, we will cease to be the mortal members of Christ’s immortal body. We will receive our own immortal and incorruptible resurrection body from Him. By His word, we will become the sons of Christ, rather than the members of His corporate body. Our physical resurrection body will be composed from the very same DNA as His resurrection body. For this reason, our resurrection body will also contain the DNA of Abraham and David.

In previous publications we have considered the distinctions between the heavenly body, the physical resurrection body, and the spiritual body. We each receive our heavenly body when we are born as a son of God. 2Co 5:1. We know that Jesus Christ has already learned our obedience and has completed the works of our sonship. As we embrace our daily participation in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings, we bring forth the fruit that He has already produced for us on His offering journey. The Father harvests the fruit that is produced during the days and seasons of our life, and builds into our heavenly body the reward for our labour that Christ has already accomplished for us. Joh 15:8.

When a person dies in the fellowship of the body of Christ, they immediately inhabit the glory of their heavenly body. When Jesus Christ physically returns on the day of resurrection, He will be accompanied by all those who have previously died in Him and received their heavenly body. 1Th 4:14. Jesus Christ will compose an immortal and incorruptible resurrection body for each

of those believers, by His word, from the dust of the ground. 1Th 4:16. Joh 5:28. When those believers who have previously died in Christ step into their resurrection body from Christ, they will be clothed with the glory of their heavenly body.

The apostle Paul also described this process for us, if we are alive and remaining when Jesus Christ physically returns. Christ will change our mortal and corruptible body, by His word, to an immortal and incorruptible body. In the twinkling of an eye, our lowly body will be conformed to the glory of His resurrection body. 1Co 15:51-53. Christ will also bring the glory of our heavenly body with Him when He physically returns. Jesus was referring to the glory that belongs to our heavenly body when He said, 'Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to everyone according to his work.' Rev 22:12.

Whether a person has already died in Christ or they are alive and remaining when He physically returns, the union of the physical resurrection body from Christ and the heavenly body from the Father is *a spiritual body*. 1Co 15:44. The spiritual body is as physical as it is spiritual, and is as spiritual as it is physical. Luk 24:36-43. It is important to recognise that the spiritual body is more than the union of the heavenly body and the physical resurrection body. The spiritual body is a temple for the full expression of the Holy Spirit, enabling each son of God and son of Christ to fully participate in the fellowship of Yahweh. 1Co 6:19. 1Co 13:9-10. This dimension of fellowship is in the Spirit and is the sum of all reality. Joh 4:24.

We recall that the covenant purpose of Yahweh *Elohim* was declared when They said, 'Let us make man in Our image and according to Our likeness.' Gen 1:26. We will bear *the image of the Father*, as sons of God, when we receive our heavenly body from the Father. We will bear *the image of the Son*, as sons of Christ, when we receive our incorruptible and immortal resurrection body from the Son. Furthermore, we will bear *the image of the Holy Spirit*, as temples of the Holy Spirit, when we receive our spiritual body.

In this regard, there will be a 'penultimate' fulfilment of the covenant purpose of Yahweh *Elohim* on the day of resurrection. However, we will not see the final phase of man in the image and likeness of God until Jesus Christ delivers the kingdom to God the Father at the end of the Millenium so that 'God is all in all'. 1Co 15:28.

The fifth waypoint – the great white throne

The fifth waypoint in relation to the true temple will be the judgement of the great white throne at the end of the Millenium. The apostle John wrote in the book of Revelation, 'Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it,

from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.' Rev 20:11. The great white throne will be the final manifestation of the throne of the Son before He delivers the kingdom to the Father for the new heavens and new earth. 1Co 15:28. The deliverance of the kingdom to the Father will mark the final dissolution of the administration that belongs to the temple of Christ's body.

Speaking about the judgement of the great white throne, Jesus said, 'When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.' Mat 25:31. Jesus Christ will personally sit upon His throne to judge 'the sheep and the goats'. Mat 25:32-33. Interestingly, Jesus said that the twelve apostles, who are the twelve foundations of the bride city, will also sit on twelve thrones with Him. He said to them, 'Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.' Mat 19:28.

The 'sheep' will be the sons of God who have already received their spiritual bodies on the day of resurrection. Jesus Christ will say to the sheep on His right hand, 'Come you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' Mat 25:34. The everlasting kingdom belongs to the Father. The kingdom was prepared for the sons of God in the fellowship of Yahweh *Elohim* when the Father proclaimed to the Son, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You.' Psa 2:7-8. As we have already considered, the Father's word proclaimed the end from the beginning. His works were finished from the foundation of the world. Heb 4:3.

The 'goats' will be the rest of mankind who have rejected the gospel of God and do not belong to the new creation. They will be resurrected at the end of the Millenium in their mortal bodies. Rev 20:7-10. Jesus Christ will then cast them, in their mortal bodies, into the lake of fire that has also been prepared from the foundation of the world for the devil and his angels. Mat 25:41. The entire old creation will be cast into the sea of God's forgetfulness in the lake of fire. The present heavens and earth will pass away before the face of Christ when He sits on His great white throne. Rev 21:1.

After the judgement of the great white throne, the only things that will remain will be the throne of God and the Lamb, and the administration of the bride city. The apostle John saw no temple in the New Jerusalem. The Lord God and the Lamb will be its temple. Rev 21:22. Time as we presently know it, will also be done away with. The Father and the Son will bring forth the new heavens and the new earth, by the Holy Spirit, through the administration of the New Jerusalem. It is remarkable to consider that the new heavens and the new earth will be populated by the bride city!

The bride of Christ will bring forth a never-ending multitude of mature sons who have spiritual bodies. The righteousness of sonship will increase forever. Isa 9:7. 2Pe 3:13. The mechanism of multiplication in the new heavens and the new earth will not be procreation. Nor will the vessel of multiplication be a woman's womb. God will not need this. We are reminded that John the Baptist said to the Jewish leaders, 'Do not think to say to yourselves, "we have Abraham as our father"'. For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.' Mat 3:9.

In relation to the new heavens and the new earth, the apostle John recorded, 'He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new".' Rev 21:5. The ministry of the bride city, by the Spirit, will be the river of the water of life that will proceed from the throne of God and of the Lamb to multiply the life of God forever. Rev 22:1-5. Significantly, the multiplication of identities in the new heavens and the new earth will be the final phase of the fulfilment of the mystery of God. It will be the final manifestation of man in the image and likeness of God where 'God is all in all'. 1Co 15:28.

Chapter 3

Ezekiel's vision of the true Temple

While the prophet Ezekiel was in captivity among the exiles in Babylon, the hand of the Lord brought him, in a prophetic vision, to the land of Israel. The Lord, through His angelic administration, set him upon a very high mountain. Eze 40:2. This was not the temple mount in the city of Jerusalem. The very high mountain was the spiritual Mount Zion. Psa 48:2. In the book of Revelation, the apostle John recorded that he was taken to this same great and high mountain. Rev 21:10.

In his letter to the Hebrews, the apostle Paul declared that we have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God. Heb 12:22. Interestingly, in Ezekiel's vision, the city was not on the sides of the north of Mount Zion. Rather, as Ezekiel stood on the high mountain, and looked toward the south, he saw the structure of a city. Eze 40:2. Again, this city was not the earthy Jerusalem that had been conquered by the Babylonians. The name of the city was given to us in the final verse of the book of Ezekiel. It is called, 'Yahweh is there'. Eze 48:35.

The prophet Ezekiel was shown the size of the city, the gates of the city, and the location of the city. Eze 48:30-35. Abraham looked for this 'city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God'. Heb 11:10. The city that Ezekiel saw was a typological representation of the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the bride of Christ, during the church age and in the time of the end. When the apostle John was taken to a great and high mountain, he saw a typological

representation of the bride city for the new heavens and the new earth.
Rev 21:9-10.

The apostle John did not see a temple in the new heavens and new earth. He said, 'But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.' Rev 21:22. In contrast, Ezekiel did see a temple. However, it is important to recognise that the temple was not in the city. In the apportionment of the land, as described in Chapter 48 of the book of Ezekiel, it is clear that the temple was located to the north of the city. The location of the temple was in the centre of the land apportioned to the priests.
Eze 45:1-4. Eze 48:9-12.

Ezekiel was standing on the very high mountain at the place of the temple. The temple was on the sides of the north of Mount Zion. Isa 14:13. This explains why he saw a structure like a city to the south of where he was standing on the very high mountain. The location of the city was in the centre of its own apportionment of land. The land for the city belonged to the whole house of Israel. Eze 45:6. The city was surrounded by common land for the people. Eze 48:15. The holy land, to the east and the west of the city, was designated to be cultivated by the workers in the city. Eze 48:18-19.

We know that Solomon's temple, which had been destroyed by King Nebuchadnezzar, was located within the city of the earthly Jerusalem. It is significant that the new temple that Ezekiel saw was not in the new city. We do not first become citizens of the city, and then proceed to participate in the cleansing process that belongs to the temple. Rather, we must first embrace the cleansing process that belongs to the temple, and then we become citizens who belong to the city. The cleansing process does not belong to the city.

It is notable that Ezekiel described the city as being populated *by workers*. Eze 48:18-19. The work of households who belong to the bride city is to bring forth sons of God. This work is accomplished by Christian parents who raise their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. This work is also accomplished through the evangelistic ministry of the church. In the time of the end, the church will be in travail to bring forth a great multitude of sons of God from every tribe, nation, people, and tongue. Rev 12:5. Rev 7:13-17.

The true temple

Having been brought to the very high mountain, Ezekiel saw a man with a measuring rod in his hand. The man said to him, 'Son of man, look with your eyes and hear with your ears, and fix your mind on everything I will show you; for you were brought here so that I might show them to you. Declare to the house of Israel everything you see.' Eze 40:4. The man then began to show Ezekiel much prophetic detail concerning the new temple. The major focus of

Ezekiel's vision was the temple, rather than the city. What is the significance of this temple?

Some commentators have suggested that this temple should have been physically built by the exiles when they returned from Babylon. However, many other commentators have observed the impracticality of such a task, noting that the size of the temple would never fit upon the temple mount in Jerusalem. It would be an error to suggest that the Jewish remnant, led by Zerubbabel, under the prophetic direction of Haggai and Zechariah, were living in disobedience because they had built an inferior temple to the one described by Ezekiel. Hag 1:7-8,12-15. Eze 5:1-2.

There is a religious movement that believes that there will be another physical temple built in the land of Palestine before the second coming of Christ. Some religious organisations are even raising funds and gathering resources to enable this building work. However, the one offering of Christ brought an end to all sacrifice and offering. Dan 9:27. His physical body is the true Temple. Heb 10:1-10. If animal sacrifice is ever reinstated in a physical temple, it will be a great abomination to the Lord. Isa 66:3.

Other commentators have suggested that Ezekiel's temple belongs to the Millennium, even calling it 'the Millennial temple'. However, the temple in Ezekiel's vision clearly portrays an ongoing work of atonement for sin and uncleanness which has no application to the Millennium. In the Millennium, which follows the second coming of Christ and the resurrection of all believers, the work of redemption and sanctification will have already been completed. Rev 20:1-6. The Millennium is the day of rest, which lasts for 1 000 years, before the work of the bride city begins in the new heavens and new earth.

The key point regarding Ezekiel's vision is that the temple is *a typological description* of the administration of the body of Christ during the church age and in the time of the end. The vision uses the typology of the Old Covenant to describe the work of atonement that is now operative in the fellowship of the body of Christ as we participate in Christ's finished offering. In terms of understanding the substance that belongs to the body of Christ, the typology that belongs to Ezekiel's temple upgrades, and replaces, the typology that belongs to the tabernacle of Moses.

The throne of the Son and the voice of the Spirit

Ezekiel saw the glory of the God of Israel coming to the temple from the way of the east. Eze 43:2. He recognised that this was the same glory that he had previously seen by the River Chebar. Eze 43:3. However, the glory was no longer carried by the angelic administration. The glory now shone from the face of the Son of God. His voice was 'like the sound of many waters' and the

whole earth 'shone with His glory'. The glory of the Son of God entered the temple through the east gate. Eze 43:4. The whole sanctuary was filled with His glory.

The Son of God said to Ezekiel, 'Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever.' Eze 43:7. There was no ark of the covenant in Ezekiel's temple. The entire sanctuary became the throne of the Son of God. Jesus Christ, as the glorified Son of Man, is presently seated upon His own throne at the right hand of God. Heb 8:1. His throne, within His Temple, is the place where He sits until all things are either perfected or judged. His throne in the Temple is the place of mercy and judgement.

The offering of Christ has given us access to the throne where Christ presently sits in the Temple of His body. Heb 10:19-21. In his letter to the Hebrews, the apostle Paul declared, 'Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.' Heb 4:16. We come to the throne of grace now, in His Temple, to be judged by Christ. This is where we obtain mercy and find grace to help in our time of need. Our time of need is the entire duration of our life.

When we come to the throne of grace, we come to Jesus Christ who is seated upon His throne as our great High Priest. He is the Mediator of the New Covenant, at the right hand of the Father. Heb 9:15. Heb 12:24. The mercy that is extended to us by Jesus Christ is our unique participation in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings. In this fellowship, we find the grace of His resurrection life. Significantly, as we receive the grace of Christ's resurrection life, we are enabled to worship and serve the Father as priests in the temple. We also receive the grace that is necessary for us to serve one another.

It is significant that Ezekiel described the voice of Christ as being 'like the sound of many waters'. When the apostle John turned to see One like the Son of Man, in the middle of His lampstand churches, he also described His voice as being 'like the sound of many waters'. Rev 1:13,15. 'The sound of many waters' is the ministry of the Holy Spirit, who speaks from the mouth of Jesus Christ who is seated upon His throne as our great High Priest. Later in his prophetic vision, Ezekiel saw the 'many waters' as being like 'a river' that flowed from the throne of Christ in the sanctuary of the true Temple, all the way to the great sea of the nations. Eze 47:1-12.

We have considered the detail of Ezekiel's prophetic vision of 'the river' in previous publications. We recall that the prophetic measurement of the river, from the temple to the sea, was 4 000 cubits long, which represents a total period of 4 000 years. Eze 47:3-5. This time period began when Jesus Christ, as Melchizedek, met Abram in the fellowship of an *agape* meal, and prophesied that he would become the possessor of heaven and earth in the

end of the age. Gen 14:18-19. The river stretches 4 000 years to the time of the end when a great multitude, from every tribe, nation, people, and tongue, will come into the kingdom of God. Rev 7:9-17.

Notably, Ezekiel described the river as flowing from the right side of the sanctuary, and then to the south of the altar. Eze 47:1. We recall that, from the perspective of Christ seated upon His throne in the true Temple, the right side of the sanctuary is the place of the lampstand. This is an important point. During the church age, the ministry of the Spirit, as the voice of Christ, flows through the presbyteries in Christ's right hand to His lampstand churches. We know that Christ finished the admonition to each lampstand church by saying, 'He who has an ear, let him hear what *the Spirit says* to the churches.' Rev 2:7,11,17,29. Rev 3:6,13,22. The ministry of the Holy Spirit, as the voice of Christ, then flows through Christ's lampstand churches to the world.

Jesus described the multiplication of the water in the river, from the sanctuary of the true Temple, by saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' Joh 7:37-38. Jesus was referring to the ministry of the Spirit that would multiply to become 'the voice of many waters' through the members of His body, after He had been glorified as our great High Priest and seated upon His throne at the right hand of God. Heb 8:1. The apostle John explained, 'This He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.' Joh 7:39.

The key point is that the ministry of the river of the water of life is through the lampstand for the entire duration of the church age. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is symbolised in the lampstand with its oil and light. It is the light of the lampstand that reveals the light of the *Shekinah*, which is the glory of God that shines in the face of Jesus Christ. For the church age, Jesus Christ is seated upon His throne as our great High Priest, in the middle of His lampstand churches. When the Father takes His seat, Jesus Christ will shift the administration of His Temple into the centre of the Father's throne. In the time of the end, the ministry of the Holy Spirit will be through the one lampstand before the throne of the Father. Rev 4:5.

The altar in the middle of the temple

We have considered that the true Temple is the place of the Son's throne and the source of the river of life that flows from the sanctuary. Furthermore, the Lord declared to Ezekiel that the true Temple was also 'the place of the soles of My feet'. Eze 43:7. 'The place of the soles of His feet' describes the true altar. When we consider the revelation of the true Temple to the prophet Ezekiel, we note that the altar was the focal point of the temple. It was located

precisely in the centre of the entire temple precinct. The altar was the only piece of furniture that Ezekiel saw outside of the sanctuary because it is the sum of the entire administration of the temple on the earth.

The true Temple was first revealed on the earth in the physical body of Christ when He was born from the womb of the virgin Mary. Joh 1:14. Jesus Christ then became our great High Priest in the garden of Gethsemane. From the garden of Gethsemane to the cross, Christ atoned for our sin in His own Temple, with His own blood, by offering Himself to God as the Lamb of God. As our great High Priest, and the Mediator of the New Covenant, Christ atoned *to God and man* within the context of the true Temple. We have considered the ministry of reconciliation and the work of atonement in the book called, *The Elijah ministry in the church*.

Having been called by God to be our great High Priest, it is important to recognise that *Christ offered Himself* to God, in His own Temple, before He proceeded to suffer at the hands of wicked men on His offering journey. Heb 9:14. That is, the scribes, elders, Pharisees, Herodians, and Romans, motivated by the high priest, did not offer up Christ. They rejected Him, and then laid hold of Him with wicked hands, to crucify Him outside the camp at Calvary. Heb 13:13.

Jesus Christ did not die on the altar in the temple built by Herod. The shedding of His blood from every pore of His body, in the garden of the Gethsemane, established and sanctified a completely new altar in the Temple of His body. Jesus Christ established the altar as 'the place of the soles of His feet' as *He walked* the blood-sprinkled way from the garden of Gethsemane to the cross. The altar in the middle of the true Temple was consecrated by the blood of Christ that was shed through the seven wounding events that He experienced on His offering journey.

In summary, the journey of Christ, as the true Temple, was firstly from heaven to the earth. He then offered Himself to the Father, in seven wounding events, to establish the altar on the earth. Having been glorified as our great High Priest, Christ then returned in His Temple, to sit at the Father's right hand in heaven. Christ purified the heavenly temple with His own blood when He offered Himself to God. The true Temple has become our heavenly habitation. It is the place of our heavenly body, in which we will reside after death, if we die as a member of Christ on the earth.

In his letter to the Hebrews, the apostle Paul rejoiced that we still have an altar on the earth that is part of the true Temple in heaven! He declared, 'Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them. *We have an altar* from which those who serve the tabernacle [the priests of old] have no right to eat.' Heb 13:9-10.

The altar in the true Temple is the place of our participation in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings within the context of His physical body.

As we have already stated, the true Temple is the body of Christ. The work of redemption and sanctification is only operative in our lives if we are joined to the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings as members of His body. The bride of Christ is formed from the body of Christ. In this regard, the city comes forth from the Temple. We could liken the altar in the middle of the Temple to the rib that belongs to the body of Christ. The bride of Christ is formed from the altar; that is, from our participation in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings.

Speaking about our participation in Christ's offering and sufferings, the apostle Paul said, 'Jesus, also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate [of the city of Jerusalem]. Therefore, let us go forth to Him [to the cross] outside the camp, bearing His reproach.'

Heb 13:12-13. Recognising that the bride city is formed from this altar in the fellowship of Christ's body, Paul then continued by saying, 'For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come.' Heb 13:14. The bride city is the heavenly Jerusalem.

It is interesting that the measurement of the top of the altar in Ezekiel's temple, was twelve cubits by twelve cubits. Eze 43:16. This means that the area that comprised the top of the altar, as the place of offering, was 144 square cubits. The 144 000 belong to the measure of the altar in the true Temple. Proceeding from the altar in the true Temple, the 144 000 then become the measure of the walls of the heavenly Jerusalem in the time of the end. The apostle John described the finished height of the walls in the heavenly Jerusalem as being 144 cubits high. Rev 21:17.

The 144 000 are the firstfruits of the bride city. They are the workers who will stand at the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem in the time of the end. Rev 7:1-8. When the first seal is opened, they will proclaim the gospel of the kingdom as a testimony in all nations. Rev 6:1-2. Mat 24:14. The great multitude who come into the kingdom of God in the time of the end, will firstly come to the altar that is in the middle of the true Temple. We know this because they will be clothed with robes that they have washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. Rev 7:14. From this altar, the Lamb will lead the great multitude to the springs of the water of life that flow from the sanctuary of the true Temple.

The ministry of the altar in the middle of the Temple will not come to an end until the blowing of the seventh trumpet. Immediately after the apostle John received, and ate, the little book which contains the finished mystery of God, the archangel Michael gave him a reed like a measuring rod. Michael said to John, 'Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who

worship there. But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.' Rev 11:1-2.

It is unhelpful to interpret this verse using the symbolism of the tabernacle of Moses. In the tabernacle of Moses, the altar of sacrifice belonged to the outer court. In contrast, the altar in the true Temple does not belong to the outer court. The altar is in the middle of the true Temple. When the Father takes His seat, Jesus Christ will move the administration of His body, which is the true Temple, into the centre of the Father's throne. Rev 7:17. When this happens, the Temple will be in the centre of the Father's throne, and the altar will be in the centre of the Temple. Those who belong to the Temple of God and worship in the altar will not be trampled by the Gentiles.

The Prince in Israel

'The Prince', referred to in Ezekiel's vision, typifies the ministry of Jesus Christ as our Shepherd-King, who is also our great High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. The Melchizedek ministry of Christ is the total provision for the kingdom of God, all the way from Abraham to the new heavens and new earth. We recall that it was Melchizedek who met Abraham when he returned from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him in the fellowship of an *agape* meal. Gen 14:17-20. As we have considered, this marked the beginning of the river of the water of life that flows from the sanctuary of the true Temple to the great sea of the nations in the end of the age. Eze 47:1-12.

'The Prince' is Jesus Christ, who is the Shepherd and Overseer of His lampstand churches and the Heir to the throne of David. Speaking about the church age, the Lord declared, through Ezekiel, 'I will raise up over them one Shepherd and He shall feed them, even My Servant David; He shall feed them and He shall be their Shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God and *My Servant David a Prince* among them; I the Lord have spoken it.' Eze 34:23-24. During the church age, Christ is 'the Prince' in relation to the kingdom of God. When the Father takes His seat, Christ will also stand up to rule and reign as a King in the midst of His enemies. Psa 110:2.

Significantly, when the apostle Peter proclaimed the gospel in Solomon's Portico, after healing the lame man, he called Jesus, 'the Prince of life'. Act 3:15. This is the name that applies to Christ as the Captain and Author of our salvation. In his letter to the Hebrews, Paul said that we are to fix our eyes upon Jesus who is the author [lit. prince] and finisher of our faith. Heb 12:2. Likewise, Paul wrote, 'It was fitting for Him [the Father] for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make

the captain [lit. prince]) of their salvation perfect through sufferings'.
Heb 2:10.

It is interesting to consider that the eastern outer gate of the temple was shut so that no man could enter through that gate. It was shut because the Lord God of Israel had entered through it to establish the temple as the place of His throne, and the altar as the place of His feet. Eze 44:1-2. We note that this doorway is the gate through which the glory of the Lord entered the temple. Jesus Christ is the Door. He said to His disciples, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.' Joh 14:6. This reality draws our attention to the personal journey that Jesus Christ made into the holy of holies, which belongs to the true Temple, before the river of the water of life flowed from His side once His journey was complete. Joh 19:34.

The eastern outer gate of the temple was shut to every man because this was the personal journey of Jesus Christ, which He made alone, to glorify the name of the Father and fulfil Their covenant purpose. We recall that Jesus said to Peter, 'Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward.' Joh 13:36. As the Captain of our salvation, the Prince of life does grant us a participation in the fellowship of His offering. For this reason, the Prince was able to enter through the vestibule to eat bread in the gate, in the presence of Yahweh. Eze 44:3.

On the appointed feast days, if the people entered the temple to worship the Lord through the northern gate, they would go out through the southern gate. Likewise, if they entered through the southern gate of the temple, they would go out through the northern gate. Significantly, the Lord said, 'The Prince shall then be in their midst. When they go in, he shall go in; and when they go out, he shall go out.' Eze 46:10. Jesus referred to this principle when He described Himself as the Good Shepherd who calls His own sheep by name and leads them in and out to find pasture. Joh 10:3-4,9,11.

In Ezekiel's vision, 'the land' represented the entire kingdom of God. It was divided among the twelve tribes of the true Israel of God from the north to the south. The inheritance that was given to each tribe, and by implication each family within each tribe, was likened to a well-watered pasture. The Lord said, "The desolate land shall be tilled instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass by. So they will say, "This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the wasted, desolate, and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited,"" Eze 36:34-35.

Furthermore, the Lord said concerning the people, 'I will increase their men like a flock. Like a flock offered as holy sacrifices, like the flock at Jerusalem on its feast days, so shall the ruined cities be filled with flocks of men. Then they shall know that I am the Lord.' Eze 36:37-38. In this regard, the sons of God who have been given an inheritance within the kingdom of God are

likened to 'sheep'. Jesus Christ is the Shepherd of the sheep. Joh 10:2,11,14. He leads His sheep in and out to find pasture. Joh 10:3-4,9. 'The rich pasture' is the provision that He has given to His sheep.

The true Feast of Passover

'The rich pasture' is also the resource from which sons of God produce a harvest and then bring offering into the true temple, which is the fellowship of the body of Christ. In relation to the harvest and the measure of offering, the Lord said, 'You shall have honest scales, an honest ephah and an honest bath.' Eze 45:10. In this context, the Lord also prescribed the measure of the mina. Eze 45:12. This is an important point which connects the economy that belongs to Ezekiel's temple to the parables of Jesus. The talents and the minas are used to measure what is produced from the land and then offered in the temple. Luk 19:11-27. Mat 25:14-30.

The Lord nominated the measure of barley, wheat, and oil that each son of God needed to offer from their harvests in each season during the year. The people obtained the double portion on their journey from the first month to the seventh month. The measure of barley was an offering from the harvest of the first month, at the time of Passover. The measure of wheat was an offering from the harvest of the third month, at the time of Pentecost. The measure of oil was an offering from the harvest of the seventh month, at the time of Tabernacles. Eze 45:13-14.

From the rich pastures of Israel, the Lord also required one lamb from each flock of 200. Eze 45:15. Remembering that the Lord likened the people to 'sheep', the offering of the one lamb represented the faith of the people to present their own bodies as a living sacrifice to the Lord. Rom 12:1. Significantly, the people were called to offer the lambs, and their harvest offerings, to the Prince. The Lord declared to Ezekiel, 'All the people of the land shall give this offering for the Prince in Israel.' Eze 45:16.

It was then the responsibility of the Prince in Israel to make all of the offerings that were necessary for the people to keep the feasts. The Prince's portion became the full provision for the people in every season of their lives. The Lord said to Ezekiel, 'Then it shall be *the Prince's part* to give burnt offerings, grain offerings, and drink offerings, at the feasts, the New Moons, the Sabbaths, and at all the appointed seasons of the house of Israel. He shall prepare the sin offering, the grain offering, the burnt offering, and the peace offerings to make atonement for the house of Israel.' Eze 45:17.

We know that Jesus Christ has already fulfilled His part, or 'Princely work', to provide every offering that is necessary for us to keep the true Feast of Passover in its appointed seasons. As the Prince of life, He has already made our offering for us, on His journey from the garden of

Gethsemane to the cross. In this regard, we cannot keep the Feast by making our own offering. Rather, in obedience to the command of the Father, we offer ourselves to Christ, and then Christ offers us, in the fellowship of His body, to fulfil the true Feast of Passover.

Ezekiel's vision reveals the typology of the true Feast of Passover in the fellowship of the body of Christ. Referring to the true Feast of Passover, the apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians, 'Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. *Therefore let us keep the feast*, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.' 1Co 5:7-8.

The blood on the doorposts of the temple

The true Feast of Passover contains the full provision for the atonement of the true Israel of God for the entire year. We recall that, under the Old Covenant, the nation of Israel celebrated the Day of Atonement on the tenth day of the seventh month. In contrast, the description of the feasts in the book of Ezekiel does not include the Day of Atonement. Rather, the offering of 'the Prince' applied the work of the atonement to the entire year. The sanctuary was cleansed, and the altar was sanctified, on the first day of the first month. Eze 45:18.

Significantly, the blood of the sin offering was applied to the doorposts of the temple. We recall that when the nation of Israel celebrated the first Passover in Egypt, they killed a lamb for their own household and then applied the blood to the doorpost and the lintel of their own house. Exo 12:7. They did this in obedience to the command of the Lord which had been given to them by Moses. However, when the nation of Israel entered the promised land, they did not keep the Feast of Passover in the same way as they did when they were first delivered from Egypt.

Before they entered the promised land, the Lord said to the people, 'You may not sacrifice the Passover within any of your gates which the Lord your God gives you; but at the place where the Lord your God chooses to make His name abide, there you shall sacrifice the Passover at twilight [lit. between the two evenings], at the going down of the sun, at the time you came out of Egypt. And you shall roast and eat it in the place which the Lord your God chooses, and in the morning you shall turn and go to your tents.' Deu 16:5-7.

When the temple was built in the city of Jerusalem, the lambs for the Passover Feast were sacrificed at the temple. They were then eaten in houses in the city. Christ suffered and died as the Passover Lamb outside of the earthly Jerusalem. His blood was sprinkled upon His own body as the Door of the true temple. Jesus said, 'I am the Door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be

saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.’ Joh 10:9. The important point is that we can only celebrate the true Feast of Passover, together, in the fellowship of the body of Christ, which is the true Temple. The life of the Passover meal then flows from the Temple to each household that belongs to the heavenly Jerusalem.

From Passover to Tabernacles

The Prince’s offering on the first day of the first month was then repeated on the seventh day of the first month. It was repeated for ‘the innocents’ who had sinned unintentionally or in ignorance. Eze 45:20. This dimension of Christ’s offering has an application for children, who have been born as sons of God in covenant families, before they come of age and make their own choice. It also has an application for sons of God who have mental impairments. We note that this offering is only applicable for those in the fellowship of the body of Christ. The Lord said, ‘Thus you shall make atonement for the temple.’ Eze 45:20.

The Passover Feast itself began on the fourteenth day of the first month and it lasted for seven days. In addition to the required sin offering, ‘the Prince’ offered seven bulls and seven rams, on each day of the Feast, for a burnt offering. This meant that the burnt offering for the Feast comprised forty-nine bulls and forty-nine rams. Every bull and every ram was accompanied by an ephah of grain and a hin of oil. Eze 45:21-24. In this manner, the Passover Feast incorporated the principle of Pentecost.

The Feast of Passover then extrapolated directly to the Feast of Tabernacles. The Lord prescribed the exact same offerings for the seven days of Tabernacles, which began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month. Eze 45:25. We know that the Feast of Tabernacles has a specific application for the kingdom of God in the time of the end. The apostle John saw the great multitude from every nation with palm branches in their hands, because they were ready to keep the true Feast of Tabernacles. Rev 7:9.

We have considered that the vision of Ezekiel’s temple is applicable for the entire church age. However, the notable presence of the palm trees on the gateposts of every doorway into the temple suggests that this vision also has a particular application for the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles by the great multitude in the time of the end. Eze 40.

Chapter 4

The purpose of signification and testimony

The book of Revelation begins, 'The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants - things which must shortly take place. And He sent and *signified* it by His angel to His servant John'. Rev 1:1. When we read this verse, we note that God the Father gave the revelation to Jesus Christ. Christ then *signified* the revelation, through His angel, to the apostle John. The apostle John recorded the revelation that had been signified to him. Everything that he had seen and heard, he wrote down in the book of Revelation. Rev 1:2. It is now recorded for us in the prophetic Scriptures.

It is important for us to understand the meaning of 'signification'. The meaning of signification is far more than the communication of information. Jesus Christ did not send His angel to deliver a package of information to John. We also know that the principle of signification is more than illumination, because the apostle John was able to interact and converse with specific presbyters who were signified to him by Christ, through the angel, as part of the revelation. If we do not understand the principle of signification, we will misinterpret some elements of the book of Revelation.

Equally, it is important for us to understand the difference between the principle of signification through an angel, and the work of the members of the body of Christ to reveal Christ, and one another, by the Spirit. The witnesses of Christ reveal Him by the Spirit, because they are joined to

the fellowship of His offering and sufferings. The apostle Paul described our ministry as witnesses of Christ by saying that we are 'always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.' 2Co 4:10.

The apostle John was commanded to write down the revelation that was signified to him, and to send it to the seven lampstand churches. Rev 1:11. The prophetic word has been written down and sent to us. Rev 1:4. The book of Revelation is now proclaimed to us by presbyteries in the right hand of Christ. The word is not signified to us through an angel. It is the Holy Spirit who illuminates the prophetic Scriptures to us when we hear them proclaimed to us by the messengers of Christ as a word of present truth. For this reason, John said to each of the seven churches, 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.' Rev 2:11.

The messengers in the right hand of Christ proclaim the word to us as those who belong to the Elijah ministry. The Lord is restoring the Elijah ministry in our day because the time of the end is fast approaching. It is important that we hear the prophetic word when it is proclaimed to us from the Scriptures, and that we give our attention to what the Spirit is saying to us, because the time for its fulfilment in history is now upon us. The apostle John wrote, 'Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; *for the time is near*'. Rev 1:3.

The Father's word

The first point to understand in relation to the principle of signification is that the Father's word is the full substance of everything that will ever exist. The full substance of the Father's word is contained in the statement, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You'. Psa 2:7. When the Father said, 'Today', He proclaimed *the end* from the beginning. The prophet Isaiah recorded that the Father 'declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure".' Isa 46:10.

The Father is the Architect and the Creator of all things. Everything that belongs to the Father was delivered to the Son. Col 1:19. The Son became the full substance of the Word of the Father. The Father entered His rest when He laid down His fullness to the Son. His works were finished from the foundation of the world. Heb 4:3. From the perspective of the Father's word at that time, everything was completed as though it already existed. It was finished! However, not a single element was brought forth until the Son proclaimed, 'Let there be light.' Gen 1:3. The word of the Son established the first day of creation.

In a series of revelations, Jesus Christ signified to the apostle John the substance of the Father's word, which is already complete. Jesus Christ is the substance of the revelation. For this reason, the entire book is called *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*. Rev 1:1. Jesus Christ signified Himself and His word, through His angel, to the apostle John. It is most likely that this angel was Gabriel. Gabriel is the revelatory angel who stands in the presence of the Lord. Luk 1:19. However, the name of the angel is not mentioned in the book of Revelation because of the principle of signification.

The right hand of Christ

John recorded that while he was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, he heard a loud voice behind him. Rev 1:10. The voice was like the sound of a great trumpet. This was the sound of the angel's voice. However, because Christ was signifying His word through the angel, we observe that the angel spoke in the first person, *as though he was Christ*. Christ said, through the angel, 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last.' Rev 1:11. He then instructed John to write the book of Revelation and to send it to the seven lampstand churches.

When John turned around to see the voice that was speaking to him, he saw 'One like the Son of Man' in the middle of seven golden lampstands. Rev 1:12-13. The phrase, 'One *like* the Son of Man', is helpful. John was not looking at the physical Person of Jesus Christ, seated upon His throne at the right hand of the Father in His immortal and incorruptible resurrection body. He was looking at the angel of the Lord. However, because Christ was signifying Himself through the angel, it was as though John was looking at the glorified Son of Man.

John said, 'When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead.' Rev 1:17. Interestingly, the angel did not rebuke John. It would have been a corruption of his angelic mandate if the angel himself had begun to speak or to draw attention to his own ministry, in the middle of this interaction between John and the Lord. Amazingly, because the angel remained obedient to his mandate, Jesus Christ was able to reach out, through the angel, to place His right hand on the apostle John. Christ spoke directly to John through the angel by saying, 'Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore.' Rev 1:17-18.

The Scriptures recorded many other examples of when the Lord signified Himself to men through His angel. Evidently, Stephen understood this principle of signification when he said, concerning Moses, 'When forty years had passed, an *Angel of the Lord* appeared to him in a flame of fire in a bush, in the wilderness of Mount Sinai. When Moses saw it, he marvelled at the sight; and as he drew near to observe, *the voice of the Lord* came to him,

saying "I am the God of your Fathers – the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," and Moses trembled and dared not look.' Act 7:30-32.

The ministry of the presbyters to John

Jesus Christ did not signify only Himself and His own word. He also signified to the apostle John, through the angel, the administration of His corporate body. This included the signification of specific members of His body who will be alive and will minister as part of the presbytery in the time of the end. These presbyters, even though they had not yet been born, were able to speak and interact with the apostle John. For example, when John began to weep because no-one was found to open the seven-sealed scroll, it was one of the twenty-four elders who told him to stop weeping, because the Lion of the tribe of Judah had prevailed to open the scroll. Rev 5:5.

John recorded another discussion that he had with one of the twenty-four elders regarding the great multitude who will come into the kingdom of God in the time of the end. We read, 'Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "These who are clothed in white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?" I said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. For this reason, they are before the throne of God, and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them".' Rev 7:13-15.

Jesus Christ also signified, through His angel, the ministry of two of the presbyters who will pour out the seven vials upon the administration of Babylon and the kingdom of antichrist. The seven vials contain the fullness of the wrath of God. After witnessing the events that will occur when these vials are poured out, John wrote, 'Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, "Come, I will show you the judgement of the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication".' Rev 17:1-2.

When John was carried away in the Spirit, this presbyter, though not yet born, showed John the entire history of the administration of Babylon. This included its inauguration in the days of Nimrod, at the tower of Babel, all the way to its final judgement in the end of the age. Notably, this presbyter was not signifying the revelation. The presbyter himself was being signified by Christ, through the angel, to the apostle John. It was the work of the presbyter to give John an understanding regarding the prophetic events that were being signified to him by Christ. The presbyter, by the Spirit, was bringing illumination to John concerning these events. Rev 17:1-3.

It is important to consider that Jesus Christ signified this presbyter through His angel in order to bring illumination and understanding to the apostle John. Even more remarkably, without the ministry of this man, who had not yet been born, the apostle John would not have understood these events. He needed to receive the word and to learn from this presbyter. We need to appreciate this point. In the same way that this presbyter was necessary to bring illumination to the apostle John as he received the revelation, it is the work of the presbytery, by the Spirit, to illuminate the prophetic Scriptures for us. The prophetic Scriptures include the book of Revelation.

We read in the book of Revelation that another presbyter, who was also among the messengers who will pour out the seven vials, showed John the bride city. He wrote, ‘Then one of the seven angels who has the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.’ Rev 21:9-10. This presbyter showed the apostle John the New Jerusalem as the administrative headquarters of the new heavens and the new earth.

Falling at their feet

John recorded that he fell at the feet of these two presbyters once they had finished bringing illumination and understanding to him. In relation to the first presbyter, who had shown him the history of the administration of Babylon, John said, ‘I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy”.’ Rev 19:10.

Similarly, in relation to the second presbyter, who had shown him the bride city in the new heavens and the new earth, John said, ‘And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, “See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God”.’ Rev 22:8-9. Evidently, the ministry of these two presbyters to John was different from the ministry of the angel of the Lord who was signifying the revelation to him.

As we have considered, when the apostle John fell at the feet of the One like the Son of Man, the angel of the Lord did not rebuke him. Rev 1:17. The angel did not speak to him on his own behalf, at all. He did not comment on his own ministry. In contrast, when John fell at the feet of the two presbyters, they both rebuked him for doing so, and admonished him to worship God. The two presbyters rebuked John because they were not *signifying Christ* as the angel

of the Lord had done. Rather, they were *revealing Christ* in a fellowship of offering *as the members of His body*.

We know that these two presbyters belonged to the fellowship of the body of Christ, because they described themselves as being John's *fellow brethren*. They were fellow servants of Christ. They were also fellow prophets, or messengers, of Christ, who held the testimony of Jesus. We know that Christ signified Himself through His angel who was great in might and power. The angel spoke to John in the first person, as though he was Christ. In contrast, the two presbyters proclaimed the testimony of Jesus in weakness, because they were participants in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings.

Having been joined to the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings, the two presbyters testified to John from the ground of the fellowship of Yahweh. This ground is the fellowship of offering in which one reveals another. The presbyters were *revealing Christ* by proclaiming the testimony of Jesus according to their own name, in the fellowship of the body of Christ. They were not speaking *as Christ*, as did the angel; nor were they speaking *on behalf of Christ*. Like the apostle Paul, they were speaking 'in the sight of God in Christ'. 2Co 2:17.

The attitude of respect that John had toward these messengers of Christ, who poured out the seven vials and illuminated the revelation to him, was necessary, even though it was misplaced. We do need to respect the messengers of Christ and the authority that they have been given to proclaim the word of God to us. Even though the apostle Paul ministered in weakness, and readily testified that he was a man of like passions with his hearers, he did say to the Galatians, 'You received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.' Gal 4:14.

When the presbyters rebuked John for falling down at their feet, they were admonishing him to receive the word that they were bringing to him, but not to worship them as though they were the source of the message. They were also resisting any attempt by John to relate to them as though they were functioning as intermediaries between him and the Lord. The messengers of Christ, who belong to a presbytery in the right hand of Christ, do not function as intermediaries. Rather, the word that is proclaimed is an invitation to join in fellowship with the presbytery, and with the Father and the Son. 1Jn 1:1-4.

The presbyters proclaimed the testimony of Jesus to John as they revealed Christ according to their own names, in the fellowship of the body of Christ. They also addressed John in relation to accepting the word of his own name and life as a servant and prophet of God. We recall that it was Christ, through the angel, who instructed John to write the book of Revelation. However, it was one of the presbyters who said to him, 'Do not seal the words of the

prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.’ Rev 22:10. In this way, John was also instructed *to proclaim the book* as a messenger of Christ, in the same manner as these men proclaimed the testimony of Jesus, in order to bring illumination to others.

The iniquity of Satan

On the first day of creation, Lucifer was created as ‘a son of the morning’ Isa 14:12. He was a light-bearing cherub who was full of wisdom and was the perfection of beauty. The Lord declared concerning Lucifer, ‘You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, *until iniquity was found in you*. By the abundance of your trading you became filled with violence within, *and you sinned*; therefore I cast you as a profane thing out of the mountain of God; and I destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the fiery stones.’ Eze 28:15-16.

The prophet Isaiah clearly identified the way in which Lucifer sinned. He said, ‘For you have said in your heart: “I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High”.’ Isa 14:13-14. Lucifer wanted to ascend above the seraphim in the angelic administration. He coveted the predestination of man, and he even wanted to become the source of his own fatherhood.

In this regard, identifying the sin that caused Lucifer to be cast out of the mountain of God as a profane thing is straightforward - he left his proper abode. He wanted to be something different from what God had created him to be. However, when we consider the description of Lucifer’s fall, in the book of Ezekiel, we note that iniquity was found in him *before* he sinned by leaving his proper abode. Eze 28:15. The Lord described his iniquity as being a trading mechanism. Eze 28:16,18. What does this mean? Considering that his fall happened before the creation of man and the kingdoms of the world, what was the ‘currency’ of his trading?

The currency of Lucifer’s trading was worship. It is helpful to remember that Lucifer was created to be a worship leader in the angelic administration. He was created with a wonderful capacity to be an instrument of worship on the mountain of God. The Lord said, ‘The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created.’ Eze 28:13. However, Lucifer’s heart became lifted up because of his beauty. Eze 28:17. He began to think that he deserved to be given a degree of worth, or to be worshipped, because of his great capacity and beauty. This trading mechanism in his heart was his iniquity.

We observe this same iniquitous trading mechanism in the heart of Satan when he tried to tempt Jesus in the wilderness. The Gospel of Matthew describes how Satan took Jesus to ‘an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory’. Mat 4:8. The ‘exceedingly high mountain’ refers to Mount Zion. It is the same mountain of God where Lucifer worshipped as part of the angelic administration on the first day of creation. The top of Mount Zion is the place of the Son’s throne, where He rules over the angelic administration and the kingdoms of men.

Notably, the Gospel of Luke explains that Satan showed Jesus ‘all the kingdoms of the world *in a moment of time*’. Luk 4:5. The earthly ministry of Jesus occurred during the sixth world kingdom. However, Satan also showed Him the preceding five world kingdoms, and the seventh world kingdom which did not yet exist. The fact that Satan could show Jesus all of these world kingdoms in a moment of time demonstrates the remarkable spiritual capacity that he possesses as a fallen cherub in the angelic administration.

We could describe the vision that Satan showed to Jesus as a counterfeit, or false, signification. Even though it was an accurate representation of the world kingdoms, it was a false signification because it was not initiated by Christ. This vision of the world kingdoms had been presumptuously initiated by Satan. As we have considered, the Father has given Christ the authority to signify the substance of His word to men through an angel. The authority to signify does not belong to the angel, even though the capacity to signify resides within the angel.

Satan said to Jesus, concerning the world kingdoms, ‘All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.’ Luk 4:6-7. Satan is presently the ruler of the world through the administration of Babylon. The administration of Babylon was first established in the days following the flood, when the fathers of the nations rejected the sovereignty of God and conspired together to build the tower of Babel. From that time, Satan has maintained his rulership over the nations through a trading relationship with the leaders of each world kingdom.

When we first read Satan’s proposition, it appears that he was trying to establish with Christ a similar trading relationship to that which he enjoyed with other world leaders. However, Satan was not offering to give Jesus some kind of ‘deputy’ role under his own rulership. Satan knew that Jesus is the Son of God and the Lord of hosts who is sovereign over all principalities and powers. Mat 8:29. He knew also that Jesus had been born in the flesh of mankind as the Son of David, and that He was the heir to the throne of David. He knew that it was only a matter of time before Christ would take His rightful place as King, to rule and reign in the Father’s kingdom.

With the nature of his own iniquity in mind, it is likely that Satan was offering to be Christ's 'right-hand' angel. He wanted to be empowered by Christ. He wanted to be the angel that Christ used for the purpose of signifying Himself to rule and reign over the kingdoms of the world. However, Satan did not want to be a signifying angel who was not named, seen or recognised. He wanted to be appreciated, shown honour, and given worth by Christ. This was the kind of worship that he was looking for. Of course, no worth could be given to Satan, because he had rejected who God had named him to be. Jesus said to him, 'Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve".' Luk 4:8.

Our mode of ministry – speaking by testimony in Christ

We have considered that the two presbyters who were signified by Christ through His angel did not allow John to fall at their feet to worship them. They described themselves as being John's fellow brethren. Rev 19:10. Rev 22:8-9. They were John's fellow servants who were revealing Christ by proclaiming the testimony of Christ as members of His body. In the New Testament, we observe that Peter, Paul, Barnabas and James all aligned themselves with this same mode of ministry. It is the mode of weakness, which is demonstrated by all disciple-messengers who belong to the Elijah ministry.

For example, when Peter and John healed the lame man in Solmon's Portico, a great crowd gathered to them. However, Peter immediately said to the crowd, 'Why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?' Act 3:12. Likewise, after Paul and Barnabas healed a cripple in Lystra, and the people identified them as 'gods', the two messengers tore their clothes and ran among the multitude, crying out, 'Men, why are you doing these things? *We also are men with the same nature as you*, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them.' Act 14:14-15.

The ministry of Elijah is not the proclamation of theology by an expert; nor is it the establishment of a righteous standard. Rather, it is the testimony of a person with the same nature as their hearers, who is joined to a process through which they are being enabled to walk blamelessly by the Spirit. As those who are being established in the ministry of Elijah as part of lampstand churches, we should be able to acknowledge our nature and faults to one another and be willing to pray for each other. This was the point that James was asserting when he identified Elijah as being a man with a nature like ours.

James wrote, 'Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the

elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. Elijah was a man *with a nature like ours*, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months.' Jas 5:17.

It is notable that the apostle Paul did not identify himself as being a success. In fact, he identified any measure of his own righteousness as being excrement! Php 3:4-8. Rather than speaking from a position of strength, he described himself, for example, as 'the chief of sinners'; as 'a man weak in speech'; and as 'a wretched man'. 1Ti 1:15. 1Co 2:3. 2Co 11:6. Rom 7:24. His confidence was not in himself, but was in his personal fellowship in the offering and sufferings of Christ. Php 3:10-11. This is the example that we are to follow as those who are being established in the ministry of Elijah as part of a lampstand church.

As we have been considering in this present season, the Lord is establishing, in our day, a presbytery of elders who are part of His Elijah ministry. Jas 5:13-18. True elders, who belong to a presbytery, recognise that they are men of like passions with Elijah. At the same time, they demonstrate a blameless culture as they embrace their fellowship in the offering and sufferings of Christ. In this fellowship, they are finding deliverance from their carnality, and capacity for their obedience. This capacity comes from the Holy Spirit as they feed from the tree of life in the fellowship of the presbytery. This is the same 'food' that they minister to their hearers in the fellowship of the body of Christ. Luk 12:42.

True elders in a presbytery are those who are spiritual in their understanding. Gal 6:1. That is, their understanding of the gospel is not simply theological. Their culture must reflect the gospel that they have been set apart to proclaim; that is, that all flesh is as grass. Isa 40:6-8. The grass withers and becomes chaff. Its end is to be burned with eternal fire. A true messenger puts 'no confidence in their flesh'. Php 3:3. They have become obedient disciples to the doctrine of godliness that is conforming them to their sanctification, and to the works that they have been called by God to do, which have been written in the book of life.

A messenger who accepts their mandate to proclaim the message of the gospel of God should not be doing so for advantage or for dishonest gain. 1Pe 5:2-3. Jesus said to the scribe who desired to follow Him, 'Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.' Mat 8:20. In other words, the work of the messenger is not an opportunity for financial gain or social security. Similarly, Jesus warned those

who wanted to follow Him against putting their hand to the plough and then turning back when the work became difficult. Luk 9:62. It is only a messenger who has counted the cost of becoming a disciple of Christ, in all areas of their life, who is able to minister in the spirit and power of Elijah.

Jesus Christ sends disciple-messengers to find worthy houses through their proclamation of the gospel. The blessing of peace that they bring to a house is the gospel, which is replete with grace and peace, compelling their hearers to repent, and to walk in a new and living way. Luk 10:5. Motivated by the fear of the Lord, they proclaim the message with which they have been sent in love, in power and with a sound mind. To this end, Paul exhorted Timothy, writing, 'Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.' 2Ti 1:6-7. This same fruit will be manifest in the worthy houses who receive the ministry of these disciple-messengers.

Chapter 5

The three books in the book of Revelation

Jesus Christ told the apostle John to write in a book everything that he saw and heard. He then told John to send the book to the seven lampstand churches in the region of Asia. Rev 1:11. It is notable that the book of Revelation was addressed to the seven lampstand churches because those seven churches represented all of Christ's lampstand churches. Rev 1:4. The whole book of Revelation has been sent to us. The apostle John has exhorted us all by saying, 'Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.' Rev 1:3.

When we read the book of Revelation, we note that it includes the content that belongs to *three distinct books*.

The *first book* is the seven letters that contain the personal admonition of Jesus Christ to the seven lampstand churches. Rev 2-3. These letters identify the false doctrines and issues that need to be addressed and overcome by all lampstand churches during the church age. Jesus addressed the first, and foremost, issue for each lampstand church when He said to the presbytery in Ephesus, '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.' Rev 2:4-5. The 'first works' refer to our participation in the four foundations of fellowship that belong to the Lord's *agape* meal. Act 2:42.

The *second book* is the scroll with the seven seals. Rev 5:1-5. After the Father has placed His throne and has taken His seat in the middle of His tabernacle, Jesus Christ will stand up and move the administration of the Temple of His body into the middle of the Father's throne. The Father will then give to Christ the scroll with the seven seals. Rev 5:7. As Christ progressively opens the seals, the content of the scroll will be progressively unsealed and revealed to men. Rev 6. The scroll contains the full revelation of the will of God that will be accomplished in heaven and on the earth during the time of the end.

The *third book* that is contained in the book of Revelation is the 'little book' that was open in the hand of the mighty angel. Rev 10:2. After the mighty angel had given this little book to the apostle John to eat, the angel said to him, 'You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.' Rev 10:11. The little book contains all of the events that belong to the blowing of the seventh trumpet. Rev 11:15. The blowing of the seventh trumpet will initiate the final consummation of God's will and purpose for mankind. This will include the outpouring of the seven vials that contain the fullness of the wrath of God, the physical second coming of Christ, the judgement of the great white throne, and the inauguration of the new heavens and new earth. Rev 11:17-18.

The opening of the seals

In relation to the scroll with the seven seals, which is the second book, we expect that the first four seals will be opened by Christ in quick succession. The events that belong to the opening of the first four seals will happen concurrently. When the first seal is opened, the gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed by the 144 000 as a testimony in all nations. Rev 6:1-2. When the second seal is opened, peace will be taken from the earth, leading to world-wide war. Rev 6:3-4. The opening of the third seal will cause great economic upheaval, characterised by rampant inflation and the scarcity of resources. Rev 6:5-6. The opening of the fourth seal will lead to wide-spread disease and death. Rev 6:7-8.

The book of Revelation recorded that one-quarter of the world's population will die under the judgement of God that belongs to the opening of the first four seals. That is, one-quarter of the world's population will die by the sword (the second seal), by hunger (the third seal), or by pestilence and the beasts of the earth (the fourth seal). Those who die under the judgement of God during the opening of these seals will go straight to hell. We know this because the fourth horseman, who is called 'Death', is immediately followed by another horseman, called 'Hell'. Rev 6:8.

The fifth seal

During the opening of the seals, when the gospel is proclaimed as a testimony in all nations, the church will also be hated by all nations. Mat 24:9. The opening of the fifth seal reveals that there will be a company of martyrs who will die during this period of persecution upon the church. The apostle John recorded, 'When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held'. Rev 6:9. When John saw the souls of the martyrs under the altar, he was referring to the altar in the middle of the true Temple.

The apostle John heard the martyrs crying out with a loud voice, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?' Rev 6:10. The Lord will avenge the blood of the martyrs when the seven vials are poured out. The seven vials contain the fulness of the wrath of God. Notably, in response to this request, 'It was said to them [the martyrs under the altar] that they should rest [wait] a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed'. Rev 6:11.

As an aside, it is important for us to understand the significance of this statement in relation to the timing of the events that are described in the book of Revelation. The Lord clearly stated that the seven vials will not be poured out to avenge the blood of the martyrs, until the number of martyrs is complete. Moses and Elijah will be the final two martyrs who will be killed because of the word of God and their testimony. Rev 11:7-8. The simple point, in relation to the sequence of events, is that the death of Moses and Elijah must happen *before* the seven vials are poured out upon the throne of Antichrist at the beginning of his reign.

The fruit of the evangelistic ministry of the 144 000, after the opening of the first seal, will be a great multitude from all tribes, nations, peoples, and tongues. Rev 7:9. The great multitude will come out of the great tribulation. Rev 7:14. The great tribulation will begin when the second seal is opened, and it will reach its climax when the fifth seal is opened. Dan 12:1. Mat 24:21. During this time of great trouble upon the earth, the great multitude will wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb by embracing their unique participation in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings.

The sixth seal

When the sixth seal is opened, the Lord will sovereignly intervene in the affairs of men by judging the armies of Gog and Magog on the mountains of Israel. Eze 38:18. Eze 39:21. In the immediate aftermath of this great slaughter on the mountains of Israel, all the rulers of the seventh world kingdom will

know that the day of God's judgement upon the world has arrived. The leaders of the seventh world kingdom will all say to the mountains and the rocks, 'Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?' Rev 6:16-17.

Following the judgement of God upon the armies of Gog and Magog at the opening of the sixth seal, the book of Ezekiel recorded that it will take seven months to bury the bodies and seven years to destroy all of the weapons. Eze 39:9,12. During these seven years, the mountain of the Lord's house will be established above all the world kingdoms, and it will fill the whole earth. Dan 2:35,44. The earth will be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Isa 11:9. Hab 2:14. The word of the Lord will proceed from the heavenly Jerusalem to all nations.

It will be the presbytery around the Father's throne who will instruct the world leaders to beat their weapons into plowshares. Isa 2:2-4. It is remarkable to consider that, during these seven years, the main agenda in the world will be the celebration of the Father's *agape* meal. Under the direction of the presbytery around the Father's throne, there will be public and house to house fellowship in many cities across the world. During this amazing season of fellowship in every nation, the whole world will be sifted and polarised by the proclamation of the gospel and the invitation to participate in the Father's *agape* meal.

When the seventh seal is opened, there will be silence in heaven for about half an hour. Rev 8:1. The golden censer, which belongs to the true altar of incense before the throne of God, will be inverted, and fire from the altar will be thrown to the earth. Rev 8:3-5. The inversion of the censer will mark a *major transition* in the operation of the true temple in the heavenly places. It means that the *intercessory prayers* of all the saints, as the gospel of God is proclaimed to all nations, will become the *imprecatory prayers* that activate the judgements of God upon all those who have rejected the gospel of God.

The blowing of the trumpets

The seven trumpets belong to the opening of the seventh seal. As soon as the seventh seal has been opened, and the operation of the true altar of incense has been inverted, the trumpets will begin to sound. Rev 8:6. Notably, during the blowing of the seven trumpets, the Lord will make a sharp distinction between those who choose to remain under the shadow of the Father's tabernacle on Mount Zion and those who choose to dwell 'under the sun' in the world. Rev 9:4. The seven trumpets will announce the judgement of God, in a *third measure*, upon those who remain 'under the sun' because they have refused to come into the kingdom of God.

When the apostle John heard the second trumpet, he saw something *like a great mountain* burning with fire being thrown into the sea. Rev 8:8. 'The great mountain' represents the administration of Babylon that has ruled over the kingdoms of the world since the tower of Babel. The Lord declared to Babylon, through Jeremiah the prophet, 'Behold, I am against you, O *destroying mountain*, who destroys all the earth ... I will stretch out My hand against you, roll you down from the rocks, and make you *a burnt mountain*. They shall not take from you a stone for a corner nor a stone for a foundation, but you shall be desolate forever.' Jer 51:25-26.

The second trumpet will announce the fall of the administration and the economy of Babylon. The economic system of trade, which is the foundation of the administration of Babylon, will collapse. Rev 18:2,9-19. When this happens, the kings of the earth and the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn. They will weep because the economy of Babylon has been the source of their wealth. Even though the fall of Babylon will be announced at the blowing of the second trumpet, she will not be made completely desolate until the time when the ten kings give their power and authority to Antichrist. At that time, the economy of Babylon will be totally replaced by the economy that belongs to the image of the beast. Rev 13:16-17.

A great falling away

When the apostle John heard the third trumpet, he saw a great messenger fall from heaven, burning like a torch. Rev 8:10. The name of the star is Wormwood, which means 'bitterness'. The star called 'Wormwood' will cause a third of the water to become bitter, which will lead to the death of many men. Rev 8:11. It is likely that this event describes the fall of Antichrist from the heavenly places as he comes out of the church and into the world. We know that Antichrist will emerge from the sea of the nations to revive the seventh world kingdom. Rev 13:1. However, the apostle John identified that the spirit of antichrist, which is in the world, firstly comes *out of the church*. 1Jn 2:18-19.

It is important to remember that the temple, in the middle of the Father's throne, will still be the context for a sifting and cleansing process during the time of the end. Jesus described this principle in the parable of the dragnet. Mat 13:47-50. Fish of every kind will be caught in the net and come into the kingdom of God. The good fish will be gathered into vessels, but the bad fish will be thrown away. Jesus said, 'So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.' Mat 13:49-50.

In the time of the end, we know that there will be a great multitude who will come into the kingdom of God and wash their priestly robes in the blood of the Lamb. Rev 7:9. We expect that at least half of the world's population will come into the kingdom of God and choose to remain in Mount Zion. At the same time, it is likely that many others will come into the kingdom of God but will refuse to embrace their participation in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. Because of their disobedience to the word, Christ will become a stumbling Stone for them. 1Pe 2:6-8. They will become offended and fall away by choosing to depart in *bitterness* from the fellowship of the body of Christ.

The apostle John's vision of the church bringing forth the manchild, which is the great multitude from every nation, also reveals that there will be a great falling away in the time of the end. At the same time as the woman was in travail to give birth to the manchild, John also saw a fiery red dragon in the heavenly places. Rev 12:2-3. The tail of the dragon drew a third of the stars from heaven and threw them to the earth. Rev 12:4. We know that the dragon is Satan. In the book of Isaiah, we read that 'the tail' is the prophet who speaks lies. Isa 9:15. Speaking about the time of the end, Jesus said, 'False christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.' Mat 24:24.

The Lord is presently preparing an overcoming remnant from His lampstand churches to be the firstfruits of the true Israel of God. We are certainly experiencing, in our present day, a 'falling away' from the fellowship of the body of Christ. Mat 24:12. The 'falling away' now, in 'the day of small things', is the harbinger of a greater falling away in the time of the end. In his letter to the Thessalonians, the apostle Paul said, concerning the physical second coming of Christ, 'Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day [of resurrection] will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition'. 2Th 2:3.

The fifth trumpet – the first woe

When the apostle John heard the fifth trumpet, he saw a star who had fallen from heaven to the earth. Rev 9:1. It is likely that this is Antichrist, who he had previously seen fall at the blowing of the third trumpet. Notably, he will be given the key to the bottomless pit. Antichrist will open the bottomless pit by misappropriating the authority to 'bind and loose', which belongs to Jesus Christ and the presbytery who will be seated on the twenty-four thrones around the throne of the Father. We are reminded that Jesus said to Peter, 'I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.' Mat 16:19.

When Antichrist opens the bottomless pit, a great horde of demons will be *set loose* upon the earth. These demons are likened to 'locusts', but they have the power of scorpions. Rev 9:3. In this regard, we note that not all fallen angels are presently free to roam the earth under the leadership of Satan. The letter of Jude draws our attention to another group of fallen angels who are 'reserved in everlasting chains' in the bottomless pit. Jud 1:6. They are reserved for judgement in the day of the Lord. The name of the king of these demons is Abaddon. He is called 'the angel of the bottomless pit'. Rev 9:11. Led by Abaddon, the demons from the bottomless pit will be given the power to torment men for a period of five months.

We read concerning these demons, 'They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God in their foreheads. And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was *like the torment of a scorpion* when it strikes a man. In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them.' Rev 9:6. Furthermore, we read, 'They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months.' Rev 9:10. For this reason, the blowing of the fifth trumpet is *the first woe* that will be experienced by the unrepentant inhabitants of the world. Rev 8:13.

It is certainly notable that this demonic horde will have no power to touch or harm any son of God who has the seal of the living God on their forehead. Rev 9:4. We are reminded that Jesus said to the seventy-two disciples, 'Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.' Luk 10:19. We know that this promise has an application during the church age in relation to the familiar spirits in households. However, the final manifestation of this power, by sons of God, will be seen during the blowing of the fifth, sixth, and seventh trumpets.

The power to trample on scorpions will be demonstrated by sons of God in the temple, during the blowing of the fifth trumpet. As we have already noted, the fifth trumpet will announce the first woe on the earth. The power to trample on serpents will be demonstrated by sons of God in the temple, during the blowing of the sixth trumpet. The sixth trumpet will announce the second woe on the earth. The power to trample on 'all the power of the enemy' will be demonstrated by sons of God in the temple, during the blowing of the seventh trumpet. The blowing of the seventh trumpet will announce the third woe on the earth.

The sixth trumpet – the second woe

When the apostle John heard the sixth trumpet, he also heard a voice 'from the four horns of the golden altar which is before the throne of God'.

Rev 9:13. The voice commanded the angel with the sixth trumpet to release the four angels who are bound at the great River Euphrates. Rev 9:14.

Evidently, there are fallen angels who are presently bound in the realm of the natural creation. We read concerning these demons, 'Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million ... and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions ... their power is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails *are like serpents*, having heads; and with them they do harm'. Rev 9:16,17,19.

In contrast to the demons from the bottomless pit, who have tails like scorpions, the two hundred million demons from the earth have tails like serpents. We have noted that the blowing of the sixth trumpet is the time when the sons of God, in the temple, will trample upon serpents. The serpents will have no power to harm those who have the seal of the living God in their forehead. However, in relation to the rest of mankind, the two hundred million demons will kill *one-third of mankind* with the fire, smoke, and brimstone that proceeds out of their mouths. Rev 9:18.

We do not know how long 'the blowing of the trumpets' will take. However, we know that the events that belong to the fifth trumpet, which comprise the first woe, will last for five months. It also appears that the events that belong to the sixth trumpet, which comprise the second woe, will last for at least one year. We make this observation because we read that the four angels have been prepared for the hour and day and month *and year* to kill one-third of mankind. Rev 9:15. Remarkably, the account of the sixth trumpet concludes by noting that the remaining two-thirds of mankind will stubbornly refuse to repent from their idolatry and uncleanness. Rev 9:20-21.

The mighty angel with the little book

Immediately following the events that belong to the sixth trumpet, the apostle John saw a mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. He had a rainbow on his head; his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. Rev 10:1. This was the angel of Lord revealing specific attributes of Jesus Christ as the glorified Son of Man. It is likely that this strong and mighty angel is Michael. We recall that he is also the 'strong angel' who will stand up, after the Father has taken His seat, to enquire who is worthy to open the scroll with the seven seals. Dan 12:1. Rev 5:2.

The angel had *a little book* which was open in his hand. Rev 10:2. The angel of the Lord stood on the earth; he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot

on the land. He then cried out with a loud voice, like when a lion roars. Rev 10:3. 'The voice of a lion' is a proclamation of Christ's Kingship. When the angel cried out in this manner, seven thunders also uttered their voices. Interestingly, Jesus Christ called to John from heaven, and said, 'Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them.' Rev 10:4. The utterance of the seven thunders does not form part of the *little book*.

The angel of the Lord then raised up his hand to heaven. He 'swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer, but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets'. Rev 10:6-7. The angel was swearing by the Father and the Son. The Father is the Architect and the Source of the entire creation. However, having become the substance of the Father's word, all things were created by the Son. Col 1:16.

It is significant that the angel of the Lord announced that there would be 'no more delay'. In previous publications, we have considered this statement from the perspective of the Seventy Weeks prophecy. We know that there is a period of delay between the first half of the seventieth week and the second half of the seventieth week. However, in the first case, the mighty angel with the *little book* was referring to a much broader principle of delay. He was referring to the delay associated with the revelation of the mystery of God. We know this because the angel directly connected the end of the delay with the end of the mystery. Rev 10:6-7.

The mystery of God is the will and purpose of God that has been *hidden* in the fellowship of Yahweh *Elohim* from before the foundation of the world. Within Their own fellowship, the will and purpose of God was declared when the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.' Gen 1:26. This statement defined the predestination of man, which is to be made in the image and likeness of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The predestination of man is to be sons of God, sons of Christ, and temples of the Holy Spirit.

God has progressively revealed the mystery of His will to His servants, the prophets. The prophets have recorded for us what they have seen and heard in the prophetic Scriptures. The mystery of God, that is contained in the prophetic Scriptures, is revealed to us by the proclamation of the gospel of God. The apostle Paul expressed the burden of his ministry when he wrote to the Colossian believers, 'That their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ.' Col 2:2.

The mystery of God will not be fully complete until the new heavens and new earth, when God is 'all in all'. 1Co 15:28. With this point of completion in view, why did the mighty angel say that the mystery would be finished immediately before the blowing of the seventh trumpet? Evidently, the angel was referring to the full revelation of the mystery, not the final completion of the mystery. The revelation of the mystery of God to His prophets was finished in the days immediately prior to the blowing of the seventh trumpet, because that is when the *little book* was given to the apostle John.

It is important to remember that Jesus Christ signified the entire book of Revelation, through his angel, to the apostle John. Rev 1:1. The operation of 'signification' means that the substance of future events was revealed to John in an imminent revelation. It is remarkable to consider that, as the revelation was signified to him, John spoke to presbyters who would not be born until almost 2 000 years after he had received the revelation. Rev 17:1. Rev 21:9. The revelation of the mystery of God was finished when John was called by Christ to receive the *little book* from the mighty angel so that he could write the final portion of the prophetic Scriptures.

Jesus Christ commanded John to take the *little book* from the hand of the angel. Rev 10:8. When he asked the angel to give him the book, the angel said to him, 'Take and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth.' Rev 10:9. Once John had eaten the book, the angel said to him, 'You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.' Rev 10:11. The *little book* describes all of the events that belong to the blowing of the seventh trumpet. This includes the reconstitution of the seventh world kingdom as an eighth world kingdom under the rulership of Antichrist.

Once the apostle John had eaten the *little book*, he received the prophetic mandate to write the last portion of the prophetic Scriptures as the final revelation of the mystery of God. It is important to recognise that we already have a copy of the content of the *little book* as part of the book of Revelation. The apostle John has recorded all of the events that belong to the blowing of the seventh trumpet. In this regard, the *little book* is open for us in the same way that it was open for John. By the illumination of the Spirit upon the Scriptures, we can read and understand the events that will take place when the seventh trumpet is blown.

The seventh trumpet

The blowing of the seventh trumpet announces the consummation of God's purpose in heaven and on the earth. When the apostle John heard the blowing of the seventh trumpet, he immediately heard loud voices in heaven saying, 'The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of our Lord

[the Father] and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!' Rev 11:15. The seventh trumpet includes the final seven years before the physical return of Christ, the millennial rest, and the final judgement of the living and the dead by Christ on the great white throne.

The twenty-four elders, who sat before God on their thrones, fell on their faces and worshipped God. They proclaimed, 'We give you thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was and who is to come, because You have taken Your great power and reigned. The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged. And that you should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great, and should destroy those who destroy the earth.' Rev 11:18.

The central feature of the seventh trumpet is that it announces the physical second coming of Christ and the day of resurrection for all believers. The seventh trumpet is the trumpet of the resurrection. In his letter to the Thessalonians, the apostle Paul declared, 'For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with *the voice of an archangel*, and with *the trumpet of God*. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.' 1Th 4:16-17.

In this passage, the apostle Paul made a distinction between the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God. The apostle John heard *the voice of an archangel* when Michael placed his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, and then 'cried out with a loud voice, as when a lion roars'. Rev 10:3. When Michael cried out, the seven thunders also uttered their voices. Significantly, in John's vision, the voice of the archangel immediately preceded the blowing of the seventh trumpet. The seventh trumpet is *the trumpet of God*. In his letter to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul also described the seventh trumpet as *the last trumpet*.

Paul described the day of resurrection by saying, 'Behold, I tell you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed - in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at *the last trumpet*. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.' 1Co 15:51-52. In this regard, the apostle Paul identified the central feature of the seventh trumpet. However, all of the detail that belongs to the seventh trumpet was not recorded in the prophetic Scriptures until the content of the *little book* was revealed to the apostle John. The book of Revelation explains that the voice of the archangel will be heard, and the seventh trumpet will begin to sound, about seven years before the day of resurrection.

The measurement of the temple

Having eaten the *little book*, which reveals all of the events that belong to the seventh trumpet, the apostle John was given a reed like a measuring rod.

Rev 11:1. We recall that the prophet Ezekiel was shown all the measurements of the true Temple, which is the body of Christ, by a man clothed in linen with a measuring rod in his hand. Eze 40:3-4. In the case of the apostle John, he was given the rod and instructed, by the mighty angel, to measure the Temple of God and the altar. The angel was referring to the incarnate reality of the same Temple and altar that had been revealed to the prophet Ezekiel.

The measurement of the altar and the Temple, as soon as the seventh trumpet is blown, has two important implications. The first implication is that the growth and maturity of a great multitude of sons of God, within the fellowship of the body of Christ, will be complete. The apostle Paul said that Christ has given ascension-gift overseers to the body of Christ, 'For the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to *the measure of the stature* of the fullness of Christ'. Eph 4:12-13.

When the great multitude come into the kingdom of God in the time of the end, they will begin to serve God, day and night, as priests in His temple. Rev 7:15. Jesus Christ, as the Lamb of God in the centre of the Father's throne, 'will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters'. Rev 7:17. 'The fountain of living water' is the resurrection life of Christ that flows, by the Spirit, from the sanctuary of the true Temple. As the great multitude are led by Christ, in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings, they will progressively attain to an increasing measure of *exanastasis* in their mortal bodies. *Exanastasis* is the power of Christ's resurrection life that outflows to the mortal members of His body in the fellowship of His offering.

The measurement of the altar and the true Temple, as the body of Christ, denotes that this measure will reach a stage of completion. We know that the great multitude will attain to a full measure of *exanastasis* while still in their mortal bodies, because one of the elders said to John, 'They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat.' Rev 7:16. The elder was quoting directly from the prophet Isaiah concerning the great multitude. Isaiah said, 'They shall neither hunger nor thirst, neither heat nor sun shall strike them; for He who has mercy on them will lead them, even by the springs of water He will guide them.' Isa 49:10.

The second implication of the measurement of the Temple and the altar, by the apostle John, is that it will mark the end of the work of atonement in the context of the Temple. This does not mean that the Temple will be completely

shut down at this point. The Temple will not be completely shut down until the judgement of the great white throne at the end of the Millennium.

Rev 20:11-15. However, the measurement of the Temple and the altar is *an integral step* that belongs to the process of progressively shutting down the Temple before the new heavens and new earth.

Following the measurement of the Temple and the altar, the body of Christ will no longer be the context for the living members of Christ to deal with sin and uncleanness. After this point, *martyrdom* will be the only way for a son of God to be baptised into the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings in order to be saved. Rev 14:13. When we read the book of Revelation, we see that there will be one final harvest of martyrs after the Temple has been measured. Rev 15:2. Rev 20:4. This group of martyrs will die because of their response and obedience to the word proclaimed by the two witnesses and the 144 000. Rev 14:9-11.

The ministry of Moses and Elijah

The mighty angel told the apostle John not to measure the outer court of the Temple because it will be given to the Gentiles to be trampled for a period of three and a half years. Rev 11:2. During these three and a half years, Christ will give power to His two witnesses to prophesy to the nations. Rev 11:3. The two witnesses of Christ are Moses and Elijah. We know that they are the two witnesses because they are specifically identified as the two men who spoke with Jesus about His offering journey when He was transfigured on the mountain. Luk 9:30. Even though they are not nominated by name, Moses and Elijah would have also been the two men who talked with the disciples after Jesus ascended to heaven from the Mount of Olives. Act 1:10.

We recall that Moses died on the top of Mount Nebo before the nation of Israel entered the promised land. Deu 34:5. The book of Deuteronomy recorded that the Lord Himself buried Moses, but no one knows his burial place. Deu 34:6. We learn why it is impossible to find the burial place of Moses when we read the letter of Jude. He recorded that the archangel Michael and the devil had a dispute about the body of Moses. Jud 1:9. Evidently, the Lord raised Moses from the dead to a resurrection of mortality. He is presently being preserved in heaven in a mortal body.

In contrast to Moses, who died, and was raised by the Lord, we know that Elijah did not die. Elijah was caught up in a whirlwind and taken straight to heaven. 2Ki 2:11. Like Moses, he is also being preserved in heaven in a mortal body. When we consider the ministry of Moses and Elijah during their lifetimes, we observe that neither of them fulfilled their mandate. The privilege of leading the nation of Israel into the promised land, and then distributing the land as an inheritance to each tribe, was taken from Moses

and given to Joshua, because, in the wilderness, Moses disobeyed God and hit the rock twice. Num 20:10-13.

Similarly, the prophetic mantle that belonged to Elijah was taken from him and given to Elisha, because he did not ask the Lord for a double portion of the Spirit to fulfil his ministry. Rather, in a fit of despair, he asked the Lord that he might die as he fled from the presence of Jezebel. 1Ki 19:4,16. In the Lord's mercy, Moses and Elijah will both return to fulfil the works that belong to their name, as the final prophetic witness to the nations in the end of the age. At the conclusion of the three and half years of their prophetic ministry, they will die with Christ, as the final martyrs of history, and then receive their full reward. Rev 11:7.

When we consider the power that will be given to the two witnesses for three and half years, it confirms our conclusion that the two witnesses are Moses and Elijah. For example, the two witnesses have the power to turn water into blood and to strike the earth with plagues. Rev 11:6. We know this is consistent with the power given to Moses when he was sent by God to deliver the nation of Israel from Egypt. Exo 7-11. Further to this, the two witnesses have the power to devour their enemies with fire, and to shut the heavens so that no rain falls on the earth. In this regard, the connection to the ministry of Elijah among the northern tribes of Israel is unmistakeable.

We read concerning the fire that 'if anyone wants to harm them [the two witnesses], fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner.' Rev 11:5. This is certainly reminiscent of the way in which Elijah called down fire from heaven to consume the soldiers who were sent to fetch him by the King of Samaria. 2Ki 1. It was the fire that belongs to the angelic administration that consumed the soldiers in this remarkable way. In a similar fashion, the fact that fire will devour the enemies of the two witnesses, demonstrates that the angelic administration will be working with them to invoke judgement upon the world.

Moses and Elijah are described as the 'two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the Earth'. The ministry of Moses and Elijah will be the final manifestation of 'light' in the world, as they proclaim by the Spirit of God, the sum of all the prophetic Scriptures to the godless nations. They will prophesy for three and a half years, clothed in sackcloth. Rev 11:3-4. Even though they will exercise great power before the eyes of men, the nature of their clothing demonstrates that they will, nevertheless, minister in a mode of weakness, characterised by lamentation and mourning, as they call the inhabitants of the world to repentance for one final time.

The two witnesses will overcome Abaddon

The ministry of Moses and Elijah, for three and a half years, will coincide with the time when the seventh world kingdom will be revived by Antichrist, to progressively emerge from the sea of the nations to become an eighth world kingdom. Rev 13:1. Having been cast out of heaven by Michael at the blowing of the seventh trumpet, Satan will give his power and great authority to Antichrist. Rev 13:2. When Satan gives his power to the beast, it will enable Antichrist to replace three of the ten kings who previously ruled over the nations under the administration of Babylon in the seventh world kingdom. Dan 7:8. The whole world will declare, 'Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?' Rev 13:4.

During this same season, a false prophet will emerge from the earth. Rev 13:11-12. He will perform great signs and cause the whole earth to worship Antichrist. Interestingly, he will also cause fire to come down from heaven in the presence of men. Rev 13:13. In this regard, the false prophet will function during the ministry of Moses and Elijah in a similar mode to Jannes and Jambres who mimicked the signs of Moses before the Pharaoh. Exo 7:22. 2Ti 3:8-9. Most notably, the false prophet will create an image of the beast and cause all men to worship the image. Rev 13:14-15. This will be a new image of man that will stand in direct opposition to Christ, who is the full revelation of man in the image and likeness of God. 2Co 3:18.

During the ministry of Moses and Elijah, Antichrist will be progressively empowered by Satan, once he has been cast to the earth; empowered by the false prophet who will emerge from the earth, and also by the kings of the earth. He will also have his own misappropriated power as a fallen messenger. However, despite all of this coopted power from the earth, it will not be possible for him to harm Moses and Elijah. When Moses and Elijah finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. Rev 11:7-8. As we have considered, the angel who ascends out of the bottomless pit is Abaddon. It is only when Abaddon also gives his power to the beast that Moses and Elijah will be killed. Rev 9:11. Rev 17:8.

This is a significant point. We know that it is the work of the church to overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb, by the word of our testimony, and by loving not our lives to the death. Rev 12:11. When we lay down our lives in the fellowship of Christ's death, the power of Satan is overcome and destroyed. He will be cast out of heaven at the blowing of the seventh trumpet. Rev 12:9. In a similar way, it will be the work of Moses and Elijah to overcome Abaddon by laying down their lives in the fellowship of Christ's death. When the two witnesses are killed by Abaddon, they will overcome and

destroy his power, and the power of all of the angels from the bottomless pit, forever.

Moses and Elijah will be the final two martyrs who will be killed before the outpouring of the vials at the beginning of the reign of Antichrist. We note that this is why they are called 'the two witnesses'. The word 'witness' means 'martyr'. When Moses and Elijah are killed, their bodies will lie in the street of the earthly Jerusalem, where Christ was crucified, for three and a half days. Rev 11:8-9. The unrepentant inhabitants of the earth will rejoice, and they will even send generous gifts to one another as part of a great celebration! Rev 11:10. At the end of the three and a half days, the breath of life from God will enter Moses and Elijah.

The breath of life from God will cause Moses and Elijah to stand up on their feet again. Significantly, they will be raised again to mortality, not to immortality. This will be a remarkable manifestation of *exanastasis* life. We could compare this miracle with the resurrection of Lazarus to mortality, after four days in the tomb. However, unlike the resurrection of Lazarus, it will not minister faith to anyone. Rather, a great fear will fall upon all men who witness this event. Rev 11:13. After they have been raised from the dead, Christ will call Moses and Elijah to return to heaven to await, with all the saints, the day of general resurrection. Rev 11:12.

The final ministry of the 144 000

During the trampling of the outer court for three and a half years, the church will no longer exercise authority over the nations. Rev 11:2. Having been cast out of heaven by the archangel Michael, as soon as the seventh trumpet is blown, Satan will persecute the church on the Earth. Rev 12:13. This season of persecution will coincide with the ministry of Moses and Elijah for three and a half years. The church, as the bride of Christ, will continue to be sustained by the resurrection life of Christ as she is protected in the Temple. The 144 000, who stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion, will support the ministry of Moses and Elijah. We know that the ministry of Moses and Elijah will be based in earthly Jerusalem, 'which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt'. Rev 11:8. At the same time, the 144 000 will continue to proclaim the word of God among all nations.

When we read Chapter 14 of the book of Revelation, we note that the focus of the 144 000 will be the proclamation of *three messages* to the nations. The first message that will be proclaimed by the 144 000 will be, 'Fear God and give glory to Him, for *the hour of His judgement has come*; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water'. Rev 14:7. We know that the day of the Lord's judgement upon the world will commence when the Father takes His seat. Joe 2:11. As part of this day, the blowing of

the seventh trumpet will announce the coming of the final hour of His judgement upon the world when the fullness of His wrath will be poured out.

The second message that will be proclaimed by the 144 000 will be, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication'. Rev 14:8. We recall that the blowing of the second trumpet will announce the fall of the administration and the economy of Babylon. Rev 8:8-9. As we have already considered, once the seventh trumpet has been blown, the seventh world kingdom will be revived and will emerge from the sea of the nations as an eighth world kingdom. Rev 13:1. Having been cast out of heaven, Satan will give his power and authority to the beast. Rev 13:2.

When the eighth world kingdom first emerges from the sea of the nations, it will be ruled by the ten kings together with the beast. Rev 13:1. Having previously mourned the fall of the economy of Babylon, the kings of the earth will hate the administration of Babylon. Rev 17:16. The administration of Babylon will be made completely desolate when the kings of the earth choose to give their power and authority to Antichrist. Rev 17:17. Antichrist and the false prophet will replace the economy of Babylon with a new economic system. Receiving the mark of the beast will be necessary for every person who wants to buy and sell within the economic system that belongs to the eighth world kingdom. Rev 13:16-17.

The third message that will be proclaimed by the 144 000 is, 'If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation'. Rev 14:9-10. As we have already stated, the ministry of Moses and Elijah, along with the word that is proclaimed by the 144 000, will grant to those who dwell on the earth *a final opportunity* to respond to the gospel of God. Those who respond with repentance and faith during this phase will die as martyrs.

It is notable that the apostle John recorded, '*Here* is the patience of the saints; *here* are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus'. Rev 14:12. John was drawing the attention of his readers to two major points. First, this will be the final phase of *patience* for the saints under the altar who were told by the Lord *to wait* until the number of their fellow martyrs is complete. Rev 6:10-11. Second, this will be the phase when Satan will make war with the remnant of the church's seed who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. Rev 12:17.

Satan will wage war with the remnant of the church's seed by giving his power and throne and great authority to Antichrist, and to the eighth world kingdom as it emerges from the sea of the nations. We read in the book of Revelation

that Antichrist will make war with the saints and overcome them. Rev 13:7. Significantly, Christ instructed John to write concerning all of these martyrs: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on'. He then heard the Spirit say, 'Yes, that they may rest from their labours, and their works follow them'. Rev 14:13.

Moses and Elijah will be the last martyrs. Once the number of martyrs has been completed, the seven angels will pour out the seven vials upon Antichrist and the eighth world kingdom. Rev 16:1. Immediately prior to the outpouring of the vials, the apostle John saw the martyrs, who had gained the victory over the beast and his image, standing on 'something like a sea of glass mingled with fire'. Rev 15:2. They sang the song of Moses and of the Lamb. Following the day of resurrection, these martyrs will be part of the great company who will reign on the earth, with Christ, for 1 000 years. Rev 20:4.

When Moses and Elijah are killed, the power of the holy people will have been shattered in the earth. Dan 12:7. Antichrist will then be given authority to reign over the entire world for a further three and a half years. However, prior to the beginning of Antichrist's reign over the earth, the church will be given the two wings of an eagle to fly into the wilderness, to the place that has been prepared for her by God. Rev 12:6. The entire church, as the bride of Christ, will be miraculously nourished by God in the wilderness for a period of three and a half years. Rev 12:6,14. During this time, the wilderness will blossom like 'the rose'. Isa 35:1. This will be a specific and unique manifestation of the wedding feast that God has prepared for Christ and His bride in the time of the end. Rev 19:9.

The judgement of Antichrist and the Millenium

The seven vials will be poured out upon Antichrist at the beginning of his sole rulership over the eighth world kingdom. As we have noted, the sole rulership of Antichrist will last for three and a half years. There will be no prophetic witness or light in the world during his reign. The entire church, including the 144 000, will be protected and nourished by God in the wilderness for this three and a half years. In relation to the Seventy Weeks prophecy, the reign of Antichrist will be during the second half of the seventieth week. It is the time when complete destruction, which has been decreed, will be poured out upon 'the one who makes desolate'. Dan 9:27.

Antichrist will spend the entire three and half years of his reign in a desperate bid to rearm the nations so that he can gather the kings of the earth, and all of their armies, to the battle of Armageddon. Rev 16:13-16. Once all of the nations have been gathered, Jesus Christ will physically return to defeat Antichrist, and to cast him, along with the false prophet, into the lake of fire. Rev 19:11-20. The rest of mankind will be slaughtered by the sword that

proceeds from His mouth. Rev 19:21. Satan will be bound by Michael and cast into the bottomless pit for 1 000 years. Rev 20:1-3. During the same 1 000 years, the believers, from all ages, will reign with Christ on the earth. Rev 20:6.

The day of resurrection for all believers will happen at the beginning of the Millenium. On that day, all believers will receive an immortal and incorruptible body from Christ, one that has been composed from the very DNA of His resurrection body. When the physical body that they receive from Christ is clothed with the glory of their heavenly body from the Father, they will possess a new spiritual body. During the Millenium, the bride city will fill the whole earth as the kingdom of God. At the end of the Millenium, the ungodly will be raised in their mortal body to be cast, by Christ, into the lake of fire, along with the devil and all of the fallen angels. Rev 20:7-10. The bride city will then become the administrative headquarters of the new heavens and new earth. Rev 21:2.

CHART TO ACCOMPANY 'THE ELIJAH MINISTRY IN THE TIME OF THE END'

