

Getting
Started on the
Journey
TO LIFE

HOPE OVWAH

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Printed in the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

First Published February, 2012.

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Benin City, Nigeria.
08056012177

For more information on foreign distribution, call Segun +12818590827 Or reach us on www.kingdomword.net

ISBN 978-978-932-460-8

Published By:
Mareh publishers
77, Igun Street,
Benin City, Nigeria.
marehpub@yahoo.com

PREFACE

The burden expressed in this book is concerned with the challenge of hearing and responding to the Voice of God calling His children to flee religious Babylon, ere her plagues already revealed, be poured out on her systems.

“And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues” (Rev. 18: 4).

God has made a powerful disclosure of the harlot church systems and their corrupting influences in the Church world. Many Disciples of Christ today find themselves having to contend with the spiritual conditions celebrated as normal in almost all visible church systems but which are deeply in conflict with what New Testament teaches and expects of the body of Christ. The truly godly is moving at counter

current to the general direction of flow of the masses of people and their idol shepherds both professing to be followers of Jesus Christ. All shades of moral uncleanness and sharp practices bordering on depravity have seized many assemblies so that “there is no place clean” in these places. The teaching ‘tables’ are full of demonic vomits and filthiness poured out by demons received by out-of-the-way priests and prophets as sermon materials (Isaiah 28:7, 8).

This is in harmony with the message that divinely commissioned, blood washed human angels are proclaiming everywhere today in the power of the Spirit of the indwelling Christ.

“And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird” (Rev. 18:2).

Those who have been assisted by God to see the state of the harlot church systems of man and have heard and hearkened to the clarion call: ***“Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye***

receive not of her plagues” are necessarily asking this question, **What shall I do?**

As you go through the pages of this study material, may the Spirit of the Almighty God quicken your inner man and greatly help you. Join this Chariot: place a copy of this book in the hands of an earnest inquirer with prayers to God for his blessing of spiritual enlightenment and obedient response to the Lord. Be Blessed In Jesus Name, Amen.

■Beersheba Weds Adewale■

"To the Lord our God, We give all the glory; Power and Strength and Majesty; For ever and ever, Amen; For ever and ever, Amen".

Kindly receive this book "***Getting Started on the Journey to Life***" which is freely given to all guests at Miss Beersheba Ologure's wedding ceremony. We find it fitting on this occasion to do this as her father, **Bro. Whisky Oghenemine Ologure**, now living in the bosom of the Redeemer, was anointed of God, evidencing in ministry, a uniquely clear speech on diverse aspects of the "narrow Way that leads to Life". His fruitful work abides still.

We have, in interceding faith, desired of God that divine breath may abound on this book, making it all the more effective as a '*secondarily prophetic writing*' for the blessing of many.

Hope Ovwah,
House Fellowship, Benin City.
October 18, 2014.

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INTRODUCTION

This book is written to provide helpful insights into understanding the clarion call going forth, *in this prophetic last hour*, out of the presence of our soon returning Redeemer-King, the Lord Jesus Christ: *What it all entails; and what it enjoins* on His obedient followers.

It is indeed the last time in the divine reckoning: not only for mankind generally but, more particularly for the ***gospel age marked out for the calling, saving, growing and perfecting in His image and likeness, all who daily prove they have wholly given their hearts to Jesus Christ.***

In the wisdom of God, He has set forth the great work of the gospel age in the midst of the darkness of this present world that is home to wickedness and satanic sprits manifesting in varying forms of ranked idolatry and man's worship of man.

It is rightly expected that, given this situation in the world, the course of life of those who yearn to be accounted worthy for the glories of the heavenly Kingdom that shall be revealed at the Lord's coming, will be characterized by trialsome challenges. The Scriptures teach that this is so and that, under God's hands, the fierce opposition of the world actually tests the unreserved loyalty of all those who profess they love the Lord. Unfaithfulness in any measure in some believers tends to make the path of the faithful ones more difficult to walk in.

But unfaithfulness in things pertaining to a believer's moral walk and his worship of God, when habitual, will involuntarily find shelter in congregational settings *largely* made up of persons of the same kind. What marks these places out is that there is a gradual setting aside of the Lord, His Word and the rule of the Holy Spirit.

In this connection, we may speak of the Church or rather the *churches* in different locations; and then of the *denominations* with clear cut deviations from the New Testament pattern of things and then, after a while, of *spiritual Babylon*. All these expressions of the Ecclesia, though differing in almost everything, confessedly see themselves as being built by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, it is just a journey, (*a short distance journey*), that actually separates a **denomination** from **spiritual Babylon**. **Not a gulf but a broad way; a boulevard** that links these two *places*. They have many things in common and the Bible therefore applies the same prophetic symbols to both of them. It is a sobering fact, strange enough, that some of the Lord's people may be found in these **places**.

Even in more favourable cycles where His word is embraced as the ruling light in life and service there are very troubling developments. As we pointed out elsewhere in another book, the generality of Christians are significantly aware that the time of the return of Christ to install the Kingdom of heaven is imminent. It is evident however, that this awareness has not translated into the preparation of the Church for the momentous event.

On the contrary, and as is signified by the Church in Laodicea, (Rev. 3:14-21), the prototype of the visible church systems of today, spirituality is possibly at its lowest ebb ever. *The vital signs of a focused and robust witness for Christ in the rank and file of the churches are not just disappointing, but disappearing.*

How does God react to the foregoing?
What is God saying about the condition of the

churches? Is the Lord realizing the purpose for His atoning death on the cross of Calvary? Will the glorious results that prophet Isaiah predicted be indeed the fruit of the travail of Jesus Christ, as also Apostle John records in the book of Revelation? ***What lies ahead for the Man of Calvary, the risen Lord? Has Christ's work failed?*** Or is His expectation of having a body of sons of God drawn from among men but made divine replicas of Him unattainable?

Are there any of the sons of men who care about bringing everlasting pleasure to God in their lives? Has Christ's love failed to birth in man's heart a consuming, passionate love for God and for His glory on earth? Will His Kingdom ever come and His perfect will embraced in all the earth? Do we find visible enough evidence ***in the lives of some of His followers pointing unerringly to the sure coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and of their share in the honours of His glorious reign over the nations?***

God's answers to the questions we have asked as well as also the Lord's many-sided reaction to the spiritual decays in the Churches are set forth in all Scriptures in both the Old and New Testaments. The beginning of a real encounter with God's sovereign move to stem the tide of spiritual declension, recover the obedient at

heart and out of them bring many sons to glory, is to be seen in those who hearken to the great call of this hour:

*“And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, **Come Out Of Her, My People,** that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues” (Rev. 18: 4).*

You are reading this book PERHAPS because the voice of God in the above charge has sounded authoritatively in your inward man. Or, God’s voice is now set to reach you in great power as you continue to read these pages.

“Men and brethren, what shall we do?” the people asked under a heavy conviction on the day of Pentecost when the gospel sounded forth to them in the power of the Holy Spirit. In the work of restoration the Lord is carrying out now, those who hearken to that Voice that descends from heaven with a shout, **COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE**, are invariably asking the same type of question. We respond to this Voice as individuals. So every man heeding the call is asking, ‘what shall I do?’

“What shall I do?”, the title of the book now in your hands, take up step by step, the demand of God for those whose spirits have been stirred up

to seek a full union with Christ in life and a throne placement in His heavenly Kingdom. Practical counsels are given that will facilitate a vibrant fellowship with the Lord whose Spirit has the power and responsibility to fully incorporate Christ in us. He alone has the blueprint. He will chart the specific course that is most suited for a given individual, considering all things that are peculiar to him. Praise God, all persons so taken up by the Holy Spirit travel on the same one **street** of the heavenly city, **the way** to Zion that leads to glory. Amen! Hallelujah!!.

May the great God of the Heavens, Jehovah Shalom, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you-and me-perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us that which is well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen

CHAPTER ONE

“COME OUT OF *HER*”

“And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues” (Rev. 18: 4).

“Depart ye, Depart ye, go ye out of from thence, touch no unclean thing, go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean that bear the vessels of the LORD.

For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight, for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rereward” (Isa.52:11,12).

Glory, honour, power, and majesty be continually ascribed to the most high God who alone is worthy to be worshipped and adored. We bless our God and Saviour for the glorious work of redemption that He is executing

in all the earth. Let us rejoice and be exceedingly glad for His gracious mercies which He has abundantly blessed us with in opening our eyes to see and to embrace what the Holy Spirit is saying and doing in the midst of the **church world** today. The Holy Spirit's unveilings of the desolate condition of the churches and of the present day ministry of Jesus Christ who walks in her midst carrying out a multi-faced work of restoration is bringing a most refreshing new order of things to those who have ears to hear Him.

The heavenly Messenger of the covenant as the Prophet Malachi of old prophesied has suddenly but with great authority come into His **temple**, that is, **unto His people**. He comes and keeps manifesting the purpose of breaking in among us as it is clearly predicted in Malachi 3:1-2. In His final acts of redemption dealings with the spiritually discerning, the work of judging, denouncing, correcting, rebuking are also coupled with that of cleansing, leading, teaching, preparing and perfecting the obedient in heart.

A GREAT TRUMPET SOUND

Most aspects of these mighty works of intervention in the ecclesia are accompanied or rather accomplished in the manner indicated in

the Holy Scriptures. A good example is readily seen in a *similar work* He carried out in the early Church. The prophetic report by John, given in Revelation Chapter 1, 2 AND 3 declares that He executed *that work* by **a great voice, as of a trumpet sound.** In that visitation which gave birth to the book of Revelation written by Apostle John, all the messengers that went forth from His presence proclaimed their mission in the manner commanded of the prophets of old: “*Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet...*” (Isaiah 58:1). See for example **Rev. 4:1, 6:1, 7:2, 10: 3, 14:7, 16:1, and 18:2** among others. We will have cause to refer to the Rev. 18:2 passage a little later. But it must be understood that what is indicated in the strength of the proclaiming voice is not through either a high pitch speaking or in soft persuasive tones. It is rather in the anointing and in the divine authority bearing witness to the message. Even so, everywhere today, the Lord Jesus Christ is apprehending, transforming and sending out to His people an increasing number of persons to bear witness to the work of restoration. God’s servants going forth in the voice of the Son of God will, under enabling grace of the Holy Spirit, have a clear, distinct, directional and Christ enthroning message (1Corinthians 14:8, 12:3, 2Cor. 4:5. John16: 13-15).

God is indeed thrusting out men and, we boldly declare, women too, with a great sound of a trumpet into the heavenly spheres of the Church world, proclaiming a message calling His people to deep repentance and a returning to the Lord. They have a further ministry to those who have ears to hear, **urging** them to commit their **hearts to the love and service of the Bridegroom-King, the Lord Jesus Christ.** (Matthew 24:31, 25:1.6; Psalm 50:5). Oh friend, the trumpet of God is sounding in this last hour. Yes, it is preparing the way of the Lord in the hearts of men, overthrowing all hindrances on the path of its proclamation; before its sound **“every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight and the rough places plain”**

**ALL MAY HEAR THE TRUMPET SOUND
WITH PROFIT**

But to whom is the TRUMPET sound sent? Those who mourn in Zion? Yes, of-course. Or is it to those “that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that” are going on in Christian assemblies today? Again, the answer is, ‘Yes’. Is the trumpet meant also for the sleeping and slumbering saints, some caught up with immoral and unholy dealings? Oh, YES! What about

those who though professing faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour but are nevertheless patrons of and/or members of harlot religious systems who as such court and are courted by the world and its' strange, abominable ways? Y-E-S is the answer that heaven gives.

A sheep that has long strayed away from the Shepherd may not be able to hear another's voice. The sheep knows only the Shepherd's voice. But the trumpet sound is not heard merely by the external ears which another voice may access. The voice of the Son of God sounding forth in His servants will be heard by every true sheep no matter how far lost. The heart of our Heavenly Father is tender towards ALL who are truly His. God is a most passionate lover; possessive and unyielding, making us willing but never compelling. Nothing in our state can deter Him but He watches out for the early signs of a willingness of a convicted soul to return to Him. Then He gives strength and increases might in order to revive the souls of the contrite ones.

In this great hour of restoration as it was in the day we heard the message of salvation and believed, it is God that takes the first step. And how gloriously powerful is the footstep of the Majesty on high! YES, God takes the first step. NO man knew his need of the Saviour until He

was divinely drawn to the Redeemer's side. Just so we know not ourselves as He knows us. God knows us well and leads the way out of every deception of the adversary of our soul.

A WOMAN TURNED ASIDE FROM HER HUSBAND YET BEARING HIS NAME

There is an age-long deception that has engulfed the Church world and dogs all who truly love the Lord with a sincere heart. Strange enough, this deception shows up more forcefully in assemblies of professing believers in Christ Jesus. The Apostle Paul by divine inspiration calls this spirit of deception, "***the mystery of iniquity***" (2Thess.2: 7). The Prophet Zechariah calls it "***Wickedness***" and declares further that ***a woman sits in this midst of it (Zech. 5:5-8; note particularly verses 7 and 8)***. The Apostle John in the book of Revelation, like Zechariah does, *personifies this phenomenon as a woman* and then presents her as pretentiously claiming to carry out a service in the interest of God. BUT by her works, she manifestly hates the name of the Lord and His true disciples (Titus 1:16). By seductive allurements and gaining appeal through the patronage of unfaithful believers, this harlot woman has so many in its' stranglehold. The mystery of iniquity at work under cover way back in the Early Church

continues to work more visibly **now** because the falling away predicted by Paul has begun (2 Thess. 2: 3-7).

John traces the beginning of this strange woman to the defection of some of the typical Churches of Christ discussed in Rev. Chapters 1, 2 and 3. Oh yes, she had her beginning in Christ. The prophetic parable of Numbers Chapter 5:11-31 ***describes her as a wife that goes aside, committing trespass against the husband, a type of the heavenly Bridegroom.*** What a heritage turned into a colossal disaster! This is a harlot who has concretely housed in herself the mystery of iniquity. O friend, the mystery of iniquity is not floating in space or else it will be powerless. It has taken residence in human persons, in Church systems doing their own thing but appearing to sincerely serve the cause of Christ. The Lord is greatly concerned because so many of His children unsuspectingly through *membership* share in her identity. In mercy, God has come and still comes to His children in the sounding trumpet by which also He quickens us to hear with conviction the one charge: ***COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE. TO ONE AND TO ALL COMES THIS CLARION CALL***

The call of the trumpet bears the same message to all. We may differ one from another in our spiritual estates. Surely we differ, at least in the eyes of one another. But no matter anyone's **presumed** spiritual and moral bearing at this present time, from the divine perspective, **the trumpet sound is sent his way also**. Why? The spirit of this age, and the pervasive darkening influences of the harlot church systems, acting singly or together set up atmospheres that can **vex, limit the advance of** or even **defile** anyone. Only the prophetic word, heard continually and lived in has sanctifying grace able also to keep a soul above the waters of evil. The Lord in this connection warns even apostles and other faithful followers, three days to His atoning death on the cross, to take heed "lest at anytime **your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life...**" (Luke 21:34). Drunkenness! Terrible, you say? Yes, but most subtle also. It is bad enough if any gives himself over to alcohol. But those apostles were not wine bibbers even before they came to the Lord Jesus. This stern warning was for them not to romance with **the harlot religious system** of their day no matter **her** alluring and pretentious claims of having the seal of Moses.

In that era, just as in the present time, this mystery woman, who had her beginning in

Christ, *but progressively went aside from Him and became harlot, 'keeps' His names and titles, maintains church outfits, decked with either colourful robes or rituals or both*, and ministers to ALL the illicit *wine of the wrath of her fornication (Rev.18:3)* instead of the pure gospel of the Kingdom. Whoever receives of her invariably gets drunk; always. She pays herself for this service by sucking out life from her unwary victims. Her catch is inclusive of saints, martyrs of Jesus, some of whom were in her fold before she progressively went aside from her heavenly Bridegroom.(Rev.17:2-6, note verse 6).

SHE IS NOT HIDDEN ANYMORE

Her guilt and unclean tastes expose her. So take a look at her for though she appears in different cities, towns and villages of the world in varying expressions you cannot miss how real name is spelt (Babylon) and how she smells. She causes wonder and amazement when her trickery is uncovered. **She is so different from the many names with which she identifies herself (Rev. 17:7 read and considered with Rev.3:17)**. But it is only God that can give us a full and effectual uncovering of this most potent enemy of the gospel of the Kingdom. Praise God forever and ever who has

made a proclamation of her destruction and of her terrible uncleanness. The smoke of her burning have we begun to see with our eyes!

EAGLE SAINT NOW ARISE

Eagle saints awake to the voice of the Lord! Eagle saints now arise at the sound of the trumpet!! **Make Sure, Then Depart; Depart You Saints Of God For There Is Now A Gathering Unto The Lord!!!**

Make sure you are seeing her nakedness and fall with the help of God's eyes. (Rev. 18:2) Make sure you understand with the help of the Spirit of wisdom and revelation that she has defiled and made drunk all the inhabitants of the earth. (Rev.18:3; 17:2). **Yes, make sure.** The delicately mixed wine she serves is made from fully ripe grapes of her cultivation. By such of her grapes that are already fully ripe ye shall know her and her offspring: ***gospel of extortion, living in luxury at the expense of the sheep, despotic leadership style, self advertising syndrome, names of blasphemy, eyes full of adultery, viciousness are usually the first of the ripe grapes, By their fruits, the Lord Jesus assures us, we shall know them.***

Then make sure you are inclining your ears towards the Lord. He will surely make you hear the trumpet sound: COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE. We were with her when the voice reached us. He referred to us as His people. Oh what compassion, Oh what boundless love! All who are truly delivered and now walking together in the unfettered spheres of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus were once captives to this strange woman. Have you heard and hearkened to the voice of the divine command? Yes, you say, but what should I now do? The trumpet sound waxing more intense inside of you will show you the way. Open up yourself to the liberating sound of the trumpet of the gospel of the Kingdom. It is now sounding and will continue to go forth “***in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the End come.***” (Matthew 24:14). So make sure your response to the call is effectual. Make sure with the obedient response you give comes a deep work of cleansing of your entire being. Seek this diligently.

Here is why: “And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, ***Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and ye receive not of her plagues.***” A man’s experience of a cleansed heart, the possession of a contrite spirit that is intent on following the Lamb wherever He leads is the first milestone in

his new walk with God. Seek this diligently. Turn your heart to the prophetic word constituting the essence of the trumpet sound and you shall find help at your door steps. Glory be to God in the highest. Amen and amen.

God is sure to lower His hands upon you and upon all in whom there is a deep longing after Christ (Hebrew 9: 28; Psalm 42:1, 84:2-3). This book in your hand comes to you because there is a divine desire towards you. Blessed be His holy name.

Let us put the foregoing in clear perspective that the reader may all the more appreciate the urgency of the matter and understand why moral and spiritual transformation is at the centre of the present day ministry of Jesus Christ. The time is at hand and a great work lies ahead that is to be done in and through us. The Lord will do a quick and short work and cut it short in righteousness. But there is no time left for playing Church or for being mired in the filthiness of the flesh and spirit. The exceeding great and precious promises that shine forth into the hearts of those who receive the word indeed are quite able to perfect holiness in the fear of God (2Corinthians 7:1; 2 Peter 1:4)

This is a most momentous season in the history of the human race. The Creator of the heavens and the earth is bringing the curtain

down on the present world systems that lie in wickedness. The world is very probably much more wicked today than what was witnessed before Noah's flood.

God has in His Son, Jesus Christ, prior to this time, set up an expression of His Kingdom on earth which will overthrow the civil, social, religious and political order of today. The end of this world, in the above sense is at hand. The Kingdom of Heaven which under the divine plan is destined to take over the new age to be introduced, has its beginning and gradual development in the Church of Jesus Christ, an organism that most persons are significantly aware of. ***It must be clearly understood that the Most High God is not ceding the next age to the first or to the second, third or fourth world countries. The rule of the kingdoms and empires of men over the world spanning great epochs of time until now has been most tyrannical just as much as it has cultured satanic worship and the most debased moral practices.*** It is destined to be cut off, pass away, giving place to Christ's righteous Kingdom as indicated in 2nd Peter 3:10-14 and some other Scriptures.

“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which, the

heaven shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with a fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein DWELLETH RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless”

THE MAIN ISSUES THAT SHOULD NOW CONCERN THE EAGLE SAINTS

A careful examination of the above Scriptures, considered along with the Malachi 3:1-3 passage shows that an immediate concern of the Lord in the work of preparing the **Church, His**

Kingdom now, for the next age, is in the dealing with the character, moral and spiritual bearing of His people. *The right to ruling with Christ in the Kingdom age will be given only to those who fully submit to His moral and spiritual transformation.* In this connection, the Lord is pleased to use an individual's closet devotions and daily walk as the *principal* spheres in which He comes to him “**like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap**”.

Man is ever more committed to doing things than allowing an enduring work to be done in him. We are better able to do His pleasure in service to Him, when He has been allowed to carry out this two-fold work in us. This observation brings us to the leading texts given at the beginning of this Chapter. They are reproduced here to aid our examination of them now.

“Depart ye, Depart ye, go ye out of from thence, touch no unclean thing, go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean that bear the vessels of the LORD.

For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight, for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rereward”

(Isa.52:11,12).

Let us note the following points which are taken in the order in which they are presented.

THE FIRST THINGS TO DO

When the trumpet sound reaches an individual, the first thing to do as counselled here, is to leave the spiritual environment adjudged by the Lord's word as being of the harlot system. 'COME OUT OF HER' must begin with isolating yourself from continuing in 'her' activities. God says for you to **"go ye out of from thence"**. **Let His wisdom do the thinking for you. Obey Him.**

Next, God through the Prophet Isaiah counsels, **"touch no unclean thing, go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean that bear the vessels of the LORD"**. The message in this counsel is full of wisdom and instruction for the obedient. It calls for a further action to be taken after obeying the clarion call to 'COME OUT OF HER'. If the **first** act of obedience is to 'ISOLATE' oneself from 'her', which is *physically separating* from the harlot circle, **the second** calls for something of a spiritual sort. The Lord is calling for a purging from the defilement that has come through long association with the harlot Church system. The heart will need purifying from the iniquitous ways and practices that abound in that order.

Spiritually INSULATING ourselves from these aforementioned things is quite crucial to progressing effectively in your journey to fullness of life in Christ Jesus. Proper attention must be given to opening up to the Lord and to receiving deep cleansings through the word and by His atoning blood.

Embarrassing difficulties will show up on the path of one who is not clean delivered from the ways of Babylon. Babylon is indeed a spirit. Deliverance there-from must involve the two events of 'ISOLATING' and 'INSULATING' so as to effectively separate from 'HER' The spirit of that *woman* is as deceptive and crafty as it is vicious. Do not underestimate her venom. Times of repentance and looking inward in the light of the moral laws of God should be set apart and used habitually. In doing this, sincerity with oneself is called for. To this must be added sincerity toward the testimony in His word. The grace of God both enlightens and delivers. The **prophetic word** under the mighty power of the Holy Spirit is efficient in crushing all God-dishonouring attitudes. **It** is a divine hammer that destroys the tenacious hold on a soul, of the unclean ways of that *woman*. Notice what additional attention is given in the text to those who are ministers of God by a divine calling. All who bear leadership responsibilities in the spheres of service from which they are now

called must give up the erroneous practices of that old system. The New Testament Scriptures have clear teaching respecting the doctrines of Christ, Church structure and how the church functions under the leading of the Holy Spirit. The bye-laws and constitutions of denominational Church systems should not be **'carried over'** into the new thing God is doing. The principles of God's word and the path charted by the Apostles of the Lamb and used by the early Church remain the guiding light for all aspects of Church life and mission. We shall take more thoughts in another section of this pamphlet on how the home fellowship functions.

**“BE YE CLEAN THAT BEAR THE
VESSELS OF THE LORD”**

Divinely pleasing ministry can only result from submitting to God's method of doing things. The Word of God and the ministry of the Holy Spirit **are His agencies** by which the redemption plan and purpose are executed on earth. In this passage the word *'vessels'* of the Lord relate to the means of dispensing grace in the New Testament Church. The ministry of the word and prayer are principal vessels given to the Church for the execution of her mission.

Thirdly, the word of God further counsels the obedient that has *'come out of her'* and set

his entire being on receiving moral cleansings and spiritual renewals to make very sure these things. The third thing to do, among other things, is to **commit to reinforcing the landmark decisions of being free in-and-out from that harlot woman.**

This reinforcement of spiritual and moral convictions in line with the new encounters received of the Lord is so important that a section of the next chapter will be devoted to giving it fuller consideration. But a little more details will be attended to here in line with what this chapter is emphasizing.

***“For ye shall not go out with haste,
nor go by flight, for the LORD will
go before you; and the God of Israel
will be your rereward”***

(Isa.52:12).

At the first reading, the 12th verse of Isaiah 52, (reproduced above) seems to contradict the command given in the preceding verse. In the 11th verse, the command is thrice given for His own to ‘depart’; ‘to go ye out of the midst of her’; indicating a great sense of urgency as though their personal security is bound up in being obedient. But then, in the very next verse, His people are told, **“ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight”**. How may we then

understand what the divine intention is, in the two contrasting verses?

The Lord is instructing His people that the new thing He is leading them to is to be realized in Him and through focusing on Him exclusively. We are to live by His life; and this life replenishes us daily so long as there is a total focus on Him in whom life inheres. The name of the Most High God used in the first part of verse 12 translated, 'LORD' is JEHOVAH. (*The name 'Jehovah' is used to emphasize Him as the self-existent God who is also the SOURCE of all living. Every work of redemption is introduced by a name the Lord takes in connection with it: Jehovah 'Rapha', Jehovah Shammah, Jehovah Jireh, are but few examples*). Whatever God has marked out for us is both found and realized in Him. Thus He calls us to Himself supremely. He calls us to intimacy with Him. We are called to know Him **whom to know is 'eternal life'** (John 17: 3). He is God who keeps supplying us His life (*being 'LORD'*); and who transforms us into His full image and likeness (being the **One who changed** the 'supplanter' Jacob to the princely Israel).

The call then should be understood not as a change of faith but **a divine pull, a reaching out of God's hand to the willing hearted to bring them into full union with Him.**

.Here God is presenting Himself as the One who is now to take full charge over us in all things pertaining to life and service.

We should understand that our need from the onset is to become acquainted with the voice of His Word and Spirit. How natural it is for us to want to “*go out in some service for God;*”! Man is always in a hurry; wants to speak the new “kingdom vocabulary”, to deride those in “Babylon”. But while all of these things may have their place in their redeemable aspects, the Lord wants to bring the obedient to a fuller knowledge of Him and His ways first and foremost. This makes possible for us to do His work more effectively.

THE FRUIT OF OBEDIENCE

Then of-course He will lead the obedient both individually and collectively in His service. Those who are led in this way will find Him where they serve His will and discover to their delight that ***He follows them, providing, protecting, preserving and upholding.***

There is a practical dimension to this which should be taken to heart by all. The sound of the trumpet of God may meet one while still in the payroll of some denominational set-up. All of the family support may spring from earnings derived through serving this system. What

should such a person do, if he has decisively 'come out of her?'

It is in being acquainted with God's leading that the plan of God for sorting out such a problem will be found. There is a divine provision for everyone who obediently turns to God with the whole heart in the manner just described. God will make a way for His faithful disciples who put their trust in Him. Sometimes, seeking also the counsel of godly persons walking in obedience to this great call will, under God, prove helpful.

CHAPTER TWO

**WHEN YOU HAVE
“COME OUT OF HER”**

*“For there shall be a day that the **watchmen** upon mount Ephraim shall cry, **“Arise ye, let us go up to Zion, unto the Lord our God”** (Jer.31:6)*

*“They shall ask the way to Zion, with their face thitherward, saying, **“Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten”** (Jer.50.5)*

Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, predicted that the Children of Israel would go into captivity to *Babylon* because of their unfaithfulness and idolatries. He then went on to predict that there would be a return from captivity, not just a coming back, not only to the land of their fathers but more importantly to the living God. He is the covenant keeping God who

releases His mighty power to secure His eternal purpose in Christ Jesus from failure. The return of Israel from captivity was made possible by a mighty work of the Holy Spirit stirring up of the hearts of the remnant. The Spirit of grace and supplication was poured out upon intercessors that were thus enabled to hold unto JEHOVAH HOSENU to bring His word to pass respecting their return. They were forced into captivity by military conquest. Their return was secured not by force of arms but by God working in partnership with watchmen and intercessors.

*“Thus saith the **LORD, the Maker thereof, the LORD that formed it, to establish it; the LORD is His name. Call unto me and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not**” (Jer.33: 2 and 3).*

The highlighted portion of in the passage of Scripture reproduced above bears out a most interesting covenant name of the Most High God, **JEHOVAH HOSENU, the LORD our Maker**. This name emphasizes the fact that the full scope of all of God’s redemptive plan, from start to finish are set out by Him and He is unreservedly committed to executing every bit of it. Here in this passage, God gives the prophet the assurance that the return of Israel back to the Promised Land is but a small thing. **It will**

just be a new beginning that will steadily usher in so great an inheritance beyond human description. All that were lost to the captivity will be restored, and much more.

The foregoing sets forth in a typical way but pointing to a much more glorious antitype, **the great work of deliverance from spiritual Babylon that Jesus Christ is executing in the earth today.** The recovery of lost truth and the graces of the Spirit that it births in His people; the perfection and glorification of the overcoming Church are all in the bargain for those who earnestly seek to enter the estate of the first resurrection class. And just as coming out Babylon back then was only a beginning that opened the door to executing a tremendous work of far reaching dimensions, **so today there is laid out for the obedient, who have come out of spiritual Babylon, an exciting and most satisfying *journey to full union with Christ in heart, mind and will.***

This is a far more important observation than may be realized at the first reading. How well a soul progresses in the journey to the full glories of incorruptibility and immortality depend so much on the character of the foundation laid upon escaping from the hold of *that harlot woman.* **But what exactly fits into picture**

of having started the journey to the throne on a high promissory note? How do I start well? What shall I do?

As we set out to answer these questions, may we say again even at the risk of repetition, that coming out of that harlot system, though a very definite beginning, an all important step that must be taken, never-the-less it is not an end in itself. The future glories beckon on such a one to settle down to serious business with our Saviour-God. With a view to adequately preparing oneself to press toward the mark for the prize of the High calling of God in Christ Jesus, the following should be noted properly.

(a) STRENGTHEN OUR PERSONAL ALTAR, GIVING MUCH MORE ATTENTION TO YOUR DEVOTIONS OF PRAYERS AND WORSHIP

All we need to come to fullness of life is in Christ Jesus. Christ in the believer is the means of bringing him through all the stages of growth until he stands completely divine; in the image and likeness of the eternal saviour. Our personal altar must provide the platform for building up an intensive relationship with Christ. One day with the Lord is worth so much more than what the labours of several ministries will bring to us. This is not diminishing the place and purpose of

anointed ministries set in the body of Christ for the task of building us up.

Rather, we are better made able to profit from their ministries when the indwelling Christ has gained the mastery over us. The ascendancy of Christ over the self life; the conquest of the soul and a full embrace of the government of the Holy Spirit over a man are all facilitated by a robust personal fellowship with Christ in the closet, away from all distractions.

There are transactions the Holy Spirit will lead us to make with the details of which come to us while in devotions of prayer and worship. The Holy Spirit has the blue print. It is by Him that God was with Jesus Christ in the days of His flesh. The man Jesus Christ gave serious attendance to spending much time alone with God. All He knew and did in His earthly ministry were given to Him not in one straight encounter with God but daily. It is reported of Him that He **“increased in wisdom, and stature, and in favour with God and man”** (Luke 2:52). The gospel according to Luke which uniquely demonstrates the complete human nature of Jesus sets forth in seven passages the prayer ministry of our saviour. The apostle John records Jesus Christ as saying, **“I do nothing of myself, as my Father has taught me, I speak these things”** (John 8: 28). Again, in

John 14: 10 Jesus says, “**the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works**”.

The leading texts given at the beginning of this chapter point to character of the predicted response to the divine pull exerted upon those who were led out of captivity to Babylon. The verses carry a prophetic signification and are indicative of what kind of response God desires us to make. It is important to realize early enough that the final acts of redemption that the Lord Jesus executes on earth are carried out in those who reflect intense longings for the King; who yield their all to Him in love.

*“For there shall be a day that the **watchmen** upon mount Ephraim shall cry, “**Arise ye, let us go up to Zion, unto the Lord our God**” (Jer.31:6)*

*“They shall ask the way to Zion, with their face thitherward, saying, “**Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten**” (Jer.50.5)*

Notice that the first passage assigns the term, ‘**watchmen**’ to the ‘come-outers’, those who flee Babylon. This term describes men who through habitual abiding in the Lord’s presence

develop spirituality and godly disposition. The heavenly Father seeks such persons and brings them to Himself. He empowers and sent forth ministries to reach out to those who love Him passionately enough to cultivate living by the presence of the Lord.

The second passage uncovers to us that the inward desires in a people will provoke a great committal to God. They will beckon on one another saying, “Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten”. Surely, the God to whom one makes such utter commitment, which He urges upon all, will most definitely reciprocate in measures exceedingly glorious.

So He declares, “Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice”. He has prepared for the habitually faithful ones a glorious harvest of life and peace.

Yes, you and I must make the most of the access we have by the Spirit into His lovely, transforming presence. The song writer says, “Beyond the veil I want to come; into your holy place to look upon your face. I see such beauty there, that no one can compare”. He does impart us every now and again with that beauty until we stand fully transformed.

(b) OPENING UP TO THE CLEANSING OF YOUR ENTIRE BEING.

Moral and spiritual transformation of the obedient occupies the front burner of the present day ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. All who will be accounted worthy to reign with Him **MUST** encounter the ministry of the Redeemer-High Priest as the symbolic fuller's Soap and refining Fire. Again, the right to rule in the age to come is 'Righteousness'; worked into the over-comer and proven to be in manifestation in life and service. The sceptre of the Lord's Kingdom is a right sceptre. We have already emphasized much of this elsewhere in this pamphlet.

(c) MAKE SURE THE VISION

Closely associated with the foregoing and what may be considered to be a critically vital burden is the need to have a working knowledge of the Kingdom **vision**. ***The vision has to do with the purpose and character of the present day, last hour ministry of our heavenly Bridegroom.*** The prophet Jeremiah calls it, '**the way to Zion**'. When one finds this **way** and travels thereon, he comes "unto the Lord, our God". For the faithful, going on the way to Zion results in a continuous ascent

in the Spirit, “*Let us **go up** to Zion, unto the Lord our God*” (Jer. 31: 6).

The **Way to Zion** is actually a Person, Christ Jesus the Lord (John 14: 6). He leads us unto the Father. The vision is Christ, becoming like Him through being and labouring with Him. By Christ, a new and living Way, God is bringing many sons to glory (Hebrew 10: 20; 2: 10). He is the Pattern to whose image the obedient is conformed. Christ is the living Word who has chosen to make a disclosure of Himself in the written Word. The written Word by the quickening ministry of the Holy Spirit is a lamp and a light to travellers on the **Way to Zion**.

The written Word testifies of Jesus Christ, His person and saving purpose. It came forth by prophecy and by prophetic gifting; not by the will of man. “***Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit***” (2 Peter 1; 21). The written Word becomes the basis of making Christ known through the ministry of teaching and preaching. The testimony of Jesus Christ is the power behind the labours of all true servants of God. This is saying in effect that the Spirit of prophecy rests upon all **true** ministers of the gospel of Christ.

Today, the prophetic word, which derives authority and purpose from the written Word, comes to us through teaching and preaching;

whether it is by the ministry of the spoken word or through the medium of the printed page. The prophetic Word is available through the plural ministries God has raised all over the world. Yes, the good word of the Lord is relatively scarce but glory to God, it is available. Open to the prophetic word ***daily*** through listening to recorded messages or by reading wholesome books covering the end-time ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. **Make sure the Vision.** ‘Sell’ all you have and buy this pearl of a great prize. Expend the currency of time to feed on the prophetic word. It ministers sanctifying grace to the obedient. ***Make sure yourself, as one following the Lamb withersoever He goes*** (Rev. 14; 4)

(d) START A HOME FELLOWSHIP

This should be done in your home with family and where possible, with few other persons who have come under the same experience. These are expected to be persons genuinely desiring to know the Lord Jesus intimately. In connection with the need to get off on a good note, encourage all to cultivate the Spirit of prayer. It is a great blessing to have the anointing of prayer resting upon a congregation. In a setting created by much praying, it is easy to learn in practical terms how to give place to the government of the Holy Spirit over the home Church. You will also

come to understand the desirability, nay, the imperative of operating in harmony with the ***due order***. (We will devote one chapter to this important subject)

Keep to the small number you have, being only open to receiving those whom God adds to you. This may mean that you should not, for a reasonable time, ***invite persons to join the home Church***.

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD AND RAISING A THRIVING ASSEMBLY

The ministry of the word should be attended to at all times, kept alive and fresh. Open it up to the sweet influences of the Holy Spirit, obtained through earnest, persevering prayers. The home church should be seen from the divine standpoint as a budding prophetic community. The testimony of Jesus Christ is the spirit of prophecy. When Christ is ministered and made known through the Word in spoken ministry, it pleases the Holy Spirit to grant to worshippers, diverse witnesses of His presence in gifts and ministry abilities. The revelatory and inspirational gifts have almost always, in our experience over the years, come in very satisfying measures being the most needed grace to keep the work on track. In the process of time, soon enough, the power gifts and ministries

spring up as well. It can be demonstrated through a faithful consideration of relevant passages of the written Word, that this is what is to be expected when apprehended ones spend much time with God in their devotions.

Closely associated with the impartation of spiritual gifts, is the gradual development of the prophetic spirit. On the heels of this also comes an increase of the availability of the prophetic word and the emergence of teaching ministries made able to minister relevantly, the Lord's burden. These thoughts will be further developed in a later chapter.

UNDERSTAND HOW GOD GIVES ENLARGEMENT

We need to have a clear understanding of how God gives enlargement to the home Church in a given locality. God is fully committed to causing the knowledge of His glory to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. The God of the whole earth shall He be called. But it is His righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit abundantly expressed in the lives of His people that answer to the true knowledge of God. The great numbers of the memberships of assemblies called by the name of the Lord **if not characteristically reflecting these virtues**

will inevitably include unclean, hateful birds, foul spirits and outright devils as indicated in Rev. 18:2. In the New Testament, spiritual age and beauty rather than numerical count are what is of divine consequence. That said, it is very assuring to know that God deals prudently on earth to fill it with His knowledge and glory. He demands for fruit, for increase, for the extension of the frontiers of His rule among men. Thus God will give the home Church enlargement in His time, in His own way and always in strategic partnership with a surrendered leadership. How may we partner with him to bring about real increase to us collectively, that is, to our home churches?

The answer lies in ***two distinct but related subjects: Intercession*** (Psalm 2: 7, 8, Psalm 65: 1, 2; Matthew 9:36-38; among others) and then, ***divine leading*** through prophetic witnesses. The burden of harvest calls for prayers as the passages of Scriptures cited above clearly indicate. These passages implicitly teach who they are that can use the ministry of prayers and expect answers. Deliberate prayers must be consistently made to God regarding the labours of reaching out to others with the message of the coming King. Individuals will need to cultivate the habit of witnessing to the unsaved and also to the Lord's people in the manner being

discussed. Even in this, a quickening of one's spirit at His will should also be expected outside catching in on opportunities that offer themselves. However an organized public outreach of the collective body must be preceded with much prayer coupled with times of fasting as well. Divine witnesses (Visions, prophecies and the like) which will come through at least two channels must be considered to ensure not only a proper understanding of these but also their effective use. An efficient administration of prophetic revelations is a grace God will always give in response to persevering prayers for it. **“Everyone that asketh receiveth.” (Matt.7:8)**

Every meeting in which the public is given open invitation attracts much interest in the Spirit realm. The forces of darkness will strive to frustrate such a move. Earnest prayerful preparations must not be toyed with but taken as mandatory; the only way to approach such a mission. Give much time to this.

We expect with time for the Lord to develop in our hands, sharp sickles that efficiently reaps harvest of souls. God gives grace; He gives glory. No good thing will He withhold from those who co-labour with Him.

CHAPTER THREE

MORE ON HOW THE HOME FELLOWSHIP FUNCTIONS

We have seen from our previous discussions that the medium of outworking of God's purpose is the local expression of the body of Christ. We have sufficiently shown that the scope of work being carried out in and amongst those who have come out of Babylon requires a regular meeting of these believers. The vital question that must be asked is: What guidelines drawn from the written word govern how the home fellowship functions.

The book of Acts and the Epistles agree in their testimony that the early Christians met in homes. There are strong evidences in Church history to confirm that this pattern of things was maintained for nearly three full centuries after the resurrection of Christ.

What is more, *that harlot woman* started her mysterious “leavening of truth in three measures” about the same time church edifices began to be built. Officialdom became fully incorporated into the ministry of the church during this period also.

There must therefore be a decisive return to the pattern adopted by the apostles of the Lamb who were divinely enabled to chart the course of affairs for the church. (Eph. 2:20-22) The temple of God is a living organism, not a concrete structure.

The Holy Spirit with great emphasis is stressing the need to return to home units or else rented apartments as indicated in the book of acts. These being more easily adapted to the biblical requirements, need never seek a corporate status. Thus, there would not be the necessity for an intricate network system, and following biblical example, the home units need not carry a name for identification. Thank God, there is the presence of home churches functioning along these lines in several nations we have visited for ministry. We have a good reason to believe the situation is so the world over.

The house fellowship or home church should operate along lines similar to that indicated below.

- It must be a gathering unto the Lord. All comers ought to properly set their focus upon Jesus Christ. Praise and Worship from grateful, adoring hearts should be given singular attention.
- The ministry of the Word must be kept fresh and relevant to the divine working at this present time. This will require the active preparation and participation of all. As there need not be official “prayer warriors” or “special choir” so body ministry is a highly desirable thing in this new order. But all who want to share a word or bring ministry to the body should do so only as they are enabled by God. Democracy is not a spiritual rule; it must not be confused with **‘body ministry’**. Ephesians 4:16 read along with 1 Peter 2: 9 provide for the ministry of **every vital member** in a local congregation unto building of itself in love.
- There must be in operation an effective ministry of prayers involving all who come for worship. The Spirit of prayer would always be poured out upon all who earnestly desire this grace. Asking for this grace must be continuous even when there are manifest tokens of its presence in a congregation.

- The conduct of the meeting should allow for the liberty of the Spirit. The spiritual atmosphere must be made conducive to the diverse working of the Holy Spirit. This position must be sought for and sustained by earnest, believing prayers. This will fully prepare the body to receive and properly harness the latter rain as it comes.
- The home church should give evidence of an ever increasing passion for God's Glory. This is revealed in being engaged in directed service which must be in harmony with the divine will. The work of harvest, a main feature of the ministry committed to the local church is done in partnership with Christ who gives the lead and the power to be effective.
- In this regards, every home church ought to earnestly seek the Lord for the raising up amongst them of ministries possessing prophetic abilities and priestly graces. Since a singular purpose of the gathering will be to enhance the spiritual walk of the individual, every member should strongly desire to possess this mark.
- It is the responsibility of every church to identify those the Lord wants to use in

leadership positions. It should be remembered that leadership is a plural concept. These should necessarily come together regularly to seek divine counsel and direction of ministry.

- In a growing situation, leadership grace should come upon more and more persons in the home unit. What has been observed above leads us to expect that those called to leadership should minister with a view to preparing the body for the ministry. This will enable the increasing fulfilment of Eph 4:16 referred to earlier.
- It must be borne in mind that there can be no spirituality in the absence of a divinely constituted leadership. Legislative functions belong exclusively to the Holy Spirit. But He will develop in humble teachable persons, the grace to administer loving spiritual discipline in the body.
- There ought not to be any “paid ministry” as the burden of ministry in a faithful setup is to increasingly rest on all. Great grace coming upon some will show in an increasing demand for the service of such. However, these should seek to be self supporting as much as possible. We are

persuaded of God to say that in no case should the burden of this class of people be officially laid on the shoulders of any home church. If the Lord calls any to totally separate himself from secular work for any period of time, he will provide for such a one in a way that will not encourage professionalism in ministry. The love of God will lead some persons of their own accord to play a supportive role in the lives of such servants of God.

- If a home church becomes too large to accommodate its membership in a house setting or rented hall, there should be a splitting into smaller units. Each unit must be functional but strictly autonomous. The Word of God provides for the ministry of “joint of supplies” who may be required of God to visit and encourage the home church in a sub region. But there ought not to be any deliberate arrangement which sees several home churches under the ***firm control*** of any individual or group of individuals. Such situation is abhorrent
- Every home church ought to use the ordinances given to the church by Christ: **water baptism**, the ceremonial breaking of bread in celebration of the victory of **Christ**

our Passover Lamb. But the emphasis should not be in mere ceremonies or rituals. The spiritual signification of these ordinances must be taught and urged upon all. Under increasing light, these ordinances would be seen to teach the responsibilities and privileges of the consecrated class in relation to the testimony of the anointed Jesus, the Lord. The physical observance of any ordinance should not be taken as a qualifying ground for admitting into fellowship,

- Every home unit must activate itself to the mutual care of her members. Thus, of necessity, a purse should be kept. Regular giving to the work of the Lord should be encouraged as a priest's duty and love to God. **We are all stakeholders in the Kingdom of our Redeemer.**
- It is the privilege of a home church to willingly, of its own accord, associate with as many home churches as possible. However, only an evil convenience may be gained by attempting to form an association with a ***moderate or rigid control of its members.*** Every coming together of several home churches for purpose of strengthening one another must use a

system of coordination that has only a loose grip on willing participating units.

We must now bring our meditation on this vital subject to a close. All who hearken to the call to “come out of her” should earnestly seek to find fellowship in a home church bearing the marks mentioned above. Should there be none in your locality, may we urge you to look to the Lord to evolve one. We have already in a previous chapter discussed how this may be done.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE DIVINE ORDER

The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is the Kingdom of heaven under divine preparation. The perfected Church which will be the ruling class of this Kingdom is to reign with Christ over the earth in the next age. When the work of redemption, perfection, and glorification of the Church is completed it will be much more glorious than all the works of God in creation. The New Testament in harmony with this describes the Church as a **'new creation'**. We are created after God in true righteousness and holiness (Eph. 4:24).

The gospel Church is God's glory in the earth today. The greatest possession of God in heaven and earth is the Church of the living God. In God's estimation and in harmony with the revealed order of placements in His Kingdom, the Church ranks higher than the holy angels. It is said that we shall rule over angels in the coming age. The world to come will

not be placed under the administration of angels. These are weighty statements and are worthy of being given total consideration.

How does all of the above relate to the subject of our present meditation, one may ask? Much in every way! We should understand that if the Church of Jesus Christ occupies a place in God's mind that is higher than any other creation of His, then nothing about her development is left to the mind of man. All provisions made respecting the building of the Church must be seen to come from Him exclusively.

We can therefore speak of these provisions as concrete realities that were held by God for the Church *even before the creation of the world.* We will normally expect that the wisdom of God that provided for how the Church is to be developed must have in view the role she is to play in the ages to come. An averagely discerning person will easily agree that imperfect man is not in any way positioned to chart a course for the Church. Man cannot set aside God's wisdom for his own and hope to arrive at developing an institution that is a replica of the Church of Jesus Christ. We find that even in the Old Testament era everything that had to do with operations of the covenant people as it related to the ordinances of divine service and the Sanctuary dwelling of God, was

exclusively given by Him in commandments and word descriptions of prophetic parables. Nothing was left to the mind of man to prescribe or substitute.

The Aaronic Priesthood and pattern of ministry; Levitical ministry; the feasts of the Lord; the Tabernacle of Moses and its seven pieces of furniture; the tribal inheritances of Israel in the promised land, the sacrificial offerings; the covenants of promise and other such great themes in the Old Testament were one and all wholly revelatory in nature.

The entire book of Leviticus was wholly dictated to Moses. The book of Genesis in its entirety was written by a special operation of the revelatory gifting of the Holy Spirit in the ministry of Moses. Every bit of the people and events of the Old Testament age had prophetic signification pointing to people and events of the New Testament era. Every event in the church age of divine consequence had at least one parallel happening in the Old Testament. Nothing is spurious or of an entirely new nature that is not foreshadowed in the old. In the volume of the book all things are well documented and provided for.

We cannot but be overwhelmed by the total commitment of God to minute details in His covenant dealings with the Kingdom of Israel.

Consider that that Kingdom was set aside as not producing the fruit God desired. Yet since the Old Testament Church was a shadow of the Church of Jesus Christ, His dealings with them opened up great realities that help us practice how to walk with the Lord.

The above observations point us to the main burden of this chapter. God knows what He wants and has power to realize it. He admits man into partnership with Him only on the one condition: Complete and unqualified submission in life and service to His absolute sovereignty and all surpassing wisdom as set forth in the Holy Scriptures.

The following scriptures are typical of thousands of others which give witness to the fact that God was the sole wisdom behind everything of value in that age. Exodus 25: 8-9, 40; 26: 30; 1Chr.28: 11, 19; Numbers 8; 4; Acts 7: 44; Heb. 8: 5; Gal. 4: 21-31.

***And let them make me a sanctuary;
that I may dwell among them.***

***According to all that I shew thee,
after the pattern of the tabernacle,
and the pattern of all the
instruments thereof, even so shall ye
make it.***

And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount.

(Exodus 25:8,9,40)

And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was shewed thee in the mount. (Exodus 26:30)

Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat,

All this, said David, the LORD made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern.

(1 Chronicles 28:11,19)

And this work of the candlestick was of beaten gold, unto the shaft thereof, unto the flowers thereof, was beaten work: according unto the pattern which the LORD had shewed Moses, so he made the candlestick.

(Numbers 8:4)

Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen. (Acts 7:44)

Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount. (Hebrews 8:5)

Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?

For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.

But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise.

Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.

For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem

which now is, and is in bondage with her children.

But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.

Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.

Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.

So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

(Galatians 4:21-31)

Now, we will illustrate how the principles of God's word set out in the foregoing paragraphs did play out in His dealings with the Israel of

old. This helps our understanding of what results from conformity or otherwise to God's righteous ordinances. We refer to incidences that happened in Israel at the time of Prophet Samuel and also at the time of King David. Please recall that Samuel came in as the last of the Judges and as the first of the prophets. He closed the era of the judges and opened the door to the era of the prophets. He also anointed Saul and David, the first two Kings over Israel.

Now, Eli was said to be an unfaithful priest. His two sons, Hophni and Phinehas in their moral attitude of taking other women to bed confirmed that order as grossly unfaithful. During the time of Eli, just before he died, the Philistines came against Israel. Israel carried the Ark of the Covenant to the battle. That ark which stood for the presence of God was carried to the battle. But they lost that battle, because even though the ark symbolised God's presence, they had not been faithful to observe the laws of the Almighty. They, having set aside His headship trusted in vain for God to show up for them in that battle. He disappointed their confidence because they treated God's word with contempt. As a consequence of Israel's loss, the ark was taken captive and carried to the land of the Philistines.

The main events we will be concentrating upon, concerning which there is going to be a brief exposition is the bringing of the Ark of the Covenant back from that captivity into the place that King David prepared for it. The first failed attempt and the second successful mission are recorded in 1Chronicles **13**: 1-10; **15**: 1, 2; 11-14.

“And David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, and with every leader.

And David said unto all the congregation of Israel, If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the LORD our God, let us send abroad unto our brethren everywhere, that are left in all the land of Israel, and with them also to the priests and Levites which are in their cities and suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us:

And let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we enquired not at it in the days of Saul. And all the congregation said that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.

So David gathered all Israel together, from Shihor of Egypt even unto the entering of Hemath, to

bring the ark of God from Kirjathjearim.

And David went up, and all Israel, to Baalah, that is, to Kirjathjearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of God the LORD, that dwelleth between the cherubims, whose name is called on it.

And they carried the ark of God in a new cart out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drove the cart.

And David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets.

And when they came unto the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled.

And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God” (1Chronicles13:1-10).

“And David made him houses in the city of David, and prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent.

Then David said, None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the LORD chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever.

And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel, and Amminadab,

And said unto them, Ye are the chief of the fathers of the Levites: sanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel unto the place that I have prepared for it.

For because ye did it not at the first, the LORD our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order.

So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel” (1Chronicles 15:1, 2, 11 – 14).

The first of the two events recorded in the two passages of Scriptures reproduced above happened about *seventy years* after the Israelites in the time of Eli lost the ark of God to the Philistines.

When after a series of divine display of His sovereign power, the Philistines were forced to return the ark to a border town in Israel. It was with much desire that David, who is called a man after God's heart, decided he will bring the ark to Jerusalem. In their first attempt at doing this, David and the elders of Israel encountered a serious problem. Death struck in the midst of his men who were executing that mission. Uzza had touched the ark, a thing God's word specifically forbids. The divine report of that incidence is very revealing. It simply says that this happened because David and the elders of Israel did not set out to accomplish their mission according to **the due order**.

“For because ye did it not at the first, the LORD our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the DUE ORDER” (1 Chronicles 15: 13)

Let us come into more details of this very interesting story. In 1 Chronicles 13:1 we are told that David gathered to him all leaders, the

captains of thousands and the captains of hundreds and began to say to them, “it is necessary for us to bring the Ark of the Covenant back to the city of Zion”.

Not only did David do that, he shared his burden with all the congregation of Israel in Jerusalem as it may be inferred. Messages were also sent into all the land of Israel communicating the burden. All without exception hailed the prospect. The glory had departed. But now they all saw in the planned event a way being made for the glory of the Lord to return unto them. It was indeed preciousy regarded by all to be a landmark event.

So, they set out. We are told that when they got to the house of Abinadab, they carried the ark into a new cart. In modern day language, that answers to a new wagon. The journey of the ark to the city of Zion was embarked upon amidst tremendous rejoicing and divine worship.

As they continued in their journey, they came to a point where it was as if the oxen carrying the cart were about to fall. As is to be expected, the ark also tilted. Uzza at that point stretch forth his hand to steady the Ark of the Covenant. And the Lord smote him with death. The Bible says he died right there before the Lord.

That single incidence arrested the whole of Israel. David was afraid. In fact, if you read the account of this same story in II Samuel 6, you will find that it is said that David was greatly afraid and said unto himself, “*how can I take the ark of the covenant of the Lord unto me?*”

David in utter dismay sought for somebody close by who will allow him to keep the Ark of the Covenant in his house. The King went back home confused and greatly disappointed.

Now, why did God smite Uzza? Were the intentions of David and the rest of the children of Israel proper in seeking to bring the Ark of the Covenant back to the city of Zion? Now, we shall seek to answer all of these questions. But let us go back to 1 Chronicles 15:13 so that we can place the issue squarely before us.

David said in that passage, *for because ye did it not at the first, the LORD our God made a breach upon us, **for that we sought him not after the due order.*** God broke upon them and Uzza died, because **they were carrying the ark in a manner not in harmony with the due order.**

Now, let us take a critical look at the entire story before us. David, the man at the centre of the storm was anointed of God three times. Samuel anointed him. Then several years later,

he was anointed as King over Judah. And seven years after the second anointing, he was anointed the third time over all Israel. **So, David carried the anointing.**

Now, the scripture says David was a man after God's heart. **It was the tremendous love that David had for God that made him decide to bring the ark of the covenant of God into the city of Zion.** This is the city where the temple was to be built, that it might be the centre of the worship of the children of Israel. The choice of Zion was because Moses had prescribed it. This certainly was a fine resolve.

Next, we see that he (David) did not take a one-man approach towards accomplishing that desire. He did not say, "*Well, it pleases me, so I will go ahead*". He consulted with the people. In fact, he consulted with all credible people in the land of Israel. In the account of 2 Samuel 6, we are told that He took chosen men. We are told in 1Chronicles 13 that he gathered all Israel. He sent for persons all over Israel that had insight into the workings of God and asked "*is this thing right? Let us bring back the Ark of the Covenant of our God back to Israel*". And they all agreed.

Yes, David did not operate by any absolute fiat; he knew he should consult the people. But

brethren, no matter how many persons identify with what anyone is doing, no matter what support such garners from the people, **if a thing is not according to God's word, He cannot support it. Sincerity is not enough. Good intentions are not adequate.** The stakes are high. God is building a heavenly Kingdom; not a mere human institution, He has the blue print of every detail about this Kingdom now under building, known as the Church of the living God

The Lord whom we serve has revealed himself in a particular manner. **We must follow on to know the Lord according to the principles of His word that He has made known.**

God had in the writing of His servant Moses detailed how the ark was to be carried. Now, what scripture is being referred to here? The reference is to Numbers 7:9 and Numbers 4:4–15. These verses of scriptures were written about five hundred and eighty years before the events recorded in 1Chronicles 13 and 15.

All that Israel was to do in the worship of God must agree with the principles set forth in the first five books (Genesis to Deuteronomy). Any deviation would incur the wrath of God. Just so, the guiding principles for the operations of the Church were set forth by the apostles of the Lamb and the writing ministries of the New

Testament. These were given mandate of the Lord to chart the course for the church. We all are to operate according to their writings. **Jesus commanded them to teach the people to observe whatsoever things He has given in instructions, doctrines and ordinances. Matthew 28:18-20.**

The fact that David was sincere; the fact that David loved God; the fact that the people were mindful of the Lord's glory did not make what was wrong right. Sincerity does not justify a bad action. The street of religion is filled with so many people who hunger for God, who seek to serve God. However, there has not been an equal zeal to seek to serve God according to the prescribed manner, **according to the due order.** Men who have chosen to be lazy towards spiritual things find strength to do other things. In this last hour, God is drawing our attention back to how things are supposed to be. We are referred to our spiritual roots. The New Testament writings give sufficient direction as to how the church should conduct her affairs.

What are these particulars that constitute the due order in the case under study? Turn with me to Numbers 7:9.

*“But unto the sons of Kohath he gave none: because **the service of the sanctuary***

*belonging unto them was that **they should bear upon their shoulders**".*

Also in Numbers 4:4

"This shall be the service of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation, about the most holy things:"

That includes all the seven furniture: the two in the outer-court, the three in holy place and the two in the holiest of all. All seven furniture was to be carried by the Kohatites.

The seven pieces of furniture represented the most holy things in all of the Lord's worship. Reading further, we find that **eight persons were to bear the ark** upon stakes, upon rods driven through holes attached to the Ark of the Covenant, ***carrying it upon their shoulders.***

This written provision was that the children of Israel, in moving the ark from one place to the other, should have recourse to sanctified priests only; not another. These should carry the Ark on their shoulders.

So what made God to strike Uzza with death? It was because anyone that touched the ark apart

from the priest is to be visited with the judgment of death (see Numbers 4:15).

God had written in his word: don't touch the ark with your carnal hand or you die, don't touch the ark. Only the priests are permitted to touch the ark. Uzza disobeyed that divine instruction under the penalty of death.

Now, let us begin to apply the message to our day. God has set forth in the twenty-seven books of the New Testament principles what should inform how the Lord's people are to do His work. It is important for us to know that God knows what will satisfy Him. Someone may ask, "*is it not easier to carry the ark on a new cart or a new wagon instead of the shoulders of men?*" Let us know that the new cart or the new wagon answers to man's mind. It answers to organizing things according to man's mind. Organization is not God's method of building His people or of bringing glory to his people. Saved men are God's method. Men whom He has anointed and laid hands upon are the means of God expressing Himself in the world; not organizations.

Now, one will be tempted to call what Uzza did a tiny slip. Could God not have by-passed that, some may ask? But the truth is that if God did that concerning the shadow, concerning those things which were merely symbolic, how

much more should we know and understand that he requires the same level of obedience from His people today. There is set forth in all scriptures how the church should conduct her affairs. Even at the risk of repetition, let us take a few salient points.

First, God has provided that in any given locality, the local congregation should conduct her own affairs under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ. **So, there is a close connection between the absolute headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and the autonomy of the local congregation.** In our day we see denominations with a great network of branches and one man or a few men sitting over all of that as head. **It is a repudiation of the authority of Christ in his church.**

The Baptist convention stands out as one denomination that gives an expression of this principle. Every local congregation conducts her own affairs. It is too much for one man to suppose that he can exercise lordly control over thousands of congregations as their head. This is important. We made reference to the Baptist Convention, not because we approve of any denominational system, but indicate that a measure of this truth has been recovered.

We know that in this last hour, God will have a body of people living and operating exactly

according to what is in his mind for the Church. When a man sits in lordly control over so many congregations, he begins to see himself as a god and the people will accept and worship him as such. We are only touching upon this very matter briefly here. It is worth realizing this is how cult personality develops.

Secondly, the Bible clearly teaches us that even **in the local congregation, there must be plurality of leadership**. The word of God does not witness to a situation where one man is head over every other person in a manner that makes everybody subservient to him. In God's house, there must be plurality of leadership. This is the reason why you find that whenever the Lord talks about leadership, He does so in the plural sense.

Notice in Ephesians 4:11, we read that God has set in the church some apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, teachers, all carrying the plural term. This is important. One man as pastor sitting and issuing command over the congregation, with perhaps a board of "*ordained*" ministers made subject to his whims and caprices is an outrageous departure from the principle of God's word.

The vexatious spiritual poverty among God's people can be traced to this departure. When one man does all the thinking for God's people

and he is just a human being, then there is bound to be decay. For all that this man got from Adam is death, and he can only operate in death if he had recourse to natural wisdom.

If a man sees himself as being inspired or anointed of God, then let Him do what God says. God does everything in harmony with the principles of His word that He had already set forth. Whatever God does today will always be seen to agree with what He did in time past. Known unto God from the foundation of the world are all His works (Acts 15:18).

Whatever a person witnesses to subjectively as being from God cannot be accepted if it does not agree with the principles of God's word. II Corinthians 13:1 simply puts it this way, "*by the mouth of two or three (writing) witnesses, let every word be confirmed*". Ten persons from a particular denominational church may be persuaded along one line. They may all be ministers of God. But that does not make them witnesses. A witness must be one who is called of God and who operates by the principles already set forth in scriptures. At the mouth of two or three witnesses, let every word be established.

We are going to witness a return to the basic principles that govern the operation of the local church. When the Bible says "*the kingdoms of*

this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ” (Revelation 11:15), we are to understand that He takes over the kingdoms of this world by operating through the local assembly of his people. In a city, it is the body of Christ there that is God’s power and God’s strength in that locality.

David and his people were not to excuse themselves from principles that old prophet Moses wrote many years ago, about six centuries back. They are to know that if they deviate from it, they will pay for it dearly, and know that God is not one among us but Lord over us.

CHAPTER FIVE

DIVINE PROVISIONS AGAINST FAILURE

God desires for us to make success of our calling and election. He calls us in His faithfulness to the fellowship of His son, the Lord Jesus Christ to guarantee our coming to full growth in grace, life and service (1Corinthians 1: 9; 2 Peter 3: 18). Knowledge of how to use this great privilege of access to this fellowship is of great importance. One is in true fellowship with God if in vital contact with Christ on daily basis.

In the first epistle of John, the principle governing fellowship with God is discussed in chapter one. It is simple enough. Instead of being filled with fear the believer may know fullness of joy in Christ Jesus. You may want to read through the chapter to familiarize yourself with that passage of scriptures. Here are things

the individual believer needs to know in relation to maintaining growing fellowship with God.

- 1) God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. This calls for an attitude of transparent honesty in all of man's dealings with God and others. Sincerity coupled with truth is counted as being of great value in God's sight (1 Cor. 5:7, 8). It is a reward of dishonest dealing with others if a man is able to deceive himself. We must learn to protect our powers of self-judgement by embracing truth principles in relating to others (verses 5, 6).

- 2) We are to live with an abiding consciousness of our imperfections. Justification by faith presupposes an admission of imperfection. It is an arrangement whereby God progressively deals with man's imperfection, without condemning him. The way of justification requires the believer to embrace the principles of righteousness and desire God's strength to live according to them. Walking in the light of what He knows to be the will of God, and at the same time cleaving to the blood of the ransom as the only sufficient ground for claiming acceptance with God takes care of unknown sins. (verse 7).

- 3) The believer walking in the light of what he knows must daily seek God for more spiritual enlightenment. This will invariably lead him to more of the saving knowledge of Christ, which will assist him to be more, yielded to God. It is this eager yearning for more and more of the life of God that is the practical proof of one being not satisfied with his imperfections. It reveals an individual as knowing the purpose of justification by faith. Only such ones will never cover their sins. Those not truly eager for life transformation are in effect saying they have no need for a change. (verse 8).

- 4) The Lord will always bless the desirous with light. The light of God's word received makes possible two vital things; the improvement of the power of self-judgement which assists repentance and secondly, it secures to the believer deeper work of cleansing.

When a sin is committed there is a loss of fellowship between God and the individual concerned. A man's attitude towards his sin if known would be dependent on how much he is living in harmony with the principles set out in our first three observations. If true repentance is possessed by the individual he is able to receive

forgiveness and cleansing by an act of faith. Forgiveness breaks the power of sin acknowledged and truly repented of. Cleansing completes the work of taking away the guilt. Fellowship with God is restored. This is the principle of bouncing back and operates in the environment of the other three things noted above.

Whenever a sin becomes habitual with an individual it is a revelation of a considerable lack of the operation of the truth in the inward parts. A general rule is for the individual to take out time to study God's word and pray. As he seeks to reinforce the areas of moral strength in his life, help begins to emerge. The secret desire for that habitual sin is dealt with in these circumstances. True repentance becomes possible. Brokenness, sanctification, deliverance from that sin's hold is then wrought by the power of God. But if habitual sins are not thoroughly dealt with through Holy Spirit empowered repentance and faith operation, they spread their defiling hold on other aspects of the believer's life. Intervention can only come to him from other ministries. This is a very worrying state to be found in. This brings us to the next important thought: a consideration of what has been divinely offered the Church to enable her to be always approved of God in life and service.

We have **two great provisions** revealed in the Holy Scriptures that assist a body of believers to remain in God's reckoning as an instrument for the realization of His purpose. It is required of us to give the unveiling of these two things due attention and diligent study.

The FIRST GREAT PROVISION

The account of the experiences of the children of Israel as they journeyed through the wilderness, particularly that given from Numbers chapters 11 through 17 is very scary to read and contemplate. It reveals a prolonged season of devastating judgments that finally brought the self-willed Israelites to their senses. It became clear to them that the course of acting contrary to divine instructions is lined up with events of destruction and death. In their bewildered condition they wondered how they could be free from their predicament. The last two verses capture their desperate need for a way out.

“And the children of Israel spake unto Moses, saying Behold we die, we perish we all perish. Whosoever cometh anything near the tabernacle of the LORD shall die: shall we be consumed with dying?

(Num. 17:12, 13).

God in redeeming love gave answers to their quest for deliverance from their woes. These are given in the next two chapters; Numbers 18 and 19. From these chapters we are taught two great provisions God graciously gives us to help keep away from things that attract divine displeasure. It would be useful for the reader to go through the eighteenth chapter on his own, noting in particular the first eight verses. However, we would be considering **four elements** numbered below (a) to (d) which together constitute the **first great provision** for securing divine approval and great favours.

- (a) Intercessory prayers for two distinct classes.
- (b) Seeking and encouraging the emergence of more spiritual leaders
- (c) Leadership responsibilities to be borne by divinely fitted individuals alone.
- (d) Knowing how to bear the glory of God.

Let us briefly discuss, one after the other, the foregoing elements as to what they entail.

(a) Intercessory Prayers for two classes of persons

All of God's people meeting together in fellowship must **cultivate the spiritual habit of praying one for another.** This prayer concern should particularly cover the spiritual and moral state of the individuals. All must bear in mind that priestly intercessions are needed to counter the imperfections of the house. As people uphold one another in prayers out of a concern for God's glory to be revealed, the Holy Spirit will communicate specific burdens that deal with diverse conditions respecting them.

In particular, there should be a sustained ministry of prayers for **persons who take on leadership responsibilities in the fellowship.** Failure in a leader usually has a great telling effect on many. When a people are faithful to pray for their leaders many evil things can be forestalled. The first verse indicates that leaders should take out time to pray together for themselves besides being faithful to do so in their closets. This helps in receiving divine guidance and makes ministry fruitful.

Leaders should counsel among themselves, lovingly and truthfully. It is quite easy for leaders to talk to persons of younger standing in the Lord. But there is much reluctance when

the need arises for someone to counsel with another of similar spiritual exposure.

The reluctance, quite often, is derived from the resistance encountered when such a ministry is to be fulfilled. But that as an excuse is not tenable in God's sight. God will give the humility and enabling grace to leaders to move in mutual counsel if this is sought for in all sincerity and goodwill.

It is culpable hypocrisy if one cannot correct a colleague and yet seek to give the impression that all is well. But if we are ready to open up to others' correction, then there is every assurance that our priestly service in this regard will be helped by God. Let it be realised that this matter is not left to a man's fancy. It is a commandment of the LORD.

(b) Seeking the emergence of more leaders.

This is a very important issue. In the performance of the word of oath that He swore concerning the seed of Christ, God is constantly thrusting out men and women into His vineyard. The presence of an adequate number of suitably blessed spiritual ministries in a local congregation is an indication that divine favours are at work towards them.

God's servants are to seek for a situation where more and more persons are being raised up to spiritual Leadership. The first obvious way this is to be done is prayers unto God. Closely associated with taking up this burden, is the responsibility that ministers are to identify, encourage, support and 'bring near' persons who manifest an anointing upon them to serve in God's house.

All believers are enrolled in the school of life. Those fairing well in their use of divinely arranged providence of grace receive more and more of divine attention. But these ones when spotted must be encouraged to make use of opportunities of service. These persons must be held up to God in strong, deliberate, intercessory prayers for more grace and good character.

"He that is joined to the LORD is one spirit with Him". The same passion for the body is developed in men and women upon whom the LORD'S hands rest. The house is kept steady in its spiritual pursuits when more and more persons within it minister effectively because they are divinely enabled.

The appearance of secondary spiritual leadership relieves the primary ones. They are thus enabled to spend more quality time with the LORD in His word and spirit. This is the situation we find in Acts 6: 1.4.

It is not to be supposed however that election of men to official responsibilities is what is being counselled. The ordination services in the denominational church systems cannot make ministries. Spiritually gifted persons need only be allowed to operate along lines of their calling. All must make themselves available whom God is placing in the church for spiritual service. A one-man ministry approach almost always wants to creep into every spiritual set up. It neither helps such an individual nor God's purposes. Where it obtains, the level of spiritual growth never rises beyond spiritual infancy. No one becomes spiritual by receiving ministry only. Leaders who have come to the estate of the fivefold ministry must keep their charge. But so must they also deliberately seek God for a corporate expression of the ministry of Christ in the Ecclesia.

This brings us to the next element in our discussion. It stipulates the necessity for great caution to be taken in extending spiritual responsibilities to persons.

(c) Leadership responsibilities are to be borne by individuals divinely fitted for these

In our passage, the seventh verse tells us that the priest's office under the Old Testament

arrangement is a service of gift. Again, in the New Testament, there is a provision against novices taking up oversight functions in the congregation. Disregarding this counsel has led to much spiritual damage to the ministry of local congregations

The word of God specifically says, “*and the stranger that cometh nigh shall he put to death*”. Leadership duties should be entrusted to those who have such graces of God upon their lives as may be required

The kingdom of heaven is not a democracy. God rules in the universe; even more so He rules in His house. Theocratic governance in the house of God is manifested along the lines of the anointing.

Spiritual abilities, exposures to more mature ministries, strength of character and availability assist the release of the anointing that rest on an individual to do a specific work. Only such as suitably equipped for an assignment should take it up.

Natural skills, educational advantages and societal standing are of secondary importance in the kingdom. The adornment of such natural gifted persons is not needed for God to register its control and rights in any matter of eternal significance. It is the anointing that breaks the

yoke. We are submitting to God when there is found in us a ready spirit to give place to the work of the Holy Spirit in an assembly. Thus great care must be taken in relation to ministering in the holy things of God.

Secondly, the word '*stranger*' may be taken as referring to the un-consecrated. All services within the kingdom are spiritual. The believer is called upon to fulfil priestly roles which are essentially spiritual. The entrance into every spiritual service is by way of consecration (Rom. 12: 1, 2). This implies that one in an un-consecrated condition should not presume to do any work.

In a house fellowship setting, there might be a situation in which none has come up to the estate of ministry, that is, the fivefold ministry. Does this mean that no ministry should be fulfilled; and none should take the responsibility of having an oversight in the house of God? We believe that the spirit of consecration can be used by all in God's house. So long as the way of consecration is adopted, there can be a fruitful ministry fulfilled in such a setting. God will always move upon the availability of His people through responding to their consecration. The service of the anointing discussed in Leviticus chapter 8 takes place during the occasion of the consecration of the Priests. Man consecrates

himself; God anoints. However the rules still holds, that the services of the more spiritually gifted persons are needed in relation to exercising spiritual leadership.

A most needed service in any congregation of believers is the ministry of the word in teaching and preaching. The principles of God's word and doctrinal positions and concept derived therefrom are God's holy vessels. Those who labour in the word of God and doctrine must be persons who have received the needed graces. They may be few in a local congregation. God's word provides for such only to fulfil the teaching ministry.

There is no wisdom in supposing that the present emphasis on body ministry calls for just anyone to presume to teach. The spheres of spiritual services include more elements than teaching. Every sphere of service is equally important, and a man should seek to faithfully serve God according to what graces are evident in his life. Faithfulness in the things of God sponsors rapid growth. Ministries must beget ministries if a true spirit is maintained. The steady increase in the number of persons coming to the estate of ministry is the only practical proof that those already standing in that grace are faithful to their charge.

(d) Knowing How To Bear His Glory

"And the LORD spake unto Aaron, Behold, I also have given thee the charge of mine heave offerings of all the hallowed things of the children of Israel. Unto thee have I given this by reason of the anointing, and to thy sons, by an ordinance forever" (Num. 18:8; see also verse 19 and Lev. 7: 35-36).

The heave offerings were placed under the charge of the priest by a covenant provision. They were taken from the offerings the children of Israel gave unto God after they have been formally presented. Thus these heave offerings could be regarded as direct gifts from God to the priesthood. The heave offerings speak of things that relate to the glory of God as it relates to His Servants.

No man in his natural estate can serve God acceptably. All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23). The fall accomplished a twofold damage to man. He cannot bring glory to God not being worthy enough. And then he is not suitable in himself to interact with glory and obtain improvement.

The amplified version of the Bible gives a correct rendering of Romans 3:23. It reads as follows: *"since all have sinned and are fallen*

short of the honour and glory which God bestows and receives.” Redemption restores man to a standing where upon being bestowed with glory he is made able to bring glory to God.

The glory God bestows upon redeemed man is the anointing and is always in view of service. Accordingly, devotion to God's service is the environment in which the anointing is both received and expresses itself. When by the anointing, a consecrated man serves the LORD, he brings glory to Him. The glory which God receives has to do with the establishment of His authority, rule and worship among men. Thus the consecrated man is expected through life and service to bring self and others to deeper submission to the will of God.

Ultimately, the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God; which knowledge will cause the human race to whole-heartedly worship the LORD and enjoy His goodness forever.

Man is by the fall extremely rebellious. The yoke of rebellion and self worship can only be crushed by the glory of God. The greater the glory of God seen in operation in His Church the easier it is for men to learn submission.

The offerings of the LORD's people speak of their hearts, minds, and wills submitted to Him.

The heave offerings speak of these same things but now as they pertain to the ministry of the house in a corporate (body) expression of the worship of God. The spiritual leadership set in the body are expected to properly direct the willing hearted in God-honouring services. This is typified in the priests being asked to eat the heave offerings. This responsibility is upon the priests by reason of the anointing. (Num. 18:8)

The implication of what has just been said is twofold. Firstly, those filling the room of leaders (or elders) in a local congregation are under divine mandate to receive glory (anointing) from God with a view to bringing about the obedience of the Lord's people unto Him.

This is a very solemn responsibility. If the Lord's people do not obey and reverentially fear Him, the first persons to answer for this are the leaders. There is glory available to cause men to be obedient to the faith. We must very deliberately seek God for this grace. He is more abundantly willing to bestow grace upon His people than is often realised.

Secondly, the Lord will have His people thoroughly given to the outworking of His purposes. It is the responsibility of spiritual leadership, having by the anointing secured the confidences of the people, to see to it that the Lord's work is being done. It is inexcusable for

the ministries to say the Lord's work is not being done because the people are disobedient. Read Rom. 1:5, 6; Ps. 68:18, Isaiah 49:8, Acts 13:47.

The priests were also required to heave a portion of their heave offerings to the LORD. A little explanation of the typical performance of this duty is necessary at this point.

Under the Old Testament, when the children of Israel brought their offerings to the LORD, a certain described portion is taken out as the heave offering. The priests will raise the portion up unto the LORD using the right hand. This act of raising up is called heaving. The priests would regard all heaved offering as their own. Before eating it, they would take out a tithe, heave and burn it as a memorial before the LORD.

The heaving of a portion of the heave offering speaks of the fact that God's servants must thoroughly honour Him by life and service. They must very deliberately sanctify the LORD before the people. Prideful arrogance attracts judgment from God. True ministers must have and keep a humble comportment; not magnifying themselves above the flock. They must lovingly endure all misunderstanding and ill treatments received in the course of service.

Ministers of God are under divine mandate to so consecrate themselves as to receive

uncommon grace and glory for performing the work of the LORD. Then they are required to put the people of the LORD to work by example and precept. In doing so, they must not lord it over God's heritage. However, they must in a firm resolve establish the rule of God in the midst of the congregation. God in response to all these will put in the hearts of His people to love and submit to their leaders. He will deliberately choose to honour His servants by clothing them with grace and glory.

To make use of divine glory without coming into self destruction has been a most difficult challenge servants of God have had to face. Men, in a negative attitude, treat the glory that accompanies their ministry as a ground to turn themselves into graven images. Hero-worship is a most insulting kind of treachery against God when it is set up by men whom He has honoured with His glory. Divine judgments cannot be held back from visiting human grooves and their worshippers.

The spirit of prophecy is saying very clearly that because the LORD's temple, already in building, would be brought to a perfect finish, God will release great glory to fully empower those who share in the work. Men and women would be taught how to bear the glory of the LORD. It is also certain that several persons

through a wrong attitude would be crushed; because they put God's glory to use in a manner that did not sanctify Him.

Glory preserves, it also enables men to mount up higher and higher until the promise is fulfilled to them:

But glory kills when wrongfully handled. We must all realise that it is the exclusive preserve of God to receive glory from men. When men think otherwise, they would have to learn the hard way. The scriptures teach us how to bear the glory of God. The Bible says that it is the priest that sprinkles the blood that should take the heave offering. This implies our holding tenaciously to the blood of the Lamb as the only ground for our acceptance with God.

Then the Bible teaches that the heave offering should be eaten before the LORD. The attitude of a servant must be maintained all through as one seeks to fulfil ministry in the house of God. The scriptures also stipulate that only the clean among the priests should eat of the heave offering. All upon whom the grace of God rests must deliberately seek to live morally pleasing lives. To bear the glory in a shameful lifestyle does damage to the testimony of Christ.

Waiting upon the LORD before a season of ministry is a familiar practice. It is also a

spiritually healthy habit to take out time to seek the face of the LORD after a period of ministry.

Quite often, the Holy Spirit surfaces before us in certain situations in which we behaved unbecomely. Repentance coupled with sincere pleas for mercy attracts divine help. The heart is thoroughly purged and the inner man strengthened with needed virtues. Such times are also attended with divine teaching and instructions which help to improve our lives and services. As we bear His glory in a true and humble spirit, He invests us with more of it.

THE SECOND GREAT PROVISION

The nineteenth chapter of the book of Numbers may be divided into three distinct groups of verses: The first ten verses (Num. 19: 1-10), then next, the middle six verses (Num. 19: 11-16); and the last six verses (Num. 19: 17-22).

Our concern in this section will be limited to things revealed in the middle six verses and their practical implications for the church. In the nineteenth chapter things are brought up which require combined expression of the authority of the King and the compassion of the Priest of God. We reproduce here the six verses under consideration (Num. 19: 11-16). Also reproduced is Numbers 5:1-4 which will assist us in interpreting the other passage.

“He that toucheth the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days.

He shall purify himself with it on the third day, and on the seventh day he shall be clean: but if he purify not himself the third day, then the seventh day he shall not be clean.

Whosoever toucheth the dead body of any man that is dead, and purifieth not himself defileth the tabernacle of the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from Israel: because the water of separation was not sprinkled upon him, he shall be unclean; his uncleanness is yet upon him.

This is the law, when a man dieth in a tent all that come into the tent, and all that is in the tent, shall be unclean seven days.

And every open vessel which hath no covering bound upon it is unclean. And whosoever toucheth one that is slain with a sword in the open fields, or a dead body, or

a bone of a man, or a grave shall be unclean seven days.” (Num. 19: 11-16).

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Command the children of Israel, that they put out of the camp every leper, and every one that hath an issue, and whosoever is defiled by the dead:

Both male and female shall ye put out, without the camp shall ye put them; that they defile not their camps, in the midst whereof I dwell.

And the children of Israel did so, and put them out without the camp: as the LORD spake unto Moses, so did the children of Israel.

(Numbers 5: 1-4).

We will now comment on the above passages of Scriptures.

- (a) The passages deal with God's interests in the moral and ministerial purity of the Church; and of man's responsibility in both submitting to and ensuring the protection of these rights.
- (b) The Lord's people are to particularly remind

themselves that the Church is the dwelling place of the most High God, the Holy One.

- (c) The category of persons to be put out of the camp is mentioned: the lepers; those having a running issue (discharge); and those defiled by the dead.

- (d) The three listed conditions are a three-fold description of the same malady: It has to do with the utter depravity of the old Adam nature gaining ascendancy over the individual. In the natural sphere, we know that leprosy is contagious. Lepers are usually separated from the rest of society. The use of the figure of leprosy to antitype morally undesirable characteristics conveys to mind a clear picture of what God would have His church know.

Discharge or running issue reveals inability to retain life; the victim having pierced himself through with diverse injurious cares. The Lord expects fruitful results from all His investments.

The dead man is the first Adam. To be defiled by touching the dead is to allow self to be overcome by some moral failure. It becomes a fixed habit. The defilement that comes through contact with dead men's bones or through walking over a tomb speaks of one who has been

ruined morally by evil associates. Matthew 23: 27 reveals this term as being used for the Pharisees and Scribes of Jesus' day.

There is evident in all these scriptures that God expects spiritual elders to enforce needful discipline on erring members of a local congregation. Disorderliness, disgraceful conduct, immorality, unbridled anger and such like are character traits which must not be allowed to find any form of expression in the Ecclesia.

Numbers chapter 5: 5-10 however, identify a class of believers who are still in the conflict stage with sin and are visibly yearning for God's mercy and deliverance. Through proper counselling and the ministry of the word and prayers, believers in this class should be given all assistance to help them win the victory over the flesh. But it is not an expression of love to overlook cases of habitual failure which quite often are accompanied by a carefree attitude.

It must be remembered that the handling of '*unclean*' persons must be both punitive and redemptive. Provisions must always be made to ensure the recovery of one placed under discipline. Those involved in spiritual leadership should take time to visit such occasionally to counsel and pray with them. God requires this. In the same manner any under disciplinary

measures owes himself a duty to repent, to cry out to God for mercy. Where fellowship is withdrawn from any it should never be taken as an excommunication. The latter practice is rarely called for and we are of the opinion that the prerogative for such level of discipline belongs to the LORD.

The Kingdom of heaven is the domain of the LORD'S RULE, AUTHORITY AND POWER. Learning to live in unreserved submission to God's governance is of paramount importance. Spiritual discipline involves subjecting oneself to divine controls and the arrangements that God has put in place in His Kingdom. This is not negotiable. The Lord places those who neglect to render to Him due reverence under fatherly chastisement. It is part of the child-training measures He directly adopts towards us so that we might progressively learn obedience and be rewarded with fully developed divine nature.

There is this aspect of administering discipline in His house which He places under the responsibility of the leaders. We are brought face to face with this challenge in this chapter.

God must be honoured by His people through their submitting to this provision. The terrible and fearful abuse of the word of discipline has made many well meaning servants of God to shy away from the subject and practice. But it must

be realised that if the church would not lovingly but firmly deal with matters calling for discipline, God will take the initiative. If we judge ourselves, we would not be judged. This is true both in relation to individual and corporate acceptance of the counsel. It is not an easy matter when God steps in to judge.

The fall has made man callous. It is potentially dangerous to have man be in a position where he can wield instruments of punishment over others. But this fear ought not to have a place among God's children. The boundaries of authority to discipline are clearly marked out. If the Spirit of Jesus is allowed to rule in the heart, needed wisdom and caution shall be supplied to suitable persons whose main desires in stepping into this issue in the local set up are to honour God and show redemptive concern for the flock purchased by the blood of the Jesus Christ, the Lamb.