



COMPLETING
The
Unfinished
REFORMATION



George Akalonu

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Completing the Unfinished Reformation

George Akalonu

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Preface for the Kingdom Culture Series

We have tarried before the Lord for some time to receive a rhema concerning how to introduce the books in the series you are about to read. He directed us to share a little bit of how He ordered our steps over a 21-year period between 1996-2017.

In 1996, the Lord called us out of denominationalism to serve His Body and Kingdom. As we resigned from a Pastoral calling and began to serve Him and the Body in a community in Africa (Owerri, Imo State of Nigeria), we held on to one critical vision He released beginning August 1996. At that time, we joined other saints to lament the sad state of Africa on almost all fronts of life. It was surreal to hear the Lord comfort us by saying He had appointed His Church in Africa as instrument of a quick work: Rescuing His Kingdom program in the earth realm from corruption in preparation for the return of King Yeshua, Jesus.

In August 2006, He directed us to relocate to London which as centre of the world would make our Acts 1:8 assignment more impactful on a global scale. Looking back, because we did not see it then, it is significant that it was 100 years after Azusa Street Revival that the Lord in 2006 birthed Global School of Ministry as a catalyst of Reformation, Restoration, and Revival. Again, we did not see clearly then how extensively it was to be used to rediscover Truths which were missed out by Martin Luther in the Protestant Reformation of 1517.

Interestingly, the Lord used various means to make it clear what He was about to do was not raise a man or woman, like Martin Luther was raised prominently and publicly. But rather activate a company of saints worldwide with understanding of Him and the Church. A company of saints who embrace His Kingdom pattern and take their place as His sons who would do all His will. In this regard, the Lord made it clear the election of His Church in Africa was not for the purpose of building an 'African Cultural Church'. The wider and more strategic scope was to use it to use His remnant 'out of the seed of Ham' to impact and connect His seed out of Shem and Japheth to constitute the fourth race which is the Elect Remnant or 'one new man' spoken of by Apostle Paul.

In other words, the focus of the Lord was simply to use the Global School of Ministry project to activate His elect remnant to walk in unity of the Faith. And, be empowered to represent Him and the Kingdom right where they are in various corners of the world where He preserved them from the claws of Babylon. It was then Holy Spirit provided illumination of this anchor scripture:

Romans 11:5 (KJV) *5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*

There is a simple, yet grand key to understand the fundamental difference between the Martin Luther Protestant Reformation and the Kingdom Culture project. The Reformation of Martin Luther was designed to 'Protest' some of the dogma and practices of the Roman Catholic Church when he received revelation of their unbiblical origins.

The Kingdom Culture project, on the other hand, is designed to take the Church back to what it was before the Roman Empire embraced the larger wing of the Church which was tired of persecution and

martyrdom in the 4th Century. In other words, through the Kingdom Culture project, the Omega or End Time Church will be a logical conclusion of what had started in the Alpha or First Century Church.

Unlike other reformation projects before it, Kingdom Culture, through the Global School of Ministry and annual Master Class series of the Global Advanced Mentorship Program have two simple keys: Get the Church back into the 'School' Paradigm where Study of the Word is central to both congregational and general ministry. Second, to challenge all saints to receive the Four-dimensional work of Holy Spirit: He Is the Seal of redemption; He uses the Word to Transform Life of Believers from inside out, He Unites saints to live as one indivisible Body of Yeshua notwithstanding their locations or sects; He releases Power through which saints are able to demonstrate the awesome powers of the Risen Yeshua, Jesus!

These are accomplished when leaders and saints sincerely and diligently embrace the ministry of Holy Spirit and the Word through the **T>T>E>A>R process**. It is one where leaders are used by Holy Spirit to:

- **Teach** saints the whole counsel of Holy Scriptures
- **Train** saints to discover and take their places as effective members of the Body of Yeshua
- **Equip** saints with what it takes to walk in victory through mentorship and support
- **Activate** the Gifts and callings of Holy Spirit which may lie dormant in them
- **Release** the saints into productive ministry. This may be by public ordination or Commissioning during ministry events.

500 years after the Protestant Reformation of 1517, the Lord Yeshua, Jesus is activating throughout the earth realm this framework. The framework through which Holy Spirit will undertake training of Reformers who will receive proper understanding of the Pauline Epistles and Master Plan of the true Kingdom Church contained therein, and build individual lives, ministries and congregations accordingly.

This Kingdom Culture project involves release of 40 books on dedicated websites where all saints worldwide who desire to discover, pursue and fulfil their callings as the Royal Priesthood after the order of Melchizedeck can find the teaching resources to train in the comfort of their own homes.

On the other hand, these 40 books will put in the hands of the great company of elect ministers across the world who know the flock is not theirs but Yeshua's. These books are tools with which to systematically transform the operating systems of the ministries committed to their trust from 'Theatres' to 'Schools'. These books collectively make up the curriculum with which to launch their own Global School of Ministry project. The curriculum will ensure every two or three years, fresh sets of fit-for-purpose ministers of the gospel who will serve the Lord with all their hearts are produced.

All 40 books on the websites constitute what it takes to root out the leaven of Babylon derived from our various experiences with Christian Religion. They therefore constitute what we need to embrace and walk in true Kingdom Culture. It is through ministry of the Word that the Church will be prepared and made ready for return of her Groom:

Ephesians 5:25-27 (KJV) *25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

Please intentionally study this and the other resources in the series prayerfully under unction of Holy Spirit with your Bible to confirm all the points made. As you train, necessity is upon you to make your vessel available for Holy Spirit to use to transmit these empowering truths to other saints who yearn for empowerment!

Psalm 68:11 (KJV) 11 *The Lord gave **the** word: **great was the company** of those that published it.*

2 Timothy 2:2 (KJV) 2 *And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

May Elohim, our heavenly Father make you the instrument of His Grace He designed you to be!

Use of the Hebraic Names of the Most High

Yahweh, Elohim, Yeshua. During our walk with the Lord, we discovered by leading of Holy Spirit how fundamentally flawed was the intrusion of Rome into the gospel from 4th Century AD. Replacement Theology led Rome to take away all Hebraic/Jewish connections as root of what is now called the Christian Faith. What He has led us to do is to call our Father by the Name He revealed Himself to Israel which is Yahweh. In the same way, rather than call our Creator by the generic title God, we find it more appropriate to call Him by the Hebraic Name He revealed to humanity through Moses which is Elohim. The Name, Elohim properly conveys His Unity in Plurality as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! We also call our King the Name His Father gave Him, Yeshua as well as the Anglicized translation, Jesus derived from the Greek translation, Ioseus.

We do this as led by Holy Spirit, not as part of the so-called sacred Names movement. Neither do we subscribe to the legalistic methods of Judaizers who are intent on dragging saints into the dead works and rituals of Judaism. We do not condemn or malign those who have not yet caught this depth of revelation. Please feel free to call the Most High by what He reveals to you and what you are comfortable with.

Chapter 1

Introduction & Synopsis

In the Gospel written by John, the beloved, Yeshua Jesus made two promises which are keys to a life of true Liberty in the Spirit. The first had to do with the reality that knowledge of the Truth set people free from the bondage of ignorance.

John 8:32 (KJV) *32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

Second, those who truly believed on Him were delivered from the hands of the enemy.

John 8:36 (KJV) *36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*

Those who are truly saved are therefore guaranteed Liberty when their lives are built on Truth not errors, falsehood, lies or assumptions.

2 Timothy 3:14-17 (KJV) *14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; 15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

It is very easy for people to claim to have a relationship with the Lord or to love Him. But, the acid test is not what we think but who we are and what we do. The Lord Himself set a simple benchmark as proof of our love: Obedience to His Word.

John 14:21, 23-24 (KJV) *21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.*

23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. 24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

John 15:9-10, 14 (KJV) *9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. 10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.*

14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

For the Church to walk in Truth while Yeshua ascended to Heaven and remain there until that Great Day when He will return to rule and reign in a physical sense, two critical provisions were made:

1. Holy Spirit was given to be the Ultimate Teacher of the Church and guide into the mind of The Father.

John 14:15-17 (KJV) *15 If ye love me, keep my commandments. 16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*

John 14:25-26 (KJV) *25 These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. 26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

2. The Holy Scriptures were birthed and preserved, often at the great cost of Martyrdom by a great company of hosts. Divinity was at work through the centuries to inspire various vessels, who laid down their lives, so to say, to collate the various sections of the Holy Scripture to present them as the single volume now called the Holy Bible. With the Bible now freely available, what the Lord expects all who are called by His Name to do is to yearn for and know the Truth through prayerful, diligent study of the Holy Scriptures as a lifestyle. This was the case with the saints at Berea who were diligent to cross check the ministry of the leading Apostle of their age, Paul. They received commendation, not condemnation for so doing!

Danger of Faulty Foundations

One of the saddest realities of spiritual life in this critical, End Time generation, is a majority of Christians have lost the spirit of the quest for and discovery of Truth which is so necessary to know and stay in. Of all things maturing and mature saints need to know, nothing matches the issues of foundations. There is a real need to examine the nature and power of foundations on which we stand as saints. This will enable us to discern Truth from error and adjust while there is still time.

Psalm 11:3 (KJV) *3 If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?*

Martin Luther rejected Faulty Foundations and the result was the Protestant Reformation!

500 years ago, in the City of Wittenberg, Germany, an event of epic proportions which redefined Christianity took place. It was the Protestant Reformation ignited through the man who up until then was a Roman Catholic Priest, Martin Luther.

Since end of the Alpha Church, there has been no move of the Lord in the earth realm as consequential and paradigm shifting as what He did with Martin Luther in launch of the Protestant Reformation in 1517, when he nailed his 95 Thesis (Protest Points against the Dogmas and Liturgy of Roman Catholic Church which until then were accepted by all), on the Doors of the Castle Church in the German City of Wittenberg.

The depth of his dissent – well articulated in writings, courage, and steadfastness. Martin Luther advocated and campaigned for his convictions breaking the chokehold of Rome on the spiritual identity and destinies of billions of people within the last 500 years like no other single thing! Without a shadow of a doubt, it was the greatest single spiritual event since the Day of Pentecost when the world experienced the first massive shift from Judaism as a Religion to Christianity as a way of life based on a relationship with Elohim through the Blood shed by Yeshua, Jesus and convicting work of Holy Spirit.

Synopsis: A Sketch of ‘Rediscovered’ Truths and Their Consequences

We all are, in a sense, beneficiaries of the great events orchestrated by this courageous Servant of the Lord. Through the Protestant Movement, many previously hidden and suppressed Biblical truths were

rediscovered, embraced, and publicly manifested by saints, Congregations, and even Nation states. Some of those truths and consequences of rediscovery:

- Salvation is entirely by Grace of Elohim in Yeshua, Jesus and appropriated through Faith alone!

This Truth, long hidden by Rome, was like a Lightbulb in the spirit-man of Martin Luther, causing the Catholic Friar to be delivered from his unceasing efforts/works to gain divine approval.

- Salvation is personal, unto Yeshua, Jesus and His Kingdom, not organizational unto a Religious group.

We are not saved by Infant Baptism to become members of the Church. Before then, the Roman Catholic Church literarily 'owned' anyone considered to be its 'members' including those baptized as infants by their parents.

- The Just shall live by Faith (not works)
- Today, nearly 1 billion people worldwide can be classified as 'Protestant Christians'
- The great economic powerhouse of the world: United States, Germany, England and Australia derive their strength partly because of the Protestant work ethic and representative democracies unleashed by the Reformation

There are many great and unassailable blessings the world has derived from the events of 1517! As the Lord directs, some will be outlined.

We will receive the Divine Verdict: While the achievements were great, the Protestant Movement had some failings which are not often acknowledged. Some are very serious from a spiritual point of view. These include:

- Treating what Elohim ordained as the beginning of a Process of Reformation as an end of itself.
- By discovering and preaching the gospel of Salvation by Grace and not discovering and embracing the Gospel of the Kingdom, which is an integral part of the message of Yeshua, the Protestant Movement has been stuck in the mud of 'Christian Religion'.

Furthermore, the Lord revealed a foundational error of the Reformation which was its positioning as a Protest of some dogma and liturgical practices of Roman Catholicism. By this outlook, a great lie has been unconsciously sustained: The Roman Catholic Church is the 'original Church' but had some teachings and practices which Martin Luther and other reformers found unacceptable:

- Anti-Semitism
- Replacement Theology
- Blood Guiltiness

Also, released by the Lord to call to the attention of His remnant are these realities:

- The full Gospel of Salvation by Grace through Faith in Yeshua and entrance into the Kingdom which He preached and taught.

- The warnings Yeshua issued about attempts of Satan to corrupt and negate His Redemptive Mission
- The revelations granted to the Church through Yeshua's appointed Masterbuilder, Paul defining who the Church is and situating his relevance to the church in all generations. This was partly confirmed by Apostle Peter
- Factors which made the Alpha or first Century Church successful
- Divine warnings through the vessels of John, Peter, Jude, Paul and others about how Satan would try to negate the redemptive mission of Yeshua through false teachers and the leaven of false doctrine
- How the Religious part of the Legs of Iron was prophesied by Daniel about 600 years before incarnation of Yeshua was fulfilled. Holy Spirit will give us an understanding of how History and the Holy Scriptures blend beautifully. We will gain an understanding of how Rome, which could not destroy the Gospel by the Crucifixion of Yeshua and massive persecution of the Alpha Church, changed track to 'embrace Christianity' to control and use it for 'Empire purpose'
- Strategic failings of the Reformation which the Omega Church needs to acknowledge: Anti-Semitism; Replacement Theology; Blood Guiltiness: Dis-unity/Life outside Order/Rebelliousness as a way of life in Protestantism; Rejection of the Fivefold and spiritual gifts while clinging to the Levitical priesthood
- The need for Representational Repentance by all who are fruits of the Protestant Reformation
- The Revelation of the Leaven of Rome – principles and practices which Protestants embrace without thinking and thus reveal themselves as clones or offspring with the DNA of Rome
- The entrapment – what has been going on since 2013 as Rome launched a charm offensive within the ranks of Pentecostalism and Evangelism with a powerful ecumenical outreach
- Clear guidelines of what it will take for complete Reformation of the Church to take place
- The reality that Yeshua has already defined what the Reformed Church will look like in Ephesians 5:25-27
- Dangers of ABC (Attendance, Buildings, Cash) Christianity. The sad reality is at end of the day most Christians will prefer to engage in Religion – rituals without heart – inside designated buildings on certain 'holy days'! Implications are clear: Only the Remnant who allow Holy Spirit to align their lives with Words of the Holy Scriptures will be saved!
- The difference between the Protestant Reformation of 1517 and the Last Reformation which will usher in readiness of the Bride for her Groom, Yeshua, Jesus.

Holy Spirit will guide us through a complex maze of History!

As we conclude this Introduction and Synopsis, it is necessary to state our Navigator will be Holy Spirit alone! He knows all things and when we trust Him, there is no doubt He will lead us to the Truth which sets free:

1 Corinthians 2:3-14 (KJV) *3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. 4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. 6 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to*

nought: 7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: 8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Welcome to the journey of discovery! And, come along with an open heart and willing mind, ready to adjust at the place of prayer!

Review Questions

1. Why should Saints bother about the Foundation of Truth on which we stand?
2. Summarize what you personally received from this chapter.

Chapter 2

Distortion of Truth Weaponized for Deception

Distortion of Truth, weaponized for Deception against Leaders: A Constant Tool in Satan's War against Humankind – A Biblical Survey Part 1

In the Presence of Elohim, it pleased Him to give us revelation by showing this vessel a panoramic view of life in Time, since the days at Eden. It was indeed very insightful to see from the beginning, at the dawn of life in the earth realm, how Satan has fought mankind with a simple tool: ***Distortion of Truth which he weaponized for Deception***. This derives from the reality he is the father of lies!

John 8:44 (KJV) *44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*

We can hazard a guess as to why Satan has been an adversary of humanity he wanted the Mantle on mankind given by Elohim as Governor and Ambassadors of the Kingdom of Heaven in the earth realm!

Genesis 1:26-30 (KJV) *26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. 29 And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. 30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.*

Genesis 2:15 (KJV) *15 And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.*

Satan knew something which many saints still struggle to grasp: ***What you do flows out of who you submit to***. If we submit to Elohim in total surrender of our lives, His righteousness will flow from our innermost being and manifest outwardly as good behaviour and character – in the secret as in the open. But, where one has any aspect of the spirit, soul, and body latched to Satan, what will flow out will be sin.

Romans 6:16 (KJV) *16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?*

So, Satan was and has been contending with humanity for lordship of the earth realm. ***If he can get any human to disobey Elohim, Satan bears rule over that person***. Saints must live their lives in the consciousness that the Grace of Elohim in us guarantees the capacity to obey Him at all times, once

Yeshua is truly enthroned in our hearts. In this regard, half obedience to Elohim and half obedience to Satan is not an acceptable option!

Romans 6:11-15 (KJV) *11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. 12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. 15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.*

Knowing Saints have a basic fear of Elohim based on a basic awareness of His Being as the Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omnipresent One, Satan often does not come blazing with weapons we can clearly see. What he does, therefore, is to adopt anything from his bag of tricks, called wiles, which he deems as best to gain access to the heart or mind of a saint. The ultimate objective is using the same to cause a departure from the Truth. It makes sense therefore for saints to outwit Satan by understanding how he operates – otherwise called his wiles.

2 Corinthians 2:11 (KJV) *11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.*

Ephesians 6:11-13 (KJV) *11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

Nothing suits Satan and his evil cohorts better than to take an element of truth and weave lies into it to be used for Deception

1 Corinthians 5:6-8 (KJV) *6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? 7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

Galatians 5:9 (KJV) *9 A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.*

Once he gets a man or woman to bite his poisoned fruit, the deed is done. Such a person or group in effect, become controlled by that deception. Without knowing it, they submit to him while blindfolded that they are worshiping or serving Elohim! We shall look at various ways the Adversary deployed lies or half-truths to deceive humanity, starting with Adam and Eve.

Phases of the Scriptural Survey

Hebrews 11:3 (KJV) *3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.*

The world created by the words of Elohim is ordained to be ruled by His Word!

A. Adam and Eve at Eden

At the dawn of life in the earth realm, the Creator, Elohim gave Adam and Eve clear unambiguous Instruction of what to do and what to avoid:

Genesis 2:16-17 (KJV) *16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

In his nefarious assignment, Satan chose to distort the Words of Elohim to create the basis of dialogue with Eve. Once she opened that door of conversation, coupled with the irresponsibility of Adam who failed to be an effective covering over Eve, the deal of the Fall was sealed! Satan targeted the will of Eve through activation of her carnal senses. Once the will made the choice to disobey Elohim and obey Satan, it secured a new master to submit to.

Genesis 3:1-13 (KJV) *1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? 2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. 6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. 7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. 8 And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. 9 And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? 10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. 11 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? 12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. 13 And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.*

If only saints will be diligent to understand just as he did with Eve, Satan is ever at work through offering us the world: Lust of the Flesh, Lust of the Eyes, and Pride of Life as instruments of temptation to engage in lifestyles and ministry patterns which ultimately create false worship of a false god while appearing to look, feel, and sound 'good'!

2 Corinthians 11:3 (KJV) *3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.*

B. Between Eden and the Flood

Adam and Eve infected humankind with the DNA of Sin. Wickedness became a 'normal' tendency.

Genesis 5:1-3 (KJV) *1 This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; 2 Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. 3 And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, and after his image; and called his name Seth:*

Cain murdered Abel. With the transmission of the DNA of Sin as evidence of the lordship of Satan over fallen humanity, it was not long before the spirit of Jealousy and murder came calling and Cain fell for it. Nobody taught him to sin or kill. It flowed from the fallen nature within!

By the time, we get to Genesis Chapter 6, the full fruit of that one sin of Adam and Eve was clear: Mankind lost it totally!

Genesis 6:1-13 (KJV) *1 And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, 2 That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. 3 And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. 4 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. 5 And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. 7 And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. 8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. 9 These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God. 10 And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. 11 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. 13 And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.*

Destruction of the First World was the only Solution!

C. From the Flood till Exodus

In various ways, we see Satan at work both against the Patriarchs and against humanity in general.

Noah, the man who found great grace through which only him and his family were saved, lost it, not many years after! The Patriarch of humanity, almost standing at par with Adam as the father of human race lost it to excess wine. In a moment of unmanaged anger, Noah defined the world from his days onward. The fallen nature is indeed evil!

Genesis 9:20-27 (KJV) *20 And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: 21 And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. 22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. 23 And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness. 24 And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him. 25 And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. 26 And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. 27 God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.*

Abraham, he received a clear promise of a Seed through his marriage with Sarah.

Genesis 15:1-4 (KJV) *1 After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. 2 And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me,*

seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? 3 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. 4 And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.

Yet, Satan worked through Sarah, his sweetheart, to compromise the promise. By deploying the arm of the flesh to actualize the promise of a son, Abraham ended up producing Ishmael! The effect of that moral fall has defined the history of the Middle East.

Genesis 16:1-3, 15-16 (KJV) *1 Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. 2 And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. 3 And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.*

15 And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael. 16 And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.

In the fullness of time, when Abraham and Sarah were too old to bear children, when the arm of the flesh had clearly failed, Elohim visited them with the Promised son who would continue the lineage that would produce Seed of the Woman.

Genesis 18:9-14 (KJV) *9 And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. 10 And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him. 11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. 12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? 13 And the Lord said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? 14 Is any thing too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.*

Genesis 21:1-7 (KJV) *1 And the Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken. 2 For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. 3 And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac. 4 And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him. 5 And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him. 6 And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me. 7 And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born him a son in his old age.*

Till today, Satan is still tempting saints with the notion that delay is denial, causing many to recourse to the arm of the flesh instead of waiting on Elohim.

For the mass of humanity, it was only a matter of time before extreme sin/iniquity became commonplace and normal. The lifestyle which dishonored Elohim and His creative prowess ended up in destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

D. During the Old Covenant

The Season of Time between Giving of the Law and End of the Old Covenant offered us great opportunities to learn how Satan works against both the elect and generality of people.

Moses, he was a man with an outstanding testimony rendered severally by Elohim Himself.

Numbers 12:5-8 (KJV) *5 And the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth. 6 And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. 7 My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. 8 With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?*

Even when he was jealous for the glory of Elohim defiled by Israel, in the matter of the Golden Calf, it is significant that Moses would allow the spirit of Anger to so consume him to the degree he would smash the very Tablets on which the Torah was written with the very fingers of Elohim! That he could cast that Holy Book to the ground where it was smashed is mind boggling in its profanity!

Exodus 32:15-16, 19-20 (KJV) *15 And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand: the tables were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written. 16 And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables.*

19 And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount. 20 And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strawed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it.

Satan had obviously cased Moses well to discover he could manipulate the Anger in his soul and jealousy for the glory of Elohim to cause him to stumble! In the matter of the water from the Rock at Kadesh, Satan played the trick again and Moses lost not just his cool but also his mandate as Apostle-Prophet and indeed life!

Numbers 20:7-12 (KJV) *7 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 8 Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink. 9 And Moses took the rod from before the Lord, as he commanded him. 10 And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? 11 And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. 12 And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.*

Aaron, the very first High Priest of Israel gave room for Satan to use the pressure of the people so much, he became a men pleaser. The outcome was a man who knew Elohim and had served as his Ambassador to Pharaoh; who had seen His mighty acts and was made the very Custodian of holy things, became the very person to build a Golden Calf and called on Israel to worship it as their god in Exodus 32! He short-circuited his life and ministry and could not enter the Promised Land as Numbers 20:23-29 reveals.

Saul was chosen from obscurity to lead Israel. Saul in 1 Samuel chapter 15 unilaterally changed the rules of engagement Elohim gave him in the Battle against Amalek and its king Agag. Confronted by Samuel

the Prophet, he was not penitent but rather sought to be covered. It was here Elohim defined how He views disobedience and rebellion:

1 Samuel 15:22-23 (KJV) *22 And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. 23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.*

David, though a Teenager, he found favor in the sight of Elohim and was chosen to replace Saul. A mighty and Charismatic Warrior King, Priest, and Prophet, David was a worshipper and Psalmist without compare. But, in a season, Kings went to war, per 2 Samuel 11, he stayed back from the war front, giving Satan the opening he needed to fire the arrow of seeing and lusting for Bathsheba. He subsequently committed adultery and to cover his tracks, ordered her husband Uriah who was his faithful commander to be killed. A fruit of that relationship became Solomon whose perversion of immorality was unrivaled till date!

David was emotionally driven to build Elohim a solid temple full of splendor and physical majesty befitting His status as Lord of Israel. But, because of his blood-stained hands, Elohim declined the offer.

Solomon was to receive Elohim's permission to build the temple. When it was completed, it was a sight to behold. As far as Solomon was concerned, he had built an everlasting edifice through the Temple for Elohim to abide. How carnal were his thoughts as expressed in 2 Chronicles chapter 6! Unknown to him the Temple became one of the pillars which sustained religion in Israel: A building you could go into to meet Elohim, seek and get ablution for Sin, and participate in carnal ordinances of rituals while sustaining a sinful lifestyle, just like the builder whose debauchery with 1000 wives and concubines (who brought the gods of their nations to Israel).

Interesting, Elohim had not changed in His desire for a relationship with humans based on obedience to His Word! At the dedication of the temple, here is what Elohim said:

2 Chronicles 7:17-22 (KJV) *17 And as for thee, if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, and do according to all that I have commanded thee, and shalt observe my statutes and my judgments; 18 Then will I stablish the throne of thy kingdom, according as I have covenanted with David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man to be ruler in Israel. 19 But if ye turn away, and forsake my statutes and my commandments, which I have set before you, and shall go and serve other gods, and worship them; 20 Then will I pluck them up by the roots out of my land which I have given them; and this house, which I have sanctified for my name, will I cast out of my sight, and will make it to be a proverb and a byword among all nations. 21 And this house, which is high, shall be an astonishment to every one that passeth by it; so that he shall say, Why hath the Lord done thus unto this land, and unto this house? 22 And it shall be answered, Because they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, and laid hold on other gods, and worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath he brought all this evil upon them.*

Elohim later emphasized through Prophet Isaiah that proper relationship with Him based on His Word is the basis of a true and lasting relationship.

Isaiah 66:1-2 (KJV) *1 Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? 2 For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.*

Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, an ordinary man given the privilege of ruling 10 Tribes of Israel allowed Satan to plant an evil seed of how to retain loyalty of the people by preventing them from going to Jerusalem to worship Elohim. He therefore conceived and built an alternative altar at Samaria (1 Kings Chapters 11 and 12).

Contemporary Applications

Till today, many ministers and ministries are building Golden Calves and alternative altars - supposedly for Elohim - where dead works of rituals are performed for benefit of crowds of 'worshippers'. And, building millions more via TV, Satellite, and cable worldwide while living in Sin and continuing in disobedience of the clear instructions of Elohim concerning what constitutes Kingdom life and ministry!

Let us also take note of one principle Satan has always deployed since the days of Adam and Eve: He specifically targets those in leadership! Satan deploys the hosts of hell to study men and women of influence in the Kingdom, targeting their hearts and minds through the carnal senses. Satan considers his work done when they can take even a little leaven of lie into their theologies or liturgies.

Matthew 26:31 (KJV) *31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.*

Unsuspecting followers who have neither the will nor time to diligently study and compare scripture with scripture just get soul tied to the personalities of leaders they 'adore' to the degree lies are taken in as truth. Such people can jump up and down, engage in a thousand and one activities, but they end up getting farther away from Elohim, not nearer to him in their 'worship' and dogmas!

Review Question

1. Please share 3 clear things learned from this chapter for personal life/ministry application

Chapter 3

Inter & New Testament Period

Distortion of Truth Weaponized for Deception Against Leaders: A Constant Tool in Satan's War Against Humankind – A Biblical Survey Part 2

The Inter-Testament and New Testament Years

For what has been estimated by Bible Scholars as a period of almost 400 years, the Voice of Elohim was not heard in Israel. The conquests of Israel by the various Empires (Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia; Greco-Macedonia and Rome) had taken its toll on knowledge and practice of the Old Covenant. On 16th March 597 BC, Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar II sacked Jerusalem. The Magnificent First Temple built by Solomon was destroyed and the people carried away into captivity.

But, for a brief period, estimated as 108 or so years, when the Hasmonean dynasty ruled Judea after the successful Maccabean revolt against Antiochus IV Epiphanes who desecrated the Temple, Israel ceased to function as a viable State: The people were largely in exile. Those who remained got thoroughly corrupted by the ways of Gentiles.

With the loss of Sovereignty and destruction of the Temple, its cherished Religion based on the Torah fell on the ground! The Priesthood all but disappeared. Various attempts were made by various pious men to keep the Hebrews reminded of their spiritual identity. The result was twofold:

i. Synagogues were raised in cities with Jewish populations to become their Cultural and Religious Education Centers in exile (a very poor substitute for the Temple). In the Synagogues, the Tanakh (Old Testament) was read every Sabbath Day followed by exhortations.

ii. In place of the Levitical/Aaronic Priesthood, there arose various sects (Denominations in modern parlance) which advocated for certain interpretations of Truth, in accordance to the ability of their founders and adherents to define their perspectives. Chief among such sects were:

1. The Pharisees
2. The Sadducees
3. The Scribes
4. The Sanhedrin arose as Spiritual Elders of the Land or High Council

Judaism had indeed fallen on hard ground and these substitutes ran the ship of Religion fully aground as Satan distorted Truth, weaponized same in their hands to fight the Prince of Life when He was incarnated during the days when Augustus Caesar reigned as the First Emperor of the newly transitioned Imperial Rome. One scripture best illustrates the way Religion – rituals without heart done inside specially designated buildings on certain holy days – had taken the life out of Judaism.

Distortion of Torah

When Elohim gave the Torah to Moses, His clear intention was to create a Kingdom of Priests who would be His Ambassadors to the Gentiles. The idea was once you encounter a Hebrew/Jew, there would be such a uniqueness of lifestyle and pursuits which would draw Gentiles to seek their Elohim:

Exodus 19:3-8 (KJV) *3 And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; 4 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. 5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: 6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. 7 And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him. 8 And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord.*

Here is how a Britannia.com, a secular website describes this special relationship of the Hebrews and Elohim:

“Israel, its prophets proclaimed, was the chosen instrument of the transcendent God, whose name was Yahweh. Yahweh was utterly “other” than man, he was “holy.” It was God who had created man, not man the gods, and Israel was God’s chosen instrument to be “a light to lighten the nations” (Isaiah). To make the meaning of its special relationship to Yahweh evident to the world was therefore Israel’s reason for being. Its task was to put the revelation of God into purposeful use by producing an ordered human society that was ruled by God’s justice and love and not by man’s force and greed.”

The Torah was thoroughly dishonored by the various denominations which arose to serve interests of their followers rather than Elohim who they purported to represent. They distorted the Torah to suit the fancies of their followers. They took away the personal relationship and Kingdom purpose of the Torah and its essence and rather substituted same with countless rituals.

Matthew 23:1-10 (KJV) *1 Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, 2 Saying The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: 3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. 4 For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. 5 But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, 6 And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, 7 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. 8 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. 9 And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. 10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.*

Matthew 23:13-39 (KJV) *13 But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. 14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. 15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. 16 Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing;*

but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! 17 Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? 18 And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. 19 Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? 20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon. 21 And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein. 22 And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon. 23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. 24 Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. 25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. 26 Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. 27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. 28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. 29 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, 30 And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. 31 Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. 32 Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. 33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? 34 Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: 35 That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. 36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. 37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! 38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. 39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

In other words, when Yeshua appeared on the world scene, Judaism had become Utilitarian – where people desired to use Elohim to serve their carnal needs and twisting His word just as is widespread in the Christendom of Today. ***Mankind since the Fall has found it easier to submit fully to Satan and Self than to Elohim the Creator!***

The New Testament Era: Truth Manifested Bodily in a Person, Yeshua Jesus!

Let us remember, Satan used distortion of Truth to deceive Eve and Adam. By so doing, he took their mantle as ruler of the earth realm. The world since then is wired with lies, make believe, error and all kinds of deviations from righteousness. As people are born with the DNA of fallen Adam, they meet a world of distorted truth and values and are programmed to conform, thereby remaining in the grip of Satan whether unaware or consciously. In this environment, the religions of the world are infused with variations of Truth to the degree that either in Thought, Word, Attitude, or Actions they are unable to please Elohim.

Let us be reminded, Satan had clearly been identified as the purveyor of lies, error and all deviations from Truth:

John 8:44 (KJV) *44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*

Divinity was throwing down the gauntlet: To use Truth to defeat the father of lies and negate his works! It should not be lost on us that the wisdom of Elohim was manifesting in how He chose to deal with Satan: By incarnating Bodily as Truth!

Testimonies of John

Of all the vessels who recorded the spiritual identity of Yeshua, none captured the reality of Him as embodiment of Truth of Elohim like John the beloved. Let us collate some of the things this unique vessel captured in print for our knowledge and trust Holy Spirit to enable us gain understanding:

John 1:1-5 (KJV) *1 In the beginning was **the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.** 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*

John 1:14-17 (KJV) *14 **And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.** 15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. 16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. 17 **For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.***

A New Era was upon Israel and the world; True worship needs two pillars: In Spirit and in Truth!

In place of the dead works of religion Judaism offered, Yeshua advanced a radical alternative:

John 4:23-24 (KJV) *23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*

John 8:32 (KJV) *32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

John 14:6 (KJV) *6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

For this reason, Holy Spirit of Elohim operates in the earth realm as purveyor of Truth.

All things Elohim does in the earth realm are executed by His Holy Spirit. On Creation Morning, He was at work, bringing to pass in the earth realm, everything Elohim spoke into being even as He hovered over face of the deep to incubate life (Genesis 1:1-30). When it was time for the Promised Seed of the Woman to manifest, Holy Spirit went to work as described by Luke:

Luke 1:26-35 (KJV) *26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, 27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. 28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. 29 And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind*

what manner of salutation this should be. 30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. 34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? 35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

For Him to do public ministry, public affirmation of the Father was backed by infilling of Holy Spirit without measure.

John 1:29-34 (KJV) *29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. 30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. 31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. 32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. 33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. 34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.*

John 3:34 (KJV) *34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.*

Acts 10:38 (KJV) *38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.*

Let us get this clear: For Yeshua to be Incarnated into the earth realm, Holy Spirit had to plant Him in the Womb of Mary. For Him to engage in public ministry with mighty signs and wonders following, the Son of Man needed to be clothed with full Power of Holy Spirit! Of this Personality, Holy Spirit, it is worthwhile to reflect on how His assignment ties in with restoration of Truth in the earth realm. When we know, and understand this reality it will be obvious that trying to understand the Scriptures, to exposit same or to do Kingdom work without Him can only lead to futility! It is Holy Spirit Who quickens and enables us to understand both the Letters and the Purpose of Holy Scriptures. He is The Spirit of Truth!

John 14:16-18 (KJV) *16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. 18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you*

John 15:26 (KJV) *26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:*

John 16:13 (KJV) *13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.*

In praying to the Father to preserve His Own in the world, it is telling that Yeshua pointedly asked for these:

John 17:14-19 (KJV) *14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.*

Let this be clear to all who will truly participate in this study: The Battle of the Ages between Satan and humanity is hinged on Truth! If he can distort Truth and repackage it in any way to present to any group of people, his efforts will lead them astray! All roads may lead to Rome but certainly not to the Kingdom! The Kingdom rests on the Foundation of the unchanging Truth of Elohim in Yeshua and His Grace which is released to those who embrace same!

Satan went for the jugular in his Attempt to kill Truth: Yeshua, Jesus in infancy!

The Mystery of the Incarnation was plainly stated in several Old Testament Scriptures based on revelations Yahweh granted several vessels. Right after the Fall, Elohim prophesied the reality that Satan would fight the redemption plan at source by attacking its carrier, Yeshua.

Genesis 3:15 (KJV) *15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

Isaiah 7:14 (KJV) *14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*

Isaiah 9:6-7 (KJV) *6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*

Knowing Yeshua was the physical Manifestation of Truth, Satan wasted no time when He was incarnated. Matthew Chapter 2 documents how he used Herod, the King imposed on Jews by their Colonial masters to seek to slay the Baby Yeshua. But, Elohim cannot be taken by surprise! Hundreds of years before that date, He had declared what was going to happen and had made provision to shelter the Baby in Egypt, Africa.

Matthew 2:1-18 (KJV) *1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, 2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. 3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. 5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, 6 And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. 7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. 9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. 10 When they saw the star,*

they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. 11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh. 12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. 13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. 14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: 15 And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son. 16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. 17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, 18 In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

Review Question

1. Please share 3 things the Lord ministered to you personally from this chapter

Chapter 4

Satan's Attack against Israel using Veil of Religion – Part A

The entire redemption story is hinged on what Elohim did in the earth realm to actualize His declaration to Satan after the fall of Adam and Eve.

Genesis 3:15 (KJV) *15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

By virtue of Divine Election, Abraham received the specific promise that the Seed of the Woman would be of his lineage:

Genesis 12:3 (KJV) *3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

Galatians 3:16 (KJV) *16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.*

Part of this foundational Prophecy was fulfilled with the Incarnation, Death, and Resurrection of Yeshua, Jesus in a historical frame of time. The second part will be fulfilled when Yeshua returns in Majesty to rule the earth realm in the manifest or physical phase of the Kingdom of Elohim. At that time, He will rule as King of Kings assisted by all saints of all ages who overcame Satan, Flesh, and the World. They will be rewarded as joint heirs and co-rulers. At this future time, the Kingdom lost by Adam and Eve would have been fully restored for a season of time (1000 years as pronounced in Revelation 20:4-5).

Israel had a vested interest and lived in expectation of the Messiah!

Because of their checkered history during which they suffered great oppression from Gentile Powers who hated them culminating in occupation and exile, Israel lived in great expectation of the Messiah who would manifest at some point in History to change their lot and restore the glory of the kingdom that was once theirs in the days of David and Solomon. From the days of Moses, through the Judges, Kings, Prophets, life under colonial powers and in exile, the Hebrews as a people were comforted by provisions of Scriptures which pointed to the time of restoration and rule of the Messiah. As a people, they were experts at documenting and exploring genealogies. Ironically, it would have been very easy to cross check Yeshua's claim of being the Messiah!

To suggest the tot in the crib at Bethlehem was anything more than a mere human was clearly sacrilege and heresy to the men of Israel who were bound by the veil of Religion. When the young Yeshua, Jesus at the age of 12 confounded the learned men with His deep understanding of the real essence of the Torah, not a few people were dazed. It was only Mary and Joseph who were privy to a deep secret: This was no ordinary human. This was the very Son of Elohim who was conceived supernaturally when the Holy Spirit planted Him in the womb of Mary and whose grand assignment was to redeem humanity and set up the Kingdom which had been lost in Adam (Please read the full accounts in Luke chapters 1 and 2).

Not leaving the revelation of Yeshua, Jesus to the opinion of men, Elohim supernaturally orchestrated a series of supernatural signs and prophetic fulfillment to attest this was indeed no ordinary prophet and certainly not a mere mortal.

For their sake, Matthew who had great skill in documenting records as a Tax Collector was specifically recruited as a biographer of Yeshua for the benefit of Hebrews who knew the Tanakh and what it said of the Messiah. That is why the Gospel written by him contained the phrase 'that it might be fulfilled' several times:

Matthew 1:22-23 (KJV) *22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.*

Matthew 2:15 (KJV) *15 And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.*

Matthew 2:23 (KJV) *23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.*

Matthew 4:13-16 (KJV) *13 And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: 14 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, 15 The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; 16 The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.*

Matthew 8:17 (KJV) *17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.*

Matthew 12:17-18 (KJV) *17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, 18 Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.*

Matthew 13:35 (KJV) *35 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.*

Matthew 21:4-5 (KJV) *4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, 5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.*

Matthew 27:35 (KJV) *35 And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.*

Satan fought Israel through the veil of Religion: Getting stuck in the Past so they could lose their Present and Future!

To ensure people do not receive the full reward, Satan has been at work to redefine the Person and Mission of Yeshua, Jesus. Unable to deny the historic reality that He came to the earth realm, the attacks focused on distorting His identity, negating His Mission and in the process, deceiving as many as give him access to confuse their minds and understanding! To understand the seriousness of this thesis, we will publish here, extracts from Course 102: Understanding Yeshua, Jesus. The idea is to show how the Adversary could cause them to be fully invested in Religion (Rituals and dead works) to the degree it became a veil which covered their eyes, preventing them from seeing Yeshua for Who He was and is.

2 Corinthians 3:12-18 (KJV) *12 Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: 13 And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: 14 But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. 15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. 16 Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. 17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

Saints from Gentiles, beware!

Romans 11:17-21 (KJV) *17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; 18 Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. 19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. 20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high minded, but fear: 21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.*

Hundreds of years before He was born, prophets predicted His coming and Life in great details.

The Old Testament which was written over a period of 1,500 by several writers from different places and customs contains more than 300 prophecies describing His coming, His miraculous birth, His sinless life, His many miracles, His death, His resurrection, and ascent into heaven, and His eventual return to banish evil and rule over the earth forever.

Indeed, these also point to the fact He is not merely a Prophet, Teacher, or indeed a Mortal man. Yeshua, Jesus claimed,

John 10:30 (KJV) *30 I and the Father are one*

John 14:9 (KJV) *9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?*

John 14:6 (KJV) *6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

Listed below is an exemplary list of some Old Testament prophecies about Yeshua, Jesus several hundred years before He was born. They were fulfilled, exactly as predicted.

Seed of a woman

Genesis 3:15 (KJV) *15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.*

Galatians 4:4 (KJV) *4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,*

Descendant of Shem

Genesis 9:26-27 (KJV) *26 And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. 27 God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.*

Luke 3:36 (KJV) *36 Which was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Arphaxad, which was the son of Sem, which was the son of Noe, which was the son of Lamech,*

Descendant of Abraham

Genesis 22:18 (KJV) *18 In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.*

Matthew 1:1 (KJV) *1 The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.*

Luke 3:34 (KJV) *34 Which was the son of Jacob, which was the son of Isaac, which was the son of Abraham, which was the son of Thara, which was the son of Nachor,*

Descendant of Jacob and of the Tribe of Judah

Genesis 49:10 (KJV) *10 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.*

Numbers 24:17 (KJV) *17 I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.*

Matthew 1:2 (KJV) *2 Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren;*

Luke 3:33 (KJV) *33 Which was the son of Aminadab, which was the son of Aram, which was the son of Esrom, which was the son of Phares, which was the son of Juda,*

The Messiah will be a prophet like Moses

Deuteronomy 18:15-19 (KJV) *15 The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; 16 According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. 17 And the Lord said unto me, They have well-spoken that which they have spoken. 18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.*

19 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.

Acts 3:22-23 (KJV) *22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. 23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.*

Descendant of Jesse and his youngest son, David

Isaiah 11:10 (KJV) *10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.*

Romans 15:12 (KJV) *12 And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.*

Jeremiah 23:5-6 (KJV) *5 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. 6 In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord Our Righteousness.*

Matthew 1:1 (KJV) *1 The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.*

Ezekiel 37:24 (KJV) *24 And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them.*

Matthew 2:6 (KJV) *6 And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.*

Heir to the throne of David

Isaiah 9:7 (KJV) *7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*

Psalms 45:6-7 (KJV) *6 Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. 7 Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*

Psalms 102:25-27 (KJV) *25 Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. 26 They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: 27 But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.*

Luke 1:32-33 (KJV) *32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.*

Born in Bethlehem

Micah 5:2 (KJV) *2 But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*

Luke 2:4-5, 7 (KJV) *4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) 5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.*

7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Time for His birth

Daniel 9:25 (KJV) 25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

Luke 2:1-2 (KJV) 1 And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. 2 (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

To be born of a virgin

Isaiah 7:14 (KJV) 14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Luke 1:26-27, 30-31 (KJV) 26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, 27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus.

Worshiped by shepherds

Let the nomads of the desert bow before him; And his enemies lick the dust (Psalm 72:9).

Luke 2:8-15 (KJV) 8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. 10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. 12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. 15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

Honored by Royalty

Psalm 72:10, 15 (KJV) 10 The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

15 And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him continually; and daily shall he be praised.

Isaiah 60:3 (KJV) 3 And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

Matthew 2:1-2, 11 (KJV) 1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, 2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh.

Massacre of children

Jeremiah 31:15 (KJV) *15 Thus saith the Lord; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not.*

Matthew 2:16-18 (KJV) *16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. 17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, 18 In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.*

Flight to Egypt

Hosea 11:1 (KJV) *1 When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.*

Matthew 2:14-15 (KJV) *14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: 15 And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.*

His way to be prepared by a Forerunner

Isaiah 40:3-5 (KJV) *3 The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. 4 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: 5 And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.*

Luke 3:3-6 (KJV) *3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; 4 As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. 5 Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; 6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.*

Malachi 3:1 (KJV) *1 Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.*

Luke 7:24, 27 (KJV) *24 And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?*

27 This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

Preceded by one who would operate in the spirit of Elijah

Malachi 4:5-6 (KJV) *5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: 6 And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.*

Matthew 11:13-14 (KJV) *13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. 14 And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come.*

He will be called the Son of God

Psalm 2:7 (KJV) *7 I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.*

Proverbs 30:4 (KJV) *4 Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?*

Luke 1:32 (KJV) *32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:*

Matthew 3:17 (KJV) *17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

Galilean ministry

Isaiah 9:1-2 (KJV) *1 Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations. 2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.*

Matthew 4:13-16 (KJV) *13 And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: 14 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, 15 The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; 16 The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.*

He will speak in parables

Psalm 78:2-4 (KJV) *2 I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: 3 Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. 4 We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.*

Matthew 13:34-35 (KJV) *34 All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: 35 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.*

In zeal, He will confront reality that Temple becomes a house of merchandise instead of prayer!

Isaiah 56:7 (KJV) *7 Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.*

Jeremiah 7:11 (KJV) *11 Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the Lord.*

Matthew 21:13 (KJV) *13 And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.*

Psalm 69:9 (KJV) *9 For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.*

John 2:17 (KJV) *17 And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.*

Blind, deaf, and lame are healed by the Messiah

Isaiah 29:18 (KJV) *18 And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.*

Isaiah 35:5-6 (KJV) *5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. 6 Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.*

Luke 7:22 (KJV) *22 Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.*

Matthew 11:3-5 (KJV) *3 And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? 4 Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: 5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.*

Messiah will be meek and mild

Isaiah 42:2-3 (KJV) *2 He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. 3 A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.*

Isaiah 53:7 (KJV) *7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.*

Matthew 12:18-20 (KJV) *18 Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. 19 He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. 20 A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.*

Matthew 11:29 (KJV) *29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.*

He will minister to Gentiles

Isaiah 42:1 (KJV) *1 Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.*

Isaiah 49:1 (KJV) *1 Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.*

Matthew 12:18-21 (KJV) *18 Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. 19 He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. 20 A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. 21 And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.*

Luke 2:32 (KJV) *32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.*

Review Question

1. Please mention 5 Prophecies any religious leader in Israel who was diligent about the Prophesied Messiah should not have missed.

Chapter 5

Satan's Attack against Israel Using Veil of Religion – Part B

Let us remember, for about or four hundred years after the book of Malachi, the light had gone out in Israel, the voice of Elohim was not heard and despair had set in over the way they were treated by their Roman oppressors. Meanwhile Herod the Great, an Idumean who Rome imposed upon Israel as King had rebuilt the Magnificent Temple (between 20-19 BC to curry favor with the Hebrews who hated him and satisfy his love of grandiosity). Though outwardly magnificent, the glory of Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel was just not therein so the motions of religion – dead works/rituals had a field day. The House of Elohim was not more than a House of Merchandise where Mammon received greater attention from the Money Changers!

The people of Israel, in this valley of despair, sensed Yahweh was up to something extraordinary. However, in their normal human mindset, all they were looking up to was a liberator, a political Messiah with real military clout who would defeat their Roman oppressors and set up the long-promised kingdom which would follow up on the earlier glorious eras enjoyed under David and his son Solomon when Israel was the Crown Jewel of the nations.

When John the Baptist appeared on the scene with his Distinctive rough, spare clothing, and powerful sermons, the boldness and authority with which he spoke caused many to speculate if he was the Messiah in disguise. It was perfectly acceptable for Israel to flock to John who was of the priestly lineage, whose father Zechariah was a priest of national renown. Israel even knew of his extraordinary birth and how an angel appeared to his father; how both parents conceived him out of season and how the mouth of Zacharias was only loosed when naming his son (Luke 1:5-25, Luke 2:57-80). The nation was aware of the fact John lived an exceptionally out of this world life.

True to his mission and assignment, however, John plainly told the expectant nation he was not the one they were waiting for (Matthew 3:1-12). Their wait was not for long. One day, the heavens opened as John baptized the obscure Carpenter of Nazareth, Yeshua < translated in Greek, the Literary language of the Empire as Ioseus which was later translated as Jesus in English>. From heaven, with a host of Israel present, Yahweh and Holy Spirit affirmed His Divine Personality and mission (John 1:29-34).

Matthew 3:5-17 (KJV) *5 Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, 6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. 7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: 9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. 10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance. but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: 12 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. 13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of*

him. 14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? 15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. 16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: 17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

You would think all the leaders and people who heard John, heard from Yahweh and saw Holy Spirit descend bodily upon Him would have embraced Yeshua. But, Satan had done such a deep work with the veil of Moses that having eyes, they could not see and ears, they could not hear or comprehend spiritual things! (2 Corinthians 3:13-16). Just as they rejected the revelation Yahweh offered them, He Himself gave them over to a state whereby they could not comprehend spiritual things:

Romans 11:7-10 (KJV) *7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. 8 (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. 9 And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: 10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.*

In this state as we saw in Lesson 4, despite numerous precision-fulfilled prophecies in Yeshua, Israel rejected the very Messiah it had waited for several hundreds of years and millennia.

More Messianic Prophecies Fulfilled by Yeshua Ha Mashiach

Let us examine more Prophecies about Yeshua. They were so spectacularly fulfilled that any true Religious leader who had basic knowledge of the Torah and the Tanakh (all Old Testament Scriptures) with an open heart could have been convinced to embrace Yeshua as the Messiah.

To bind up the broken hearted by unction of Holy Spirit

Isaiah 61:1-2 (KJV) *1 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; 2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;*

Luke 4:18-19 (KJV) *18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, 19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.*

He gives rest to souls of believers

Isaiah 63:14 (KJV) *14 As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord caused him to rest: so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name.*

Jeremiah 6:16 (KJV) *16 Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.*

Matthew 11:29-30 (KJV) *29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

Rejected by His own people, the Hebrews/Jews

Isaiah 53:3 (KJV) *3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*

Isaiah 8:14 (KJV) *14 And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.*

Isaiah 28:16 (KJV) *16 Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.*

Psalms 118:22 (KJV) *22 The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.*

John 1:11 (KJV) *11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.*

Luke 23:18 (KJV) *18 And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas:*

Acts 4:11 (KJV) *11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.*

For this is contained in Scripture:

1 Peter 2:6-8 (KJV) *6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. 7 Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, 8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.*

Priest after the order of Melchizedek

Psalms 110:4 (KJV) *4 The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*

Hebrews 5:5-6 (KJV) *5 So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. 6 As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*

Triumphal entry

Zechariah 9:9 (KJV) *9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.*

Mark 11:7-11 (KJV) *7 And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; and he sat upon him. 8 And many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches off the trees, and strawed them in the way. 9 And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: 10 Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest. 11 And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.*

Enter the temple with authority

Malachi 3:1 (KJV) *1 Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.*

Matthew 21:12 (KJV) *12 And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves,*

Adored by infants

Psalm 8:2 (KJV) *2 Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.*

Matthew 21:15-16 (KJV) *15 And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were sore displeased, 16 And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?*

He would not be believed

Isaiah 53:1 (KJV) *1 Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?*

John 12:37-38 (KJV) *37 But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: 38 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?*

Sheep of the Shepherd scattered

Zechariah 13:7 (KJV) *7 Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.*

Matthew 26:31 (KJV) *31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.*

Betrayed by a close friend

Psalm 41:9 (KJV) *9 Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.*

Psalm 55:12-13 (KJV) *12 For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: 13 But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.*

Zechariah 13:6 (KJV) *6 And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.*

Luke 22:47-48 (KJV) *47 And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him. 48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?*

Matthew 26:49-50 (KJV) *49 And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him. 50 And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus and took him*

Betrayed for thirty pieces of silver

Zechariah 11:12 (KJV) *12 And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.*

Matthew 26:14-15 (KJV) *14 Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, 15 And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.*

Betrayal money used to buy Potter's field

Zechariah 11:13 (KJV) *13 And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord.*

Matthew 27:6-7 (KJV) *6 And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. 7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.*

Accused by false witnesses

Psalms 35:11 (KJV) *11 False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not.*

Mark 14:57-58 (KJV) *57 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, 58 We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.*

Silent to accusations

Isaiah 53:7 (KJV) *7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.*

Mark 15:4-5 (KJV) *4 And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee. 5 But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.*

Spat on and struck Him

Isaiah 50:6 (KJV) *6 I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.*

Matthew 26:67 (KJV) *67 Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands,*

Matthew 27:30 (KJV) *30 And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.*

Scourged

Isaiah 53:5 (KJV) *5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*

Matthew 27:26 (KJV) *26 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.*

Hated without reason

Psalm 35:19 (KJV) *19 Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me: neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.*

John 15:24-25 (KJV) *24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. 25 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.*

Vicarious sacrifice

Isaiah 53:5 (KJV) *5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*

Romans 5:6, 8 (KJV) *6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.*

8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Crucified with transgressors

Isaiah 53:12 (KJV) *12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.*

Mark 15:27-28 (KJV) *27 And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. 28 And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.*

Pierced through hands and feet

Zechariah 12:10 (KJV) *10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.*

Psalm 22:16 (KJV) *16 For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.*

John 19:34 (KJV) *34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.*

John 20:25-27 (KJV) *25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. 26 And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. 27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.*

Sneered and mocked

Psalm 22:7-8 (KJV) *7 All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, 8 He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.*

Luke 23:35 (KJV) *35 And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.*

He was reproached

Psalm 69:9 (KJV) *9 For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.*

Romans 15:3 (KJV) *3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.*

People shook their heads

Psalm 109:25 (KJV) *25 I became also a reproach unto them: when they looked upon me they shook their heads.*

Matthew 27:39 (KJV) *39 And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,*

Given vinegar for His thirst

Psalm 69:21 (KJV) *21 They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.*

John 19:28-29 (KJV) *28 After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. 29 Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth.*

To intercede for the people/Prayer for His enemies

Psalm 109:4 (KJV) *4 For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer.*

Isaiah 53:12 (KJV) *12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.*

Isaiah 59:16 (KJV) *16 And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him.*

Luke 23:33-34 (KJV) *33 And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. 34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.*

Romans 8:34 (KJV) *34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

Hebrews 7:25 (KJV) *25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.*

Soldiers gambled for His clothing

Psalm 22:17-18 (KJV) *17 I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. 18 They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.*

Matthew 27:35-36 (KJV) *35 And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. 36 And sitting down they watched him there;*

Forsaken by Yahweh His Father

Psalm 22:1 (KJV) *1 To the chief Musician upon Aijeleth Shahar, A Psalm of David.) My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?*

Matthew 27:46 (KJV) *46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

Committed His Spirit to Yahweh

Psalm 31:5 (KJV) *5 Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.*

Luke 23:46 (KJV) *46 And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.*

Friends stood afar off

Psalm 38:11 (KJV) *11 My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar off.*

Luke 23:49 (KJV) *49 And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.*

No bones broken

Psalm 34:20 (KJV) *20 He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.*

John 19:32-33, 36 (KJV) *32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. 33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:*

36 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

Darkness over the Land

Amos 8:9 (KJV) *9 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day:*

Matthew 27:45 (KJV) *45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.*

Buried with the rich

Isaiah 53:9 (KJV) *9 And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.*

Matthew 27:57-60 (KJV) *57 When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: 58 He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. 59 And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, 60 And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.*

He would be resurrected

Psalm 16:10 (KJV) *10 For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.*

Psalm 30:3 (KJV) *3 O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.*

Psalm 49:15 (KJV) *15 But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah.*

Psalm 118:17 (KJV) *17 I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.*

Mark 16:6-7 (KJV) *6 And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. 7 But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.*

He would send Holy Spirit

Isaiah 44:3 (KJV) *3 For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:*

Joel 2:28 (KJV) *28 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:*

John 20:22 (KJV) *22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:*

Acts 2:1-4 (KJV) *1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

Acts 2:16-17 (KJV) *16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; 17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:*

His ascension to God's right hand

Psalm 68:18 (KJV) *18 Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.*

Psalm 110:1 (KJV) *1 The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*

Mark 16:19 (KJV) *19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.*

1 Corinthians 15:4 (KJV) *4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:*

Ephesians 4:8 (KJV) *8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.*

Establishes a new covenant

Isaiah 55:3-4 (KJV) *3 Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. 4 Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.*

Jeremiah 31:31-33 (KJV) *31 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: 33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

Matthew 26:28 (KJV) *28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*

Luke 22:20 (KJV) *20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.*

Hebrews 8:6-10 (KJV) *6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. 8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: 9 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. 10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:*

The Gentiles will seek the Messiah

Isaiah 9:2 (KJV) *2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.*

Isaiah 11:10 (KJV) *10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.*

Isaiah 65:1 (KJV) *1 I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name.*

Matthew 4:16 (KJV) *16 The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.*

Romans 11:25 (KJV) *25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.*

Why did we have to examine these extensive prophecies and their fulfillment in Chapters 4 and 5?

If we do not understand how Israel missed it with Yeshua, we may also not understand how the Church drifted away from the Compass of Kingdom life and foundation which He and the apostles set in the New Covenant! If we do not understand how Satan can use Religion to blindfold many away from the Divine Purpose, we certainly may

not fully understand what necessitates the Final Reformation that will cause the Church in this generation to be radiant, ready for the return of King Yeshua!

Review Questions

1. Please State 5 of these prophecies and their fulfillment which should have convinced any diligent religious leader in Israel that the Man, Yeshua, was the Long-Promised Messiah.
2. Write a summary of what you receive from Chapters 4 and 5.

Chapter 6

7 Dimensions of Yeshua Which the Veil of Religion Cloaks

In Chapters 4 and 5, we saw with clarity one dimension of the Personality and Mission of Yeshua that can be referred to as **the Prophetic**. It was a dimension which presents to us with clarity, the Yeshua of Prophecy. This covered what was prophesied of Him by many vessels starting from Elohim Himself in Genesis 3:15 as Seed of the Woman till John the Baptist who in John 1:29 confirmed Him publicly as the Lamb Who would take away Sins of the World. We also saw How Holy Spirit planted Him in the womb of Mary and in-filled Him bodily at the Baptism 30 years later.

While there is great temptation to dive into other aspects of this, there is a strong impression on our heart the Lord wants us to not leave anything to supposition. The entire dealings of Elohim and humanity – before and after the fall – are hinged on One Personality: Yeshua Ha Mashiach, Jesus the Messiah. If Satan can somehow make our understanding of Him deficient or twisted, he would have succeeded because the outcome would be extremely toxic to true spirituality.

As we saw in the last two chapters, the basic failure of Israel as a nation and the Hebrews as a people was rejection of Yeshua, Jesus when He manifested about 2 Millennia ago. That rejection was of His Divinity and His message.

1 Corinthians 10:1-14 (KJV) *1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; 2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat; 4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. 5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. 6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. 7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose to play. 8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. 9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. 10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. 11 Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. 12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. 13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. 14 Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.*

The Controversy of the Ages between all Religions and even those who have no Faith is not mainly about Elohim because in their national/cultural/religious thoughts, there is a Supreme Being they have no difficulty calling 'God.' Their issue with the Gospel is rather about the Identity of Yeshua Ha Mashiach, Jesus the Messiah! Once Satan can convince a human to reject the Person of Yeshua, that individual is toast! Anything done outside the foundation of the Deity and Humanity of Yeshua, Jesus is simply an exercise in Religion – no matter how sugar coated. This explains the existence of a myriad of cults today who preach a Jesus who is merely a Rabbi, Prophet, Good Man or Preacher/Teacher.

Let us cull material from the ground-breaking Course 102: Understanding Yeshua, Jesus.

Dimensions of Yeshua Ha Mashiach, Jesus the Messiah to establish key truths about this Incarnate Being Who is the center and circumference of all things in the earth realm. He Who the veil of Moses prevented proper understanding of His identity is still the Main issue in the final Reformation that is upon us.

To have a full and proper understanding of Whom Yeshua, Jesus Is, we shall now sketch out some dimensions of His being and personality. Most of the scriptures we will cite have already been listed in previous lessons. But, this subject matter is so critical repeating them again, in the context of the dimensions of His Person and Mission, is safe. Please make out time to explore all the Bible references prayerfully by yourself, asking the Holy Spirit for illumination. The True Yeshua, Jesus Who Is very Elohim and Very Man has 7 distinct dimensions which combine to unveil the fullness of His identity.

Dimension #.1: Yeshua as Pre-existent:

This shows Yeshua existed in eternity past as part of the One Elohim manifested in personalities identifiable as Father, Son and Holy Spirit in various parts of the Holy Writ. As we see His footprints which pre-date time in the Scriptures, assurance of His Divinity is conclusive.

Revelation 13:8 (KJV) *8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

This scripture is particularly pivotal for it proves the divine plan of salvation in Genesis 3:15 was not a plan B unfolded by an Elohim Who was taken by surprise when Adam fell. The scripture reveals Elohim knew Adam would fall and determined the only just and legally acceptable avenue to reclaim the kingdom would be the incarnation and propitiation offered by a divine personality to be revealed at the appointed time as the Son of Yahweh and Seed of the woman.

Luke 1:35 (KJV) *35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.*

Other references to Yeshua as existing before the foundation of the world are as follows:

John 17:1-5 (KJV) *1 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: 2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. 3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. 4 I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. 5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*

John 17:24 (KJV) *24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.*

Implication: He existed with and came from the Father on a Mission to the earth realm and as His assignment was ending, Yeshua was simply reporting it was coming to a close, and His mind was now on going back to His glory.

Ephesians 1:3-4 (KJV) *3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: 4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:*

1 Peter 1:18 (KJV) *18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;*

Implication: True security arises from receiving Salvation from He Who was Pre-existent and manifested in Bodily form to shed His Own Blood as the price paid for the remission of our Sins. Salvation rests on the solid foundation that the Blood shed was not that of a mere mortal by any Name called by but He Who was Incarnated!

In the Book of Revelation, His Pre-existence as: ***him which is, and which was, and which is to come;***

Revelation 1:4 (KJV) *4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;*

These are some supporting scriptures:

John 1:1-5 (KJV) *1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*

John 1:8-10 (KJV) *8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.*

John 1:14-15, 18 (KJV) *14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. 15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.*

18 No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

John 1:29-30, 34 (KJV) *29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. 30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.*

34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

Colossians 1:15-17 (KJV) *15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*

In the Book of Hebrews His Pre-existence is defined in these words:

Hebrews 13:8 (KJV) *8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*

Dimension #.2: The Yeshua of Prophecy:

This is the aspect of His Being outlined in hundreds of several prophecies from Genesis 3:15 to Malachi. The fact of their fulfillment in Him reveals Yeshua is not a mere man. This matter was dealt with in Lesson 4 and 5, however, a few will be listed here:

In **Exodus 17:1-7** Yahweh supplied water to the Church in the wilderness through the Rock. Paul was granted an understanding of significance of the Rock:

1 Corinthians 10:4 (KJV) *4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.*

Isaiah 7:14 Clearly prophesied that He would be born by a Virgin.

Isaiah 9:6-7 Here the prophet declared in vivid detail the Divine nature and attributes of He who would come as Emmanuel.

Isaiah 11:1-5 describes the fullness of the Holy Spirit with whom Emmanuel would function on planet earth. This was certified by John the Baptist in John 3:27-36

Isaiah 53:1-12. This powerful Messianic prophecy captured the passion of Yeshua.

Psalms 2 is one of many messianic psalms which capture the revelations Yahweh gave of He Who would come. Some aspects are to be fulfilled in the future when He returns to rule and reign here on planet earth.

Dimension #.3: The Incarnate Yeshua: The One who was made Flesh and dwelt amongst us:

In Luke 1:26-35, in his meticulous manner as a physician, historian and biographer, Luke documented the awesome conversation of the angel Gabriel with the innocent Virgin, Mary. We see here the process by which Yeshua was supernaturally conceived.

John the beloved was a man very close to Yeshua Jesus. The affinity included service to the master by his own mother and elder brother James. However, he did not allow his privileged access to becloud his sense of spiritual sensitivity. Yahweh graciously granted John a rare view of the divinity of the Man Who loved him and he faithfully penned such for our records.

John 1:14 (KJV) *14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*

John 20:30-31 (KJV) *30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: 31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

He clearly articulated the purpose of his gospel account is to prove Yeshua, Jesus is the Son of Elohim, a divine personality.

Let us take note the Principal line of attack Satan deployed with the veil of Moses was to dispute the Divinity of Yeshua. This he did by causing religious leaders of Israel to vehemently reject the pre-existence of Yeshua.

John 8:42, 45-59 (KJV) *42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.*

45 And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. 46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? 47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. 48 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? 49 Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me. 50 And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth. 51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death. 52 Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. 53 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself? 54 Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: 55 Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying. 56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. 57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? 58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. 59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

John 10:33 (KJV) *33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.*

Upon this rejection of His Divinity, all Cults stand united, including various strands of the pseudo-Kingdom Movement. The Gospels by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John basically are biographies of the Incarnate Yeshua who walked on earth for 33 and half years in the physical Body of a Hebrew.

Galatians 4:4-5 (KJV) *4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.*

It was in His Incarnate Nature as a human that Yeshua accomplished a reversal of the principle which Satan activated in Adam and Eve: Making the Soul (Mind, Will, Emotion) rule the human being through the five carnal senses. Through Lust of the Flesh, Lust of the Eyes, and Pride of Life, Satan had deceived Adam and Eve and had taken their mantle as ruler of this world. In His Incarnate State as a human, Yeshua used the Sword of the Spirit – the Word and submission to Elohim as the basis to defeat Satan when tempted.

Matthew 4:1-11 (KJV) *1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. 2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. 3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. 4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. 5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, 6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. 7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. 8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high*

mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. 10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. 11 Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

Based on this great victory, Yeshua announced with certainty Satan, as the Prince of this world, had been judged

John 14:30 (KJV) *30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.*

John 16:11 (KJV) *11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.*

In other words, Yeshua – in His Body as a Human - reversed what Adam and Eve had fallen for! For this reason, saints who put away the motions of the flesh and walk by Holy Spirit, can live in full victory over Satan, Sin, the World and Flesh on a 24/7 basis!

Romans 8:1-8 (KJV) *1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: 4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. 8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*

Dimension #.4: The Paschal Lamb (His suffering, crucifixion, and death):

Yeshua, Jesus has two equal and opposite natures. He was fully Divine and fully human. To be human, He had to be begotten. By this is implied He had to be “Fathered”. That was prefigured in the Old Testament in Genesis 3:15.

In Psalm 2, the special Father-Son relationship is established. Its end will be an inheritance of the nations as affirmed in Isaiah 9:6, 7; Daniel 2:34, 44, 45; Daniel 3:24, 25; Daniel 7:13, 14 (compare with Matthew 26:64-65).

As was outlined in a previous text, Holy Spirit was the principal agent for bringing to pass this unique work of birthing a Human of Divine origin as Messiah for the fallen creation (Luke 1:35). By His Incarnation, Yeshua, Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of the Lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8).

As we observed earlier, the divine plan of salvation was not a Plan B of Elohim who was caught off guard when Adam and Eve sinned. Elohim knew man would miss the mark and Yeshua resolved to model ultimate love – death of self (by shedding of His glory and the humiliation of becoming, as it were, an earthling, to recover unworthy human species for no personal benefit). This truth is captured vividly in Romans 5:6–21. This helps us to understand John 3:16 better.

In effect, the Law of Moses was given to provide a temporary remedy so when the One Who had the original mandate to restore humanity back to Elohim came, He would be received by faith as the Seed of the Woman of Genesis 3:15 and the Seed of Abraham of Genesis 22:18.

Galatians 3:16-29 (KJV) *16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. 17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. 18 For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. 19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. 21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. 22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. 26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

For this reason, when He eventually appeared, Yeshua, Jesus clearly announced He came not to abolish but to fulfil the Law:

Matthew 5:17 (KJV) *17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.*

On the day of His Baptism, John announced Him as the Paschal Lamb thereby prophesying the suffering and crucifixion ahead:

John 1:29 (KJV) *29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*

It was in His Humanity Yeshua, Jesus yielded up the ghost and uttered those powerful words in John 19:30 "It is finished". By so doing, He pronounced the judicial end of the dominion of Satan over man.

Thus, the blood of the new covenant was poured out as the sufficient and conclusive propitiation for the sins of the whole world. He was truly the Lamb of Elohim who took away the sins of the world and opened the life gate so as many as accept His sacrifice would stream into the Kingdom (Colossians 1:13-18; Hebrews 9:11-28; Hebrews 10:1-29).

Dimension #.5: The Risen and Glorified Yeshua, seated at the right hand of the Father interceding:

The Divinity of Yeshua was further confirmed with the stamp of approval given by the Father that His earthly assignment was a case of "Mission Accomplished": His resurrection after 3 days and nights. He Himself had given the resurrection as a sure sign to convince all who were in doubt of His divine identity.

Matthew 12:38-40 (KJV) 38 Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. 39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: 40 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Matthew 28:1-10 (KJV) 1 In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. 2 And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. 3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: 4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. 5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. 6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. 7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you. 8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word. 9 And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. 10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

For this reason, the doubt of Thomas was taken away when he saw irrefutable proof of the Resurrection!

John 20:24-29 (KJV) 24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. 26 And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. 27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. 28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. 29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

1 Corinthians 15 was written to clearly establish the centrality of the Resurrection to the life of saints!

1 Corinthians 15:12-19 (KJV) 12 Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: 14 And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. 15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. 16 For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: 17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. 18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. 19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

His Ascension

On His resurrection, the next phase of the Life of Yeshua, after further instructing His disciples in deeper truths of the Kingdom was to ascend bodily into Heaven.

Acts 1:9-11 (KJV) 9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. 10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; 11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

Ephesians 4:8-10 (KJV) *8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)*

Revelation 1:17-18 (KJV) *17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: 18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.*

Revelation 3:21 (KJV) *21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*

There, He is seated at the right hand of the Father as seen by Stephen when martyred (Acts 7:55- 57).

The question can be asked: What is He doing there? These scriptures provide clear answers that He is interceding for us:

Hebrews 2:16-18 (KJV) *16 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. 17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. 18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.*

Hebrews 4:14-16 (KJV) *14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. 15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

He is interceding for saints, knowing fully well what we are going through. He is enjoying the worship of angels, waiting for the day and hour known to only Elohim when He will return to subdue all opposition and set up the Blessed Kingdom (Matthew 24:36).

Psalms 110:1 (KJV) *1 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*

Dimension #.6: The Present King of the Invisible Kingdom which is in the earth realm:

Yeshua now reigns as King in hearts of the redeemed. This is Kingdom 'Within' hearts of individual saints and 'Kingdom Nation' as all of the redeemed are connected to Him and each other by Seal of Holy Spirit to be the Royal Priesthood of Peculiar people.

1 Peter 2:9-12 (KJV) *9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy 11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

Ephesians 4:1-6 (KJV) *1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are*

called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Denominationalism becomes such an enemy of the Cross in that it fosters separation of Blood washed saints into Religious Boxes. In the process, the capacity of the Kingdom to be manifested by synergy released through Love and Unity is severely constrained:

John 13:34-35 (KJV) *34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

John 17:20-23 (KJV) *20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*

This dimension of the King is a critical one. It is one in which Yeshua, Jesus is seen beyond the Baby in the Manger and the One with the bruises who was hung on the Cross as well as He who resurrected and ascended into heaven. This dimension speaks of the Lordship Yeshua, Jesus exercises in a practical way over those who are redeemed by His Blood. It speaks of how they open their heart to enthrone Him as Sovereign King who reigns and submit every area of their spirit, soul, and body too! The implication is this: Though He sits in Majesty in Heaven, the hearts of the redeemed are individual embassies of the King and His Kingdom.

These saints who are matured into sonship live consciously and effectively as Ambassadors of the King and His Kingdom and the Holy Spirit who inhabits them becomes their official letters of credence or proof of their status! (Acts 1:8; Romans 8:9-11).

To them Yeshua, Jesus has long finished the work of redemption and is waiting till all enemies are brought under His feet and the Saints have a major part to play in the process through power evangelism, prayer, and spiritual warfare, among others. The Omega Church partners with Him by manifesting His glory in the earth realm. The King has all aspects of their being as vessels to Express His Nature, Glory, Presence, and Power.

He uses their vessels as bridges to reconcile the lost to Himself:

2 Corinthians 5:17-19 (KJV) *17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*

What this means is Saints come to a place where they lose their will (the most potent indicator of their individuality) and rather lay it down for Him to use. In so doing, Saints simply emulate Him in how He relates to the Father while in the Incarnate state:

John 5:30 (KJV) *30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.*

John 6:38 (KJV) *38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.*

Through their word, deed, and attitude, the saints represent their King at all places and in all situations!

Dimension #.7: The Coming King:

Yeshua, Jesus Is One Whose return is now imminent to establish the Kingdom in its fullness and thereafter ensure Yahweh is all in all.

The entire creation has run its course. Presidents of nations, legislatures, and transnational organizations including the United Nations are at wit's end concerning the future of mankind. Several theories fly around concerning the future. There is panic on several fronts. The pace of climate change worries conservationists; the inability of a New World Order to emerge confuses the star gazers. Knowledge is increasing in a world through which Google, Facebook and the Internet has connected all peoples of various races, ethnicities and nationalities into what is now truly a global village.

Jerusalem has finally become the tough burdensome stone predicted and the statesmen of the world are increasingly impatient with the nation of Israel while various kinds of extremism are on the rise. Wars and rumors of wars are continually springing up all over the world. Economic and financial markets and models based on greed are crumbling worldwide.

Natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, famine, pestilences ravage developed and developing nations alike. Sins of the flesh have received legal endorsements in several nations and human beings have become lovers of self at a rate which defies logic. Protestors, urban gangs and terrorists have turned cities into war zones as prophesied in several scriptures. All these were prophesied as necessary events that will precede the return of the King of Kings (Matthew 24:3-41; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:1-9; 2 Timothy 4:3-5).

The emergence of strong anti-Semitic sentiments and stronger ultra-nationalistic movements in Europe all point to one end: We have come to the fullness of the times of the Gentiles when the last empire to oppress the Jews, even the feet and toes mixed with clay and iron speaks of the emergence of the offshoot of the old Roman Empire. Whether this will be a rejuvenated Europe, the G12, G20 or the outcome of a re-engineered United States that will be radically different from what Christians among the founders planned or even the United Nations, one thing is certain: It is time for the stone cut from the mountain without hands to emerge in accordance with Daniel 2:31-45.

That stone is Yeshua, Jesus, the Elohim-Man who straddles time and eternity as the enigma of the ages. It takes grace and special revelation to know Him (Matthew 11:25-27).

While mortal men and women are full of apprehension, the redeemed of Adonai eagerly await the return of the King who has been on a long journey. The redeemed look up in eager anticipation, getting ready for the blast of the trumpet (Matthew 24:42-51; 1 John 3:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:50-58).

We, however, do not fold our arms waiting for the blast of the trumpet. We are girded for work, occupying till He comes in accordance with Luke 19:10-27. It is, for this reason, He Who ascended to heaven has invested us with spiritual gifts and wired us with a DNA of power!

We do Kingdom business with the spiritual gifts and talents and other endowments, putting them to optimum use to produce maximum results so when He returns, we receive His commendation (Matthew 25:14-30). Because of that, we are to engage in an extensive ministry of doing good to all manner of men, especially to those of the household of faith (Matthew 25:31-46; Galatians 6:9, 10).

Revelation 2:5 (KJV) *5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.*

Revelation 2:16 (KJV) *16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.*

Revelation 3:11 (KJV) *11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.*

Revelation 22:7 (KJV) *7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.*

Revelation 22:12 (KJV) *12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.*

Revelation 22:20 (KJV) *20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

Fulfillment of all prophecies preceding His return are but pointers to the accuracy of the Word of Scripture concerning the things that are about to happen.

Any kingdom teacher who keeps the hearts and minds of the redeemed focused on the glitter this present world offers is working contrary to principles of the kingdom.

1 Corinthians 15:19 (KJV) *19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.*

Hebrews 9:27-28 (KJV) *27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: 28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*

Review Questions

1. Please share which of the 7 Dimensions of the Person and Identity of Yeshua which ministered most to you.
2. Out of all, you learned from this chapter, what Truth should be emphasized in Churches again?

Chapter 7

Divine Profile of Yeshua

Divine Profile of Yeshua in accordance to the witness of Holy Spirit and the Holy Scriptures

Since the end of the Alpha Church around the Fourth Century, the Church fell into a satanic trap. Shortly before His Crucifixion, Yeshua told them with clarity He would send another Comforter Who would remind them of His teachings and Teach them all truth: Holy Spirit.

John 14:26 (KJV) *26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

John 15:26 (KJV) *26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:*

50 Days after Calvary, Holy Spirit was poured out on all the 120 who waited in the Upper Room as instructed.

In the Old Covenant, Elohim had used Prophet Isaiah to establish a principle of true spiritual scholarship: Comparing scripture with scripture to establish the full Truth regarding any matter.

Isaiah 28:10 (KJV) *10 For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:*

Instead, the post Alpha Church which was getting 'organized' began to rely on the wisdom of men – some pious and others who were not spiritual but intellectually brilliant. The result was with natural minds and cultural affinity to the prevailing cultures of the day Councils were convened to debate and agree on various Doctrines and Dogmas. As each generation and group of believers resorted to this approach, human intellect began to intrude into interpretations of Truth. With each Doctrine established by a Council, there would arise some who opposed same.

For the final Reformation to take place, it is necessary that the minds and hearts of the remnant be de-toxified of various types of doctrines of men and dogmas of Councils handed down through the ages. We need to prayerfully go back into The Word, under unction and guidance of Holy Spirit and allow ourselves to receive and hold onto the assured Truths that set free and empower. Nowhere is this approach more needful than the issue of Elohim. Elohim is a Grand Mystery and will remain so until a set date in the future when our knowledge and understanding will be perfected!

Revelation 10:7 (KJV) *7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.*

Who Is Yeshua?

In considering the case of what Holy Spirit and the Holy Scriptures say of Yeshua, it is critical we continue the extensive study of Who He Is and His Mission. Holy Scripture best explains all things! In answer to the question "Who is Yeshua, Jesus?" here are some of the clear and direct responses of the sure word of Scripture.

John 1:1-3 (KJV) *1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.*

Let us remember, on creation morning, the very first word uttered by Elohim in Genesis 1:3 was “Let there be Light”. Unknown to mankind, Elohim here announced the Way, the Door, and the Path to Himself – the only way He can be known.

John 1:4-5 (KJV) *4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*

You cannot enter a man’s abode unless you come through His door (It is the owner who decides his door). The door to Elohim is Yeshua, Jesus! Yeshua, Jesus is the only appointed Light of men to find and to know Elohim. Outside of His chosen way, door, and light – no one can know Elohim.

John 14:6 (KJV) *6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

It is significant that this is the clear testimony of a man considered by almost all true scholars of the Bible as the human being who had the greatest degree of access to Yeshua, Jesus and therefore the person most likely to fall into what Apostle Vance Russell of Arise Ministries International calls the familiarity deception. Holy Spirit, however, opened the eyes of John to see clearly this person, on whose breast he once leaned – Yeshua, Jesus was no ordinary fellow but rather a Bodily manifestation of very Elohim Whom Israel sought but could not find through Religion filled with types, symbols, and rituals performed in the Temple!

John the beloved did not waste time with preambles. He hit the ground running in His epic treatise from the very first verse proclaiming the Divinity of Yeshua, Jesus. In so doing, John was used of the Holy Spirit to advance this as the right and proper foundational truth of all other truths concerning the kingdom. Rather than allow his intimate relationship with Yeshua to be a block, John regarded his privileged access to Yeshua an asset as set out in his first epistle:

1 John 1:1-3 (KJV) *1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; 2 (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) 3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*

At this stage, it may be necessary to answer headlong, the critical question of the ages: Why did Elohim need to be incarnated in human form? Why did Yeshua, Jesus come?

This question was extensively answered in Course 101: Understanding Elohim (God). We may as well lift the relevant section of the teaching on why a Son became necessary and place it squarely here in our systematic study of Yeshua, Jesus.

Why it became necessary for The Son to Be Incarnated? – it’s all about the unsurpassable love of Elohim!

It is significant to note, from the time of the fall when it was announced the Seed of the Woman would crush the head of Satan (Genesis 3:15), till that Seed came in the form of Yeshua, Jesus, provisions made for resolving the sin question were largely inadequate. The blood of bulls and goats and other sacrifices could only provide temporary relief from the weight of sin and worshippers, held by the inherent power of Sin, only went back to commit same again. The reason for this inadequacy of blood sacrifices for atonement is birds and animals used as sacrifices:

- Were of less stature than humans
- Were all products of the curse on the earth realm (see Genesis 3:17, 18).

The sacrifice that would satisfy the just requirements of Elohim as a righteous judge of the original sin of Adam and Eve needed to have three critical qualities:

- Needed to be of the class of man or higher;
- Needed to have the capacity to take away the sins of the whole world from Adam till the time of consummation of all things;
- Needed to be pure < without any strain of the original sin of Adam > and have the capacity to open the doors for the entire human family to have access to Elohim again;

Only a perfect human of divine origin could meet all these requirements. Yeshua, Jesus the Messiah (interpreted into Greek as the Christ or Anointed One) was the perfect human of divine origin. A study of these two scriptures is recommended: Hebrews 9:11-28; Hebrews 10:1-23.

Hebrews 10:1-4 (KJV) *1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. 2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. 3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. 4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.*

A Hidden Plan

The divine plan of action which made it possible for all of mankind – regardless of race, color, gender, or status - to be reconciled to Elohim was hidden from both Satan, his cohorts as well as humankind for thousands of years until a misguided zealot of the Old Covenant named, Saul of Tarsus, was arrested by the very Yeshua, Jesus, He sought to expunge from the consciousness of Jewish believers (Acts 9:1-30). In a funny twist of destiny, the said Saul was specifically commissioned and sent to the Gentiles to explain the strange events of the past few years when a fellow assumed to be a Jewish Rabbi named Yeshua, Jesus, son of, as was popularly assumed, Joseph and Mary was cruelly killed by Roman soldiers, at the instigation of religious leaders of the land (Acts 13:1-49; Acts 17:16-34; Acts 22:1-20; Acts 23:1-9; Acts 24:1-26; Acts 26:1-32; Acts 28:17-31; Ephesians 3:1-21).

What John the beloved wrote about in his epic treatise – the Gospel according to Saint John and his epistles regarding the divinity of He who was pierced on the Cross reveal an exceptional wonder: That a personality that is part of the One Elohim (in English language, 'God-head') actually shed His glory and for 33 1/2 years, lived in flesh and blood to qualify as a Paschal or sacrificial Lamb whose death was

ordained to open the doors of reconciliation of not just Jews but also Gentiles to a Father whose essential nature is love (1 John 4:7, 8; John 3:16).

Philippians 2:8–11 (KJV) *8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

The revelation of this mystery lies at the heart of the Pauline Epistles which some pseudo kingdom preachers prefer to be expunged from the Holy Writ because of the blindness that covers their eyes of understanding. It is impossible to fully understand Elohim, the Kingdom, and the Church without factoring in the special revelations granted to Paul the Apostle. Even Peter, a leading light of the early Church recognized this much when he wrote in 2 Peter 3:14-17. Study and meditate on Ephesians 1, 2 and 3; Galatians 3:10–29.

The divine plan of redemption required the sacrifice of a divine personality whose sinless blood could atone for the original sin of Adam. This second Adam needed to come from heaven (a divine being) and take on a human body prepared for taking away the sins of all those who would believe entirely by faith (Luke 1:26-35; 1 Corinthians 15:45-49; John 1:29; John 3:16; Romans 3:21-31).

The Law was inadequate to deal with Sin at its roots!

Let us get this clear: The provision of the Law and Ceremonial worship in the Old Covenant served, in the words of Paul the apostle, as a Schoolmaster to hold back the frontier of iniquity until the fullness of time when the perfect sacrifice would manifest in the earth realm through a process ordained by Elohim:

Galatians 3:19-26 (KJV) *19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. 21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. 22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. 26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*

Galatians 4:1-7 (KJV) *1 Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; 2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. 3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: 4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.*

Hebrews Chapters 1 and 2 present solid truths on how and why this miracle of a divine personality came to restore the sons to glory. Philippians 2:5–11 offers an insight into what theologians call the Kenosis or the voluntary laying aside of His glory and rights to operate on earth, for a speck of time, as Paschal Lamb for the whole world and the He has assumed His full glory again, following the resurrection and ascension to heaven. The Unique Personality who is fully Elohim (God) and fully Man is the key to recovering the Kingdom Adam lost.

Part of why the New Testament was written is to offer us an incisive understanding of why Yeshua, Jesus is very Elohim and very man. In presenting the most intimate account of his identity, let us be reminded of what John the beloved states in John 1:1–3:

John 1:1-3 (KJV) *1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*

He was clearly alluding to the presentation of Elohim as a 'US' or Godhead as presented in Genesis 1:26. In that same John 1 verse 14, John states as a matter of fact:

John 1:14 (KJV) *14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

Contrasting Him and Moses, here is what John wrote in verse 17

John 1:14 (KJV) *14 For the Law was given through Moses but Grace and Truth came through Jesus Christ”.*

Of this grace, John postulated in verse 12:

John 1:12 (KJV) *12 As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.*

The exclusivity of Himself as the only access to the Father and One with the Father was strongly made by Jesus Himself in John 14:6-11.

Additional References: Divinity of Yeshua Ha Mashiach, Jesus the Messiah

References of the divinity of Yeshua, Jesus are so clearly stated in the Holy Bible – both in the Old and New Testaments - only those who are spiritually blind or of a reprobate heart can reject the self-evident conclusion. In this part of the lesson, we will receive specific passages in the Bible that lay the ground on which the divinity of Yeshua, Jesus is clearly established.

On the day of the fall of man when Satan successfully wrestled the Adamic phase of the Kingdom, Elohim proclaimed, in

Genesis 3:15 (KJV) *15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

When the time came for the seed to be made manifest, here is how Luke, the physician who Elohim used to write a gospel account puts the Incarnation:

Luke 1:30-32, 35 (KJV) *30 Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:*

35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

In effect, the angel Gabriel confirmed some of the messianic prophecies that a human body would be prepared for the Messiah to function to live in as a perfect human, without sin, to condemn sin in the flesh so humanity would be liberated from the limitations imposed by Satan when he took away Adam's rightful place as overseer of creation.

Significance of the Virgin Birth

Nearly 700 years before He was "born", the prophet Isaiah had foretold His birth

Isaiah 7:14 (KJV) *14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*

The significance of the virgin birth lies in the fact that Yeshua Jesus was not conceived as an outcome of the normal procreation between Joseph and Mary which would have introduced Adam's sinful blood into His being. The only way to get around this matter was for A Divine personality, the Holy Spirit of Elohim, to supernaturally plant the designated human body in the womb of Mary so Yeshua, Jesus, the Seed, would qualify to be a Son of man with legal rights to operate on earth which is given as an inheritance to humans by Elohim

Psalms 115:16 (KJV) *16 The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.*

The divinity of He Who would be Incarnated in due course of Time as the Son of Elohim was spelt out in clear language:

Isaiah 9:6-7(KJV) *6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, **The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.** 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.*

The Human Body to serve the Divine Purpose was therefore conceived in holiness, free from Adam's sinful primogeniture and was maintained by the holy will of Yeshua, Jesus, the perfect man, Who made the critical choice to love righteousness and hate iniquity

Hebrews 10:5 (KJV) *5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:*

Hebrews 1:9 (KJV) *9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*

Other New Testament passages affirming the divinity of Yeshua, Jesus include the following:

Matthew 11:27 (KJV) 27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

Matthew 28:19-20 (KJV) 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

John 5:16-18 (KJV) 16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day. 17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. 18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

John 10:30, 38 (KJV) 30 I and my Father are one.

38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.

John 12:44-45 (KJV) 44 Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. 45 And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.

Proceeding further, we see additional potent declarations of the divinity of Yeshua, Jesus in the Holy Writ:

John 14:6-11 (KJV) 6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. 7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. 8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. 9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? 10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. 11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

John 20:28 (KJV) 28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My LORD and my God.

Acts 7:55 (KJV) 55 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

2 Corinthians 13:14 (KJV) 14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

Philippians 2:8-11 (KJV) 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Colossians 2:6-9 (KJV) 6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: 7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. 8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. 9 **For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.**

Titus 2:11-14 (KJV) *11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; 13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; 14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

These declarations are only the logical conclusion which can be drawn from the fact Yeshua, Jesus came from heaven, not the earth. He could not have come from the angelic realm for angels were created as messengers of Elohim.

Hebrews 1:1-3, 8 (KJV) *1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; 3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express **image of his person**, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high:*

8 But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.

2 Peter 2:1 (KJV) *1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, **even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.***

1 John 5:7 (KJV) *7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.*

Saints, we need to know Yeshua, Jesus fully within the revelations in The Word and by the help of Holy Spirit so those who claim to have a fresh revelation of a Kingdom in which Yeshua is not to be preached will not gain a foothold to plant their dangerous leaven!

The truth is, the Kingdom we are called to seek first rests on this solid foundation: That Yeshua, Jesus is the Reigning King in hearts of the redeemed as Elohim made flesh and Who once dwelt amongst His subjects. He experienced life in human form and by overcoming all wiles of the wicked one, condemned sin in the flesh so all who receive and accept this critical revelation are automatically translated from the Kingdom of darkness into His Kingdom.

Colossians 1:12-20 (KJV) *12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: 13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: 14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: 15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. 19 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; 20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.*

Rejection of the divinity of Yeshua Jesus is the grand ground on which all religions – including Judaism bound by the veil of Moses and secular humanistic philosophies – stand! Any supposed revelation of preachers or so-called kingdom teaching which rejects the divinity of Yeshua, Jesus or belittles His stature as Center and Circumference of it is another gospel of another kingdom and cannot be by inspiration of Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:3 (KJV) *3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.*

Galatians 1:6-10 (KJV) *6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. 10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.*

It is no wonder such pretensions to the kingdom often do not proclaim His soon return but encourage their subscribers to possess this world in a fashion that directly contradicts His teachings. The return of the King of Kings to consummate the establishment of the eternal Kingdom of Elohim will obviously settle all opinions on this matter. That is why saints are encouraged to prayerfully study the Word, asking Holy Spirit for illumination so their faith will rest on Him and not on any fanciful theories of men. He will return for those who are earnest or zealous for Him:

Hebrews 9:28 (KJV) *28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*

These are saints who are watching and praying just as the Wise virgins of Matthew 25:1-13.

The Mother of ALL Revelations any human being can ever receive in the earth realm is the Divinity of Yeshua! He is the Center and Circumference of the dealings of Divinity with Humanity; of Heaven and the Earth realm. The world likes to celebrate the Baby in the Manger but rejects He Who is Master of All! Knowing Who that Baby is and what He represents gives us the enablement to truly represent Him as Ambassador within the sphere of Influence He planted us.

Review Questions

1. Please share at least 5 scriptures which affirm the divinity of Yeshua, Jesus.
2. To what extent has this chapter been helpful?

Chapter 8

12 Relational Offices of Yeshua

One of the vital equipment we need as saints are to know Yeshua as comprehensively presented in the Holy Scriptures. When the Truth about Him is made flesh in us, we are better equipped to represent and proclaim Him by the power of Holy Spirit. It was the burning desire of Paul to preach Him in Rome and across the then known world.

Romans 1:14-17 (KJV) *14 I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. 15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. 16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*

Yeshua Ha Mashiach, Jesus the Messiah is the Center and Circumference of the Kingdom of Elohim that is now in the hearts of saints as a spiritual reality. He will rule and reign as Supreme Potentate over the entire earth in the manifest phase of the Kingdom that is soon to come!

As the ONLY bridge between Divinity and Humanity, the whole counsel of the Word reveals He is indeed the Incarnation of Elohim in the earth realm – Emmanuel – who came from Heaven to dwell amongst His own. He went on to do good, demonstrating the power of the age to come. He ended that earthly walk by tasting death for all. His resurrection and ascension back to heaven sealed the deal for all time. Those who come into the true Kingdom of Elohim will discover there is NOTHING apart from Him!

Rather than hold debates about Christmas and Easter - with their strange mixture of Biblical concepts with pagan symbols - with those who prefer to observe the Religious traditions of Christendom, the better thing to do is reach out to as many as Holy Spirit causes to cross our paths to share the wider perspectives of the Bible concerning He Was once a helpless Baby in the Manger and Pascal Lamb hanging helplessly on the Cross satisfying the Just demands of Divine Justice for all humanity.

The reason why this approach of avoiding contentions and controversies is simple: Saints cannot change the calendar that drives the world system (the Gregorian imposed on the world by the Religious part of the Leg of Iron). Rather than fight what is fixed, it is better to seize the moment by proclaiming the love of Elohim in the Incarnation of Yeshua and implication of His vicarious death for all humanity. We do this better by first demonstrating that love which is made flesh in us to our neighbors, colleagues and all who can do with an act of mercy in this season including the poor, homeless, sick and old.

In reality, when Yeshua, Jesus was actually born or date He died is not as important as Who He really is! What is most important about the Incarnation and Death on the Cross is the significance of Divinity becoming humanity out of deep love for the lost seed of Adam!

To come to a fuller understanding of Who Yeshua is, let us sketch His 12 offices in the Kingdom. They reveal dimensions of His relationship to us that mark us out and set us apart from other human beings.

May the reality of how He fills up all space help those whose minds are still fixated on the helpless Baby cuddled by Mary in Bethlehem to look beyond the Manger. May those whose perception of Him is limited to the helpless figure on the Cross and whose identification with Him consists of wearing the Crucifix or hanging it on walls of stone come to realization He was and is much more! In so doing, we shall gladly repeat some of the points made in previous sections of this work.

#.1: Creator

One of the most profound truths is the fact that Yeshua, Jesus is co-creator within the Mystery of Elohim (with Yahweh the Father and Holy Spirit).

Genesis 1:1, 26 (KJV) *1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*

26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

John 1:1-3 (KJV) *1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*

It is also significant to note all things were made by Him and for His glory. This truth can only be grasped by faith in humility as a revelation from the Father through Holy Spirit. No matter how eloquent and knowledgeable a man or woman is, inability to grasp this truth indicates a limited understanding of the Kingdom!

Colossians 1:16 (KJV) *16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:*

As Creator, Yeshua Owns us and has a legitimate right to expect us to live in accordance to His Word, not our personal perspectives.

#.2: Saviour

Yeshua, Jesus is the Saviour of all who make up the Church, which is His Body.

Luke 2:11 (KJV) *11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*

Acts 5:30-31 (KJV) *30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. 31 Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.*

It was by His death as a human that Salvation by Grace can be received through Faith, not works! What this means is no matter how sinful a person is, once Holy Spirit convicts him or her of sin, righteousness, and judgement and activates faith to believe in the heart and confess Him in the Tongue, Salvation is affected.

Romans 10:8-10 (KJV) *8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in*

thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Salvation is entirely by Grace through Faith with no room for tiresome religious works!

Ephesians 2:4-5, 8 (KJV) *4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)*

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Ephesians 5:23 (KJV) *23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.*

#.3: Redeemer

Yeshua, Jesus is the redeemer of His people. He took our sins on Himself so sin would be judged in the flesh. Those who put their trust in Him are fully redeemed from their sins and the power of darkness. As Redeemer, He took us out of the grip of Satan and Sin and reconciled us to the Father to live His as sons in the earth realm, just as He Himself lived as the Son. John 1:29; Hebrews 2:5-13

2 Corinthians 5:21 (KJV) *21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

Colossians 1:13-14, 19-22 (KJV) *13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: 14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:*

19 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; 20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. 21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled 22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:

Colossians 2:13-15 (KJV) *13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

He paid the price in full for our redemption with His Own Body!

#.4: Justifier

Yeshua, Jesus is the justifier of those who come to Yahweh by and through Him. By justifying His people, His Blood wipes away their past so they can begin life anew. Justification is the basis of living with a lively conscience void of condemnation. That is how sinners become saints!

2 Corinthians 5:17 (KJV) *17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

Romans 5:1-2 (KJV) *1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

Romans 8:1-4 (KJV) *1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: 4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

Saints who know this truth can resist the voice of Satan the accuser when he tries to suggest they are still sinners. Though still work in progress, they know their Faith stands on the sure foundation of His Word.

#.5: Healer and Deliverer

By the stripes, He suffered on our behalf at the hands of the Roman soldiers and by faith in the Name of Yeshua, Jesus, every knee bows! These include all diseases by whatever name called and Satanic oppression of all types. When hands are laid on the sick, let us constantly remember it is neither the human hands nor the anointing oil which does the work but rather the Authority of The Name of Yeshua, Jesus, and Power of His Blood! This was a basic truth known and accepted by the Early Church hence the great miracles, signs, and wonders done in His Name!

Mark 16:17-18 (KJV) *17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.*

1 Peter 2:24 (KJV) *24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.*

Knowing this truth is not enough. Saints need to tap into His Abiding Presence to receive healing and deliverance when challenges of health and life arise.

#.6: Master or Lord

By successful completion of His redemptive mission, Yeshua, Jesus obtained full rights as Master or Lord of all realms of existence – in heaven, on earth, and underneath the earth, including hell. Everyone and everything created is subject to Him!

Philippians 2:8-11 (KJV) *8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

As Lord, He lays claim on our lives and our submission to His will becomes proof we are indeed dead to self-rule.

Matthew 16:24-25 (KJV) *24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. 25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.*

Galatians 2:20 (KJV) *20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

#.7: Empowerer with Holy Spirit

John the Baptist made it clear one of the things which would distinguish Yeshua, Jesus from himself is He would baptize His followers with Holy Spirit.

Matthew 3:11 (KJV) *11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance. but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:*

Yeshua, Jesus took the time to teach and prepare His disciples to receive Holy Spirit so they could function as empowered Ambassadors of Him and the Kingdom. His exit to heaven was necessary so those who believe in Him will receive that same person and power of the Holy Spirit Who filled Him without measure. In this way, they can continue and complete the assignment of preaching the gospel of the Kingdom.

John 16:7 (KJV) *7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*

John 14:15-18 (KJV) *15 If ye love me, keep my commandments. 16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. 18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.*

Acts 1:8 (KJV) *8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

For the 120 who obeyed His instructions to tarry in Jerusalem, the rewards were very clear on the Day appointed:

Acts 2:1-4 (KJV) *1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

Through Global School of Ministry and the Master Class series, the Lord unveiled to the Kingdom Church a fuller understanding of how Holy Spirit indwells all Saints at three basic levels and how the fourth dimension has been wrongly used to assess His Presence in the Church. With this revelation, saints can fully understand why the Cessationists are in error and how by reacting to excesses of Pentecostals, Evangelicals go to the extreme error of denying Him right of way to function as Present Power of the Church.

The 3 Basic Measures of Holy Spirit at Work in all Saints

In other words, all who are truly born again have three basic measures of Holy Spirit and have no excuse to be a dormant consumerist laity in any congregation or ministry!

7.1. The Seal Measure: This is the quantum of Holy Spirit given equally to all who are saved – regardless of their ages, gender or locations to seal them into Yeshua. The seal is proof of Divine ownership which is seen and known in the spiritual realms of both Heaven and Hell! The Seal measure is so fundamental that these realities accompany it:

i. Without the Seal of Holy Spirit, the claim to be a saint is false. The person is engaged in mere religiosity!

Romans 8:9 (KJV) *9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*

ii. He bears witness to saints that they are truly saved

Romans 8:16 (KJV) *16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:*

iii. That measure of Him in saints is the proof of their Divine ownership

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 (KJV) *21 Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; 22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.*

iv. The seal measure is a down payment and proof that saints will be filled with Holy Spirit if they continue to grow in the faith and yearn for more of Him.

Ephesians 1:13 (KJV) *13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,*

v. The seal of Holy Spirit is the guarantee the saint will be raptured if Yeshua comes while they are alive. It is also the guarantee those who have been translated by death before His coming will be resurrected.

Ephesians 4:30 (KJV) *30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*

vi. It is through the Seal Measure of Holy Spirit that the Divine DNA of Elohim as heavenly Father of all saints is imparted. Being aware and conscious of this reality brings great confidence in the face of life challenges.

vii. At Seal Measure, Holy Spirit imparts basic or root gifts which define what part of the Body of Yeshua they are and shall function as. These are not the Power gifts for mighty signs and wonders but those special abilities which enable saints to function as lively parts of the Body of Yeshua or lively stones in the spiritual building which is the Church!

Romans 12:4-8 (KJV) *4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.*

1 Corinthians 12:7, 12-14 (KJV) *7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal*

12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. 14 For the body is not one member, but many.

Ephesians 4:7-8 (KJV) 7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. 8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

1 Peter 4:10-11 (KJV) 10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 2:5 (KJV) 5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

7.2. The Transform Measure: This is the measure of Holy Spirit within the heart and lively conscience of saints which makes the new creation that their spirit-man is to be identifiable by tendency towards holy living. He is Spirit of Holiness and any measure of Him in the human heart creates a distaste for Sin and love for righteousness, just as Yeshua in Hebrews 1:9.

Romans 1:4 (KJV) 4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

This is because He quickens their conscience at the new birth and makes it lively.

Ephesians 2:1-3 (KJV) 1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

In this way, saints, no matter how young can bring forth fruits meet for repentance as they abide in Yeshua and allow the Word to abide in them. (John 15:1-8; Matthew 3:8). When they thus give Holy Spirit space to convict them of any wrong thoughts, words, attitudes and deeds, He works deep in saints, transforming them from inside out.

Philippians 1:6 (KJV) 6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

Philippians 2:13 (KJV) 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

In other words, the Transform measure of Holy Spirit guarantees they will not be static in their walk but will rather grow in Grace.

2 Peter 3:18 (KJV) 18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

True holiness does not come about by observance of religious rules which weary the flesh. As the saint embraces the transformational work of Holy Spirit, He works through their lively conscience to propel saints to impart deeper realms of His Holy nature through sanctification of their souls:

1 Thessalonians 5:22-24 (KJV) *22 Abstain from all appearance of evil. 23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.*

Outcome of Inward Transformation: Fruit of Holy Spirit!

The outcome of the Transform measure of Holy Spirit in the saint is fruit of Holy Spirit rather than works of the flesh they used to engage in.

Galatians 5:16-25 (KJV) *16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. 18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. 24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*

7.3. The Unite Measure: It is Holy Spirit alone, Who unites all saints of all ages, gender and locations into Yeshua their collective Head and to one another to function as His One Indivisible Body or Church in the earth realm. In effect, He as the Other Comforter sent from Heaven, plays the unique role of keeping saints united, just as Yeshua prayed to His Father!

John 17:20-24 (KJV) *20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. 24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.*

Through Him, there is unity of Faith based on accepting the Word as stated and avoiding tendencies to twist same to suit worldly cultures. The Remnant are those who have allowed Him to create in their hearts this understanding and who erect no walls to keep other saints out of any revelation, gift or grace they received!

Ephesians 4:1-6 (KJV) *1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

7.4. Demonstration Measure: Yet there is room for more of Holy Spirit to those who thirst, just as Yeshua promised:

John 7:37-39 (KJV) *37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. 38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. 39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)*

It is based on being filled with the same Holy Spirit Who indwelt Him at the Baptism of John that saints can function in the greater dimensions of Divine exploits, able to do all things through Him:

John 14:12-14 (KJV) *12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. 13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.*

Philippians 4:13 (KJV) *13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*

Holy Spirit is still for today in the Demonstrative Dimension and will remain so until Yeshua returns!

When this measure is at work, the initial evidence is speaking in 'other tongues' as Holy Spirit gives utterance (not learned languages or incantations of certain phrases at all times). The saints are imbued with a measure of Holy Spirit Who shows up in and through their vessels to engage in signs and wonders, doing great miracles in His Name. This is an equipment from heaven to do Kingdom business with His divine authority. In this way, they can subdue the kingdom of Darkness and expand the righteous Kingdom of Elohim wherever He plants or sends them.

In the Alpha Church Paul came upon believers with limited understanding of Holy Spirit and led them to the blessed experience!

Acts 19:1-6 (KJV) *1 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, 2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. 3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. 4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.*

It is tragic that Evangelicals generally are open to only the first three measures of Holy Spirit (and therefore show better character than Pentecostals who emphasis the 4th Dimension). While they exhibit more power in terms of Signs, wonders and miracles, the inability to understand the other three measures have made Pentecostals to foster Nimrodic Priesthood patterns where believers flock around 'anointed ministers' as solution providers. In this way, the Fatherhood of Yahweh is not enjoyed by all! We all need Him as the Seal; Transformer; Uniter and Demonstrator of the power of the Risen Yeshua!

#.8: Model

The role of Yeshua as model for all the adopted sons of Yahweh in the earth realm is critical. Yeshua did not come to set up a religion called Christianity. He came to pay the price to restore the privilege of sonship to humans who had been separated from Elohim by the inherited Sin of Adam. His assignment was to ensure the earth realm is re-populated with sons of Elohim, not crowds of milk-drinking Babes, co-dependents of preachers!

Hebrews 2:9-10 (KJV) *9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*

At His baptism, the Father publicly affirmed Yeshua as His Beloved Son to Israel

Matthew 3:17 (KJV) *17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

At His transfiguration, Yahweh also affirmed Yeshua as the One the Disciples should listen to

Matthew 17:5 (KJV) *5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.*

Hebrews 1:1-3 (KJV) *1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; 3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high:*

The Father was making a statement for all those who receive His Grace to see Yeshua as a model of sonship they should emulate.

John 1:12 (KJV) *12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

Hebrews 5:8 (KJV) *8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;*

Yeshua clearly modelled for us how we should relate with the Father in absolute submission to His will.

John 5:30 (KJV) *30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.*

John 6:38 (KJV) *38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.*

Even unto death as Matthew 26:36-46 shows at the Garden of Gethsemane, Yeshua, He was content to do the will of the Father. Submitting to the will of the Father which manifests in Obedience to His Word is central requirement of Yahweh from His elect.

It is no wonder submission to the will of Yahweh was the heart of the pattern of prayer Yeshua, Jesus taught His disciples (Matthew 6:10).

Let us cease from our own plans and agendas and do ourselves a huge favor: Submit to His Supreme will which is not and cannot be grievous!

#.9: Shepherd

Yeshua, Jesus is the Great Shepherd who cares for the sheep even at the expense of His own life. He is the one who could leave 99 sheep in search of the missing one (Matthew 18:10-14; Luke 15:1-7; John 10:1-30). He is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls who yearns for the opportunity to be relied upon to provide all our needs!

1 Peter 2:25 (KJV) *25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.*

Psalms 23:1-6 (KJV) *1 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. 3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. 5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.*

Self-will and self-reliance pushes away His shepherd-hood! Let us learn to rely on Him for ALL things as saints in the early Church did!

#.10: High Priest & Chief Intercessor

Yeshua, Jesus is the High Priest of the New Covenant. The Covenant was sealed by His own blood and is all sufficient to deal with the sin problem once and for all. As prophesied by the Father, Yeshua came as a Priest after the Order of Melchizedeck.

For this reason, the Divine Plan is that the Levitical priesthood has been fulfilled in Him and no longer functional neither is the Nimrodic priesthood of any value in the Kingdom Church! All saints are called to function as part of His Royal Priesthood aligned to Him as the Head and High Priest.

1 Peter 2:9-12 (KJV) *9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. 11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

Even now, Yeshua, Jesus functions as Chief Intercessor of His saints before the Father. It is because of that intercession Grace is released for us to overcome in difficult situations! We are invited therefore to cast aside timidity and come boldly to the Throne of Grace for help!

Hebrews 2:14-18 (KJV) *14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. 16 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. 17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to*

make reconciliation for the sins of the people. 18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted

Hebrews 4:14-16 (KJV) *14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. 15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

#.11: King of the Kingdom

There is a heavenly demand on all saints to move from merely believing on Him to a state of total submission to the Sovereign rule of Yeshua as King of their lives. In a very personal and real way, Yeshua, Jesus is supposed to sit securely as King seated on The Throne of our hearts! He is there to rule our lives and determines how we live in accordance to the culture of His Kingdom, not that of the World.

Though the world does not know Him, Yeshua, Jesus is also the King of Kings and determines who gets to exercise office in the nations of the world.

Colossians 1:16 (KJV) *16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:*

All Governments and human rule shall be on His shoulders to order them as it pleases Him and no matter how they misbehave, all things ultimately work together in accordance with His determinate counsel and concluded under the statute of limitation.

Revelation 1:5 (KJV) *5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,*

The day is coming when He will finally appear to set up The Kingdom of Elohim here on planet earth. The day when the Kingdoms of this world become His Kingdom is close at hand-

Revelation 11:15 (KJV) *15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever.*

#.12: Righteous Judge

All who have ever lived on earth – from Adam to the last generation will one day stand before the Lord for Judgement. Per the Ordinance of the Kingdom, the Father has committed all judgement to the Son.

John 5:22 (KJV) *22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:*

Acts 17:31 (KJV) *31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.*

Let us know Yeshua in all these 12 Dimensions so we can live the Zoe life that marks us out from the world around us.

Review Questions

1. Which of these 12 functional offices of Yeshua are manifested in your relationship with Him?
2. Pay close attention to item 7. Which of the Measures of Holy Spirit are you deficient of and you look forward to being filled in?

Chapter 9

The Alpha Church, Identity & Name of Yeshua – Part 1

As our Heavenly Father was releasing this revelation, He gripped the heart of this vessel with the reality that Saints need to combat spiritual laziness which makes them unwilling to explore the full measure of their relationship with Elohim in Yeshua! When saints are not inclined to know Him as the Father ordained, it also affects our ability to explore the full dimension of the unsearchable riches of our inheritance in Him!

The sad outcome will be a dependency syndrome on fellow mortals who claim a special anointing that entitles them to become mediators between saints and Yahweh, turning Him into a grand Father rather than the personal Father they should enjoy an intimate relationship with. Before long, such people block their view of Who Yeshua is and they begin to be clients of fellow humans who exercise a Nimrod-type control over their lives. Secondly, inability to know Him fully opens them up to the intellectual fraud of the pseudo-Kingdom movement which rails against the person and office of Yeshua as Center and Circumference of the True Kingdom. This is the basis of modern idolatry.

Before we delve into the topic of today, let us receive these additional offices of Yeshua relative to His saints in the earth realm:

#.13. The Only Access/Doorway to The Father

John 14:6 (KJV) *6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

#.14. The Alpha and Omega (Beginning and End) of all things in the earth realm

Revelation 1:8 (KJV) *8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*

#.15. The Resurrection and the Life

John 11:25 (KJV) *25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:*

#.16. The Strong Defense of Saints

Proverbs 18:10 (KJV) *10 The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.*

John 16:33 (KJV) *33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

Colossians 3:3 (KJV) *3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*

#.17. The Battle Axe of Saints in spiritual warfare

Philippians 2:9-11 (KJV) *9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

#.18. The Source of Eternal Life

John 3:14-16 (KJV) *14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: 15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

John 17:1-3 (KJV) *1 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: 2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. 3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*

The Alpha Church was fully persuaded in He Who they believed!

The Alpha Church was fully persuaded about the Divinity of Yeshua Ha Mashiach, Jesus the Messiah and their individual and collective relationship with Him in His divine offices. To that degree, revelational knowledge of Him was the critical acid test if one was a saint or not. Let us recollect that contrary to Catholic dogma, Yeshua could not have promised to build His Church on Peter but was rather referring to the understanding of His Divinity (what Being a Son of Elohim meant)

Matthew 16:16-19 (KJV) *16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. 17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. 18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*

By the time Yeshua finished His discourse with the disciples and answered the questions of Thomas and Phillip, deeper understanding ensured of His identity.

John 14:4-10 (KJV) *4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. 5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? 6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. 7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. 8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. 9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? 10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.*

When Thomas finally encountered the risen Yeshua, his response to the reality of the Incarnation was telling:

John 20:26-28 (KJV) *26 And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. 27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach*

hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. 28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My LORD and my God.

Before He ascended on high, Yeshua did two significant things. He told them about the coming of Holy Spirit to indwell those who are redeemed by the Blood after His physical exit. The idea was to seal them unto the day of redemption and empower saints to be His personal representatives and able Ambassadors of the Kingdom to the natural nations and kingdoms of this world (Acts 1:8).

Another thing Yeshua did before completing His earthly assignment was to teach them the Authority and Power of His Name as a direct manifestation of His Person! The way He ordained it, ***His Name stood for His Person!*** Both the Alpha Church and those who opposed them, including both Religious leaders and Secular authorities were aware of this reality!

Matthew 18:5 (KJV) *5 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.*

Matthew 18:20 (KJV) *20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*

Matthew 19:29 (KJV) *29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.*

Matthew 24:5 (KJV) *5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.*

Mark 16:17 (KJV) *17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;*

Luke 21:12 (KJV) *12 But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.*

Luke 24:47 (KJV) *47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*

John 2:23 (KJV) *23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.*

John 14:13 (KJV) *13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*

John 14:14 (KJV) *14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.*

John 14:26 (KJV) *26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

John 15:16 (KJV) *16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.*

John 16:23 (KJV) *23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father **in my name**, he will give it you.*

John 16:24 (KJV) *24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing **in my name**: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.*

John 16:26 (KJV) 26 At that day ye shall ask **in my name**: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

Acts 3:16 (KJV) 16 And **his name through faith in his name** hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

Acts 10:43 (KJV) 43 To him give all the prophets witness, that **through his name** whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

1 Corinthians 5:4 (KJV) 4 **In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ**, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,

2 Timothy 2:19 (KJV) 19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let **every one that nameth the name of Christ** depart from iniquity.

Hebrews 6:10 (KJV) 10 For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed **toward his name**, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

Revelation 2:13 (KJV) 13 I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou **holdest fast my name**, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

Revelation 19:13 (KJV) 13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and **his name** is called The Word of God.

Revelation 22:4 (KJV) 4 And they shall see his face; and **his name shall be in their foreheads**.

The young Church did not waste any moment. Right after Pentecost, Peter cashed the check that is the Name of Yeshua and a notable miracle happened in Acts 3 with the lame man at the Beautiful Gate

Acts 3:6-7 (KJV) 6 Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: **In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.** 7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

When the bewildered men of Israel wondered, what was happening, Peter wasted no time sharing the secret of victory over infirmity. It was not about himself but all about faith in the Name of Yeshua:

Acts 3:16 (KJV) 16 And his name through **faith in his name** hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

Judaism was enraged that a Being greater than Moses was exalted! In response, it struck at the jugular of the new movement: The very Name of Yeshua which was their strength, identity, and defense! **The very factor which distinguished them from all humans was the Name of Yeshua in their lips based on His reign in their hearts.** Let us take excerpts of the dialogue between leaders of Judaism and the disciples shortly after Pentecost.

Acts 4:1-20 (KJV) 1 And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, 2 Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. 3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide. 4 Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand. 5 And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, 6 And Annas the high

priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. 7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, **By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?** 8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, 9 If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; 10 **Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.** 11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. 12 **Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.** 13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. 14 And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. 15 But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, 16 Saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it. 17 **But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name.** 18 And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. 20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.

In Acts 5, the same scenario was repeated where the core concern of leaders of Judaism was there should be no preaching in the Name of Yeshua! Let us see excerpts of the dialogue between them and Peter to understand the issues at stake:

Acts 4:27-31 (KJV) 27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, 28 **Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name?** and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. 29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. 30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. 31 Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. 32 And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

Acts 4:40-41 (KJV) 40 **And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.** 41 And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to **suffer shame for his name.**

The Book of John was essentially written to document the reality that in Yeshua, Divinity was Humanity as testified in his own words:

John 20:30-31 (KJV) 30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: 31 **But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.**

Knowing who he was in Yeshua and who Yeshua was in him defined the life and ministry of Paul. The man who received the clearest picture of the King and His Kingdom had this to say about his never-ending quest to be all who he was ordained to be in Yeshua:

Philippians 3:7-15 (KJV) *7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.*

This total commitment to His King produced an outcome of absolute confidence that could not be dented by attacks of Satan, demons, humans, false brethren or anything in any realm!

Romans 8:38-39: (KJV) *38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

2 Timothy 1:12 (KJV) *12 For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*

Dear saints, it is possible to think we are dwelling too long on this aspect of the Course which deals with Yeshua, Jesus as a Person. There are always great blessings when we follow leading of Holy Spirit Who is building a strong foundation for this Course on the Divine Identity of Yeshua, Ha Mashiach.

1 Corinthians 3:10-15 (KJV) *10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon **11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ** 12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; 13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*

He has some more things to share with us before we move on to study His Message and Assignment in full after the break.

Review Questions

1. Please cite 7 of these Scriptures which ministered most to you.
2. Please briefly describe the effects of this chapter on you.

Chapter 10

The Alpha Church, Identity & Name of Yeshua – Part 2

What the Name of Yeshua, Jesus secures for His saints: An Alpha Church

It is important to note, the Name of Yeshua was not just another Hebraic Name! It was One that was specifically chosen from heaven and revealed to Joseph and Mary by Angel Gabriel. He spoke to them in Hebrew and announced a Hebrew Name Yeshua/Yahshua/Yehoshua (from which the name Joshua is derived) which translated means 'Yahweh's Salvation'. In other words, the Name Yeshua when uttered simply reminds those in Him that through Him Alone are humans saved and brought into the family of Yahweh. It also reminds Satan and the hordes of hell that on a certain Day in History, Atonement for Sin was affected through His Blood, bringing Liberty to all who believe!

In the days of the Gospels, the Roman Empire did not promote their Native tongue, Latin as much as they preserved and promoted Greek Language and Literature which was already the predominant means of communicating in the Empire (Rome succeeded Greece/Macedonia as world ruler). As the predominant language of communication across the empire, most of the writings of the early church translated the Name Yeshua into the Greek, Ioseus. After the fall of the Roman Empire in AD 476, Great Britain emerged as the next world power from Europe. Its official language, English, became the main language of the world, a reality till today. The Hebraic Name Yeshua which was translated into the Greek Ioseus was later translated into the English Jesus. In the same way, His title and purpose, Ha Mashiach (which simply means the Messiah or anointed one) were translated into the Greek Christos <the Anointed One> which eventually became translated into the English Christ.

There is no sin in calling Him by the Greek Ioseus Christos or English translation Jesus Christ. Please be under no compulsion to join us to call Him by that very Name Yahweh His Father called Him!

However, per the Law of degrees of Light one receives, there are some who will come into deeper understanding of the first prophecy by the Alpha Church uttered by Peter and allow Holy Spirit to take them down the wire in recovering all that was muddled up by both replacement theology as well as the religion of Rome, including the not so subtle stripping off of the Hebraic identity of Yeshua and His re-invention as a European. Here is that prophecy of Peter:

Act 3:19-21 (KJV) *19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. 20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: 21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.*

Let us see how the Alpha Church cashed the Divine check that is the Name of Yeshua. In so doing, we of the Omega Church need to be challenged to rise in the dimension of active Faith in His Name so the Kingdom can be announced in the power of Holy Spirit Who exalts the Name of Yeshua/Jesus as a core assignment!

1. Salvation

Yeshua, Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3 that except any one is converted, he cannot see the Kingdom. The Alpha Church was persuaded that the straight gate of entry of the Kingdom is faith in the Name of Yeshua.

Acts 2:38 (KJV) 38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you **in the name of Jesus Christ** for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

1 John 5:1 (KJV) 1 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

2. Justification and Sanctification of Saints

1 Corinthians 1:2 (KJV) 2 Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, **to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus**, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's:

1 Corinthians 6:11 (KJV) 11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, **but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus**, and by the Spirit of our God.

3. Preaching was done in the Name of Yeshua

Luke 24:47 (KJV) 47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached **in his name** among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Acts 9:27 (KJV) 27 But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how **he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus**.

Acts 9:29 (KJV) 29 And he spake boldly **in the name of the Lord Jesus**, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him.

4. Love, Unity and Divine Order

1 Corinthians 1:10 (KJV) 10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by **the name of our Lord Jesus Christ**, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

1 Corinthians 5:4 (KJV) 4 **In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ**, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,

1 John 3:23-24 (KJV) 23 And this is his commandment, **That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ**, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. 24 And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

5. His Name was guarantee of access to Yahweh and answers to Prayer

John 14:13 (KJV) 13 **And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do**, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

John 14:14 (KJV) 14 **If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.**

John 15:16 (KJV) *16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that **whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.***

John 16:23 (KJV) *23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.***

John 16:24 (KJV) *24 Hitherto **have ye asked nothing in my name:** ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.*

John 16:26 (KJV) *26 At that day **ye shall ask in my name:** and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:*

6. Holy Spirit is received by saints, in His Name

John 14:26 (KJV) *26 **But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.***

Acts 19:1-7 (KJV) *1 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, 2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. 3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. 4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. 5 **When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.** 6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. 7 And all the men were about twelve.*

When He comes upon saints, the Holy Spirit empowers them to be witnesses or personal representatives of Yeshua, Jesus:

Acts 1:8 (KJV) *8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

7. All things, including service, are to be done in His Name and for His glory:

Colossians 3:17 (KJV) *17 And **whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.***

Ephesians 5:20 (KJV) *20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father **in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;***

2 Thessalonians 1:12 (KJV) *12 That **the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.***

8. Healing

Acts 3:6 (KJV) *6 Then Peter said, **Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.***

9. Deliverance from Satanic and demonic oppressions

Acts 16:16-18 (KJV) *16 And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: 17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. 18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, **I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.** And he came out the same hour.*

Philippians 2:10 (KJV) *10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;*

10. Miracles were affected in His Name

Mark 16:17 (KJV) *17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; **In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;***

Luke 10:17-21 (KJV) *17 And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, **even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.** 18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. 19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. 20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. 21 In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.*

Why the Name of Yeshua/Jesus is so potent in the earth realm can be found in this Scripture:

Luke 10:22 (KJV) *22 All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.*

John 3:35-36 (KJV) *35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. 36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

11. His Name was Security against reprobate heart

The first sign someone is taking the dangerous road to a reprobate heart (taking steps towards getting out of faith) is to speak lightly of the Name of Yeshua, Jesus or believe the lie that the Kingdom is more important than He Who is the Head of it. It takes falling away from the Faith that is rooted in Him for this to happen.

Mark 9:39 (KJV) *39 But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is **no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.***

1 Corinthians 12:3 (KJV) *3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that **no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed:** and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.*

12. His Name attracts Persecution which is the pathway to eternal glory

Luke 21:12 (KJV) *12 But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and **rulers for my name's sake.***

When persecuted, saints who are truly in Him need to respond properly, just as the King commanded:

Matthew 5:10-12 (KJV) 10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Acts 4:18 (KJV) 18 And they called them, and commanded them **not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.**

Acts 5:40 (KJV) 40 And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they **should not speak in the name of Jesus,** and let them go.

13. Heretics and Reprobates are to be dis-fellowshipped for rejecting His Divinity

1 Corinthians 16:22 (KJV) 22 If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.

2 Thessalonians 3:6 (KJV) 6 Now we command you, brethren, **in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,** that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

1 John 2:18-21-27 (KJV) 18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. 19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. 20 But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. 21 I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. **22 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. 23 Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.** 24 Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. 25 And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life. 26 These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. 27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

1 John 4:1-3 (KJV) 1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: **3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist,** whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

2 John 1:7-11 (KJV) 7 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. **This is a deceiver and an antichrist.** 8 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. 9 **Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.** 10 **If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: 11 For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.**

A Key to consider: Restoration of the Paradigm from Individualism to the Corporate Body or Organic/Organism Model where Yeshua gets all the Glory through His Body in the earth realm.

In these end times, the Lord expects that He alone be the primary motive and cause for which saints congregate to constitute His Body in the earth realm. If He is lifted up, all are to be drawn to Him, not to the super anointed Preacher or Pastor!

John 12:32 (KJV) *32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.*

No matter how anointed, it is vital that ministers emulate John the Baptist and deliberately decrease so The Name of the Lord Yeshua and His Person is exalted in the hearts, minds, and perceptions of all saints as center and circumference of their lives

John 3:14-15 (KJV) *14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: 15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*

John 3:26-31 (KJV) *26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him. 27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. 28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. 29 He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. 30 He must increase, but I must decrease. 31 He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.*

The way Yeshua ordered the present realm of His Kingdom, the fullness of His Authority is deposited in His Body through His Name. His Kingdom in the earth realm is therefore advanced by use of His Name. Accordingly, He looks at His Body as a composite whole with different individuals releasing specific manifestations of functions deposited in them so He gets all the glory. Humans have reversed the order with emphasis and focus on individuals who now use specific functions granted them to divide the Body and become famous lords of other saints who become consumers of such anointing with their lives revolving around fellow humans rather than Yeshua Himself.

The Omega Church, therefore, has a specific responsibility to reverse this ungodly trend and restore the awesome powers granted the Body! It is one in which the proof of a living congregation is not a super anointed preacher but a lively organism of saints who all discover and walk in the authority of Yeshua, Jesus, discharging the power of Ruach Ha Chodesh, Holy Spirit in them!

Mark 16:15-20 (KJV) *15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. 17 And **these signs** shall follow **them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.** 19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. **20 And they went forth,** and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.*

Ephesians 4:15-16 (KJV) *15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom **the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth,** according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

The Omega Church needs to restore empowerment of all saints so they can function as the Royal Priesthood – utilizing the authority of the Name of Yeshua to do exploits: In and out of season! When this is so, there is an unleashing of the Divine Presence and Power which subdues all plans and devices of the enemy!

By now, it should be clear to all that the School Paradigm is truly the heart of Kingdom Ministry. This is a situation where Saints are empowered through anointed diligent searching of Scriptures as they are systematically taught the whole counsel of the Word, trained, equipped, activated and released to serve Elohim, Saints and Humanity!

True Kingdom leadership is about empowering all saints within our loop of influence to be and do what Elohim purposed for creating and redeeming them! It is not about Nimrodic subduing of them to serve interests of the leader! That is why leaders must incline their hearts and minds to discern the Divine purpose for each of those Elohim brings to them and work with Him to affect same!

Review Questions

1. Please cite 5 of the Blessings that are secured by the Name of Yeshua, Jesus which touched you most
2. Please briefly share your personal message from this lesson.

Chapter 11

From Prophecy through Birth to Death

We will soon examine the true gospel of the Kingdom which Yeshua preached. But it is needful to understand Satan attacked both Him as the Promised Messiah and Messenger of Elohim from heaven as well as His Peculiar Message through some schemes that were not covered previously. In setting out the scope of opposition and schemes invested by the enemy to destroy both the Messenger and His Message, we will examine them under different headings, for ease of reference. Please bear with us as we may repeat some information previously shared in an earlier part of the Course.

1. Through Pollution of the Bloodline that would produce Seed of the Woman

From the day, he received the Divine Sentence in Genesis 3:15 that Yeshua would come as Seed of the Woman to crush his head, Satan went into overdrive to attack His manifestation. Because he is a created being, Satan had no understanding of who the Messiah would be or when He would appear. One thing he could interpret correctly was what Elohim had already revealed: Messiah would be a Seed of the Woman (in other words, He would come as a Human Being).

Groping in the dark, he inspired Cain to kill Abel. Before long, he caused the earth realm to be filled with such wickedness and even inspired angelic beings to release evil seeds into women, seeking to pollute human kind:

Genesis 6:1-7, 11-13 (KJV) *1 And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, 2 That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. 3 And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. 4 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. 5 And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. 7 And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them*

11 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. 13 And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

Because he never experienced Grace, Satan had no idea how Elohim would graciously preserve Noah and his family.

Genesis 6:8 (KJV) *8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.*

May all the elect stay in the safe harbor of Grace where their righteousness is secured by the continual appropriation of Blood of the Lamb!

After the Flood, it was now obvious to Satan that Noah carried the Seed. He wasted no time in striking: The man who was righteous to the degree of being saved specially by Elohim messed himself up with too much wine. The outcome was tragic (Genesis 9:20-27).

When Noah uttered the proclamation/prophecy that Shem would be the carrier of the Seed, Satan heard him and went to work in a special way.

Genesis 9:26 (KJV) *26 And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.*

When Elohim finally settled that the Seed would come through Abraham, Satan went into overdrive. The instrument used was no other than his beloved wife, Sarah who, thinking that the Promise was no longer feasible, presented her maid Hagar as a human alternative. All she could bear was Ishmael, clearly unacceptable to Elohim:

With the birth of Isaac through Sarah, Satan figured out the best approach was to inspire sibling rivalry of his twin sons – Esau and Jacob – right from the womb.

Hosea 12:2-4 (KJV) *2 The Lord hath also a controversy with Judah, and will punish Jacob according to his ways; according to his doings will he recompense him. 3 He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God: 4 Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us;*

Though favored by Isaac, the profanity of Esau caught up with him and in this way, the birthright and mantle of Carrier of the Seed came upon Jacob.

Genesis 25:28-34 (KJV) *28 And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob. 29 And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: 30 And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. 31 And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. 32 And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? 33 And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. 34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.*

Immorality was weaponized to pollute the lineage of Seed of the Woman!

The firstborn of Jacob, Reuben, who could have become the carrier of the Mantle was tempted with gross immorality, committed incest with a concubine of his father and missed his estate forever!

1 Chronicles 5:1 (KJV) *1 Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel, (for he was the firstborn; but forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright.*

The Scepter was graciously placed by Election on Judah. A strange thing happened to this noble man one day. He took in a lady he assumed to be a Prostitute, not knowing it was his own twice widowed

daughter in law, Tamar. The fruit of that evil liaison, Pharez became the carrier of the Seed! (Genesis 38; Matthew 1:3)

In the same way, when Israel was taking over the Promised Land, the common Prostitute of Jericho Rahab became instrumental in helping the spies. Though her past was terrible, election of Grace ensured she became married to Salmon with whom Boaz was born. (Matthew 1:5).

Boaz himself went on to marry Ruth the Moabitess! Moab was the product of an incestuous relationship between Lot and one of his daughters after they were rescued from Sodom (apparently, though out of Sodom, the evil city was part of the core of his daughters! Genesis 19:30-38).

It was from Boaz and Ruth that Obed came forth and from him, Jesse. Through Jesse, David was born. It was David who received specific Prophecies that the Messiah would be of his lineage (Matthew 1:5-6).

In a moment of low awareness, David fell into immorality with Bathsheba and in trying to cover it up had Uriah her husband killed. It was through his marriage to Bathsheba that the next carrier of the Seed, Solomon was born (Matthew 1:6).

A succession of very wicked men including Rehoboam followed as well as good men in the lineage such as Zerubbabel.

Lesson: The Election and calling of Elohim is matched by the quantum of Grace He releases. Though humans failed at critical times, Elohim is faithful to His eternal counsels. When saints walk in Grace of Elohim, they receive His Mercy to the degree issues in the family bloodline do not undercut their destinies!

Though humans, since Adam were polluted by Satanic attacks and temptations, the determinate counsel and wisdom of Elohim, was far superior: He had ordained that in due season, the Seed would not be a product of a man and woman in normal reproduction mode.

The appointed pathway was the mystery that Angel Gabriel announced to Mary when the Time of Manifestation of Seed of the Woman finally came which Satan, in his limited understanding as a created being did not know!

Luke 1:34-35 (KJV) *34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? 35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.*

Galatians 4:4-5 (KJV) *4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.*

2. Through Political Systems of the World

A survey of the four Gospels reveals Satan used Political leaders and their systems of Governance to actively oppose the Person and Mission of Yeshua, Jesus. Let us provide a brief sample for easy digestion:

2.1 Herod the Great

When Satan finally realized one day that the Promised Seed of the Woman had arrived the earth realm – despite all traps and roadblocks he had set since the days of Cain and Abel, he quickly went to work. To this end, he inspired the Idumean, Herod to devise a plot to kill the Baby Yeshua. Herod had absolutely no place in the rulership of the Hebrew/Jewish people. However, he and his lineage were foisted on Israel as an act of ultimate humiliation by the Colonial Power which ruled Israel, the Roman Empire about BC 37.

Herod quivered in fear as it dawned on him that if indeed the newly born Yeshua was the promised Son of David, his suzerainty over the Hebrews/Jews was in jeopardy (Matthew 2:1-12). As he panicked, Herod caused all infants in Jerusalem to be slain, thus fulfilling one of the Messianic prophecies in the book of Jeremiah 31:1.

Matthew 2:16-19 (KJV) *16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wrath, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. 17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, 18 In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not. 19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,*

2.2 Pontius Pilate and the Roman Governmental system

When He had completed His appointed years on earth, it was another officer of the Roman Empire – Pontius Pilate - who signed off on the Crucifixion

Matthew 27:1-2 (KJV) *1 When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: 2 And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.*

Verses 11-27 reveal how Pilate presided over a Kangaroo Court with an attitude of escapism.

2.3 It was Soldiers of the Roman Empire who did the actual act of Crucifixion and piercing of His sides and sharing of His Robes (Matthew 27:27-50).

2.4 It was also Roman Soldiers who were bribed to dispute the Resurrection. Satan knew it was a Cornerstone Pillar of the Redemption Mission and therefore set out to sow seed of doubt into hearts of people. (Matthew 27:62-66; Matthew 28:1-11; 1 Corinthians 15)

3. Religious Systems of the World led by Religious Leaders

The religious leaders of Israel: Scribes Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes and the Sanhedrin were united in rejection of both the Divine Identity and Message of Yeshua. Because many aspects of their rejection and opposition were extensively covered in a previous lesson, we will not be repeating it here.

Suffice it to say that when the end came, it was them who arraigned, prosecuted, and demanded for the death of Yeshua as documented in Matthew 27 and other scriptures.

4. Inability of His Disciples to grasp His Identity and Mission until fullness of Time

4.1. Peter's Flip flops of Faith

Matthew 16:13-23 (KJV) 13 When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? 14 And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. 15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. 17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. 18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. 20 Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ. 21 From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. 22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. 23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

4.2. Thomas and Phillip's inability to know Him until Truth started them in the face

John 14:1-11 (KJV) 1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. 4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. 5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? 6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. 7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. 8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. 9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? 10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. 11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

4.3. Judas Iscariot and the mission to betray unto Death

Matthew 26:14-16 (KJV) 14 Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, 15 And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. 16 And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

Matthew 26:21-25 (KJV) 21 And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. 22 And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I? 23 And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. 24 The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born. 25 Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

Matthew 26:45-50 (KJV) 45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46 Rise, let us be going:

behold, he is at hand that doth betray me. 47 And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. 48 Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast. 49 And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him. 50 And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus and took him.

4.4. The disciples at Emmaus and inability to recognize Yeshua epitomized the problem

Luke 24:30-35 (KJV) *30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. 31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. 32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? 33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, 34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. 35 And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.*

Why the various oppositions and misunderstandings of Yeshua were allowed by Elohim.

Unfortunately, in fighting the Divine Purpose, Satan only exhibited the reality that as a created being, he was not all knowing! Elohim used all things – including his blindfold of the Hebrews and Israel for a higher purpose: To make way for the Gentiles to come into His Commonwealth. In the fullness of time when Gentiles are fully secured, Elohim will continue His special focus on Israel.

John 1:11-13 (KJV) *11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

Romans 11:5-34 (KJV) *5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. 7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. 8 (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. 9 And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: 10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway. 11 I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. 12 Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? 13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: 14 If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. 15 For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? 16 For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. 17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; 18 Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. 19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. 20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: 21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. 22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. 23 And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. 24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild*

by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? 25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. 26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: 27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. 28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sakes. 29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. 30 For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: 31 Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. 32 For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. 33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! 34 For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?

In other words, unknown to both the Religious and Political leaders of the Day, they were acting out the Divine Script that Elohim had approved as the pathway for the Seed of the woman to fulfill His assignment in the earth realm!

1 Corinthians 2:7-8 (KJV) *7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: 8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*

Review Questions

1. What is the central message of this chapter?
2. Which aspect has real Personal application for you?

Chapter 12

The Early Assault of Satan: Religion and Human Weakness

The assault of Satan, Religion and human weakness was evident in the days of Yeshua and the Alpha Church.

One of the critical Truths we need to know and understand is the attacks of Satan did not stop at the Person of Yeshua, Jesus. The enemy went further than is generally considered to create his own pseudo-gospel and pseudo-church. While we are aware of the strong and pervasive influence of the pseudo-gospel and pseudo-church in these End Times, it is often forgotten that their roots go deep – right up to the days when Yeshua was in His Incarnate State and at the earliest stage of the Alpha Church! Let us consider 6 distinct ways in which this sad situation was executed:

#.1: The multi-pronged attack against hearts of hearers of the true gospel

What is generally called Parable of the Sower is not about he who sows but rather about the kind of hearts of hearers (and how they are inclined to hear and respond to the gospel message)! Extrapolating this message to realities of human life which generally tends to embrace lies from the father of lies to Truth from Elohim, we can see how a hefty majority (in this case 75 percent of a given population have a default heart and mind inclination which makes it impossible for the Word to be sown or bear fruit.

Matthew 13:3-8 (KJV) *3 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; 4 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: 5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: 6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. 7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: 8 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.*

The interpretation of this parable was given by Yeshua. The sum is this: The quality of heart of the hearer will determine the quality of outcomes of the words that are heard!

Matthew 13:18-23 (KJV) *18 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. 19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. 20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; 21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. 22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. 23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.*

#.2: The Tares planted to imitate Wheat: Satan is populating the earth realm with his sons for a false church to flourish, imitating saints!

In this parable, Yeshua gives the most graphic illustration of the battle of the ages between Light and Darkness:

Matthew 13:24-30 (KJV) *24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: 25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. 26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. 27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? 28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? 29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.*

Interpretation of the Parable: Satan has been 'building' his own church', just as Jesus has been building His Own (Matthew 16:18).

Matthew 13:36-43 (KJV) *36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. 37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; 38 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; 39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. 40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. 41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; 42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.*

To fully understand that the False and True Church co-exist in the earth realm at same time, we need to remember the human will is also fully invested in making the choice of which way to follow: The Narrow way or the Broadway as Yeshua indicated in:

Matthew 7:13-14 (KJV) *13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*

#.3: The Ascension was witnessed by a large crowd but the majority did not obey His Last Instructions to wait for Baptism of Holy Spirit Who would empower them to be effective Ambassadors of the Kingdom.

According to 1 Corinthians 15:6 over 500 disciples saw the Lord after His resurrection and probably heard the charge in Acts 1:4-8. Unfortunately, over 380 did not heed His instruction to wait for Promise of the Father. They went on to preach an incomplete gospel which excluded both Baptism in Holy Spirit and the revelations in the Pauline Epistles. Only 120 were obedient and patient, waiting until they were baptized in Holy Spirit in the Upper Room.

Acts 1:4-5, 8-9 (KJV) *4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. 5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence*

8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. 9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

Acts 1:12-15 (KJV) 12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. 13 And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. 14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. 15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)

It was the obedient 120 who experienced infilling of Holy Spirit and empowerment to represent Yeshua

Acts 2:1-4 (KJV) 1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Of the 380 who went forth without infilling of Holy Spirit, here were the potential outcomes:

Half Gospel/Inadequate knowledge

Acts 18:24-26 (KJV) 24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. 25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, **he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.** 26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

Acts 19:1-7 (KJV) 1 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, **2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.** 3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. 4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. 7 And all the men were about twelve.

Generally, such inadequately equipped people went forth, preaching 'another gospel' based on their limited experiences and half-knowledge.

It is not difficult to deduce that they formed the bulk of those who could not sustain the life of self-denial and cross bearing required to withstand the onslaught of Imperial Rome. When the opportunity presented itself to be wedded to the Empire and become an Established Religion, they must have jumped at the opportunity!

#.4: Judaizers wasted no time to resist the Gospel of the Kingdom.

The Gospel had room for both Hebrews/Jews and Gentiles because, by His Broken Body, Yeshua had taken away the veil of separation as Ephesians 2:11-22; Ephesians 3:1-21 says.

In Acts Chapter 10, it had to take an extraordinary intervention of Elohim before Peter was persuaded to go forth to minister to Gentiles! The cultural blockage of Hebraic superiority was indeed very thick!

Elohim left nothing to chance: Holy Spirit was poured out on the Gentiles while Peter was yet ministering! The shock of Hebraic/Jewish believers that the Gentiles were also filled with the same Holy Spirit tells it all:

Acts 10:44-46 (KJV) *44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,*

In Acts 11:1-18, Peter was forced to defend his ministry to Gentiles in such an inspired way which shut up the mouth of gainsayers.

In Acts 13, Paul and Barnabas who were set apart as Apostles by the Church at Antioch were to confront Judaizers again at Antioch of Pisidia where they gave a robust defense of the gospel and rebuked those who resisted the Truth. In Acts 14 Judaizers continued to resist the inclusive gospel of the Kingdom, clinging to the Old Covenant. By Acts 15, the First Jerusalem Council was convened to settle the challenge of Judaizers:

Acts 15:1-2 (KJV) *1 And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. 2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.*

Acts 15:5-22 (KJV) *5 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. 6 And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter. 7 And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. 8 And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; 9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. 10 Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? 11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they. 12 Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them. 13 And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: 14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. 15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, 16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: 17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. 18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. 19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: 20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from*

fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. 21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day. 22 Then pleased it the apostles and elders with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas and Silas, chief men among the brethren:

Despite this ruling, Judaizers were dogged in opposition to the true gospel! Paul engaged with their perversion of truth head on and never gave them space to deceive those committed to his trust.

Galatians 1:1, 7-14 (KJV) *1 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:*

7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. 10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. 11 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. 13 For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: 14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

At a stage, the intensity of the opposition of Judaizers almost rocked Peter out of balance and the Lord used Paul to denounce him in Galatians 2. It was Paul who the Lord used to spiritually announce the transfer of the Gospel Baton from the House of Shem to that of Japheth – because of hardness of heart of his countrymen:

Acts 28:23-28 (KJV) *23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. 24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. 25 And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, 26 Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: 27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. 28 Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.*

#.5: The spirit of anti-Christ was injected into the world in the Alpha Church period!

It is necessary to state with clarity that during the alpha Church, Satan went haywire to create his theologies, ministers, and ministries!

2 Corinthians 11:12-15 (KJV) *12 But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we. 13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. 14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.*

John the Beloved was used by Yeshua to warn His Church with clarity that a massive infiltration of the Church was underway, even during the period of the Alpha Church.

1 John 2:18-29 (KJV) *18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. 19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. 20 But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. 21 I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. 22 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. 23 Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also. 24 Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. 25 And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life. 26 These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. 27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. 28 And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. 29 If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.*

John was used to give saints clear guidelines on how to detect and deal with such satanic agents:

1 John 4:1-5 (KJV) *1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. 4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. 5 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.*

2 John 1:9-11 (KJV) *9 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. 10 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: 11 For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds*

#.6: The 7 Letters from heaven: Interim Assessment of the first Century Church by Yeshua

John the beloved lived longer than all the 12 original Disciples. In his lifetime, the Alpha Church was already crumbling under the weight of various toxic doctrines and lifestyles. By about AD95 – less than 70 years after the Church was birthed at Pentecost, here was the report card as analyzed by no less a person than Yeshua Himself, Head of the Church! Out of 7 Churches, only 2 had a clean bill of health from the Master!

Revelation 2:1-5 (KJV) *1 Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; 2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: 3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. 4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left*

thy first love. 5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

Revelation 2:8-10 (KJV) 8 And unto the angel of the **church in Smyrna** write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; 9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. 10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

Revelation 2:12, 14-16, (KJV) 12 And to the angel of **the church in Pergamos** write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;

14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. 15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate. 16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

Revelation 2:18 (KJV) 18 And unto the angel of **the church in Thyatira** write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass;

Revelation 2:20-23 (KJV) 20 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. 21 And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. 22 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. 23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

Revelation 3:1-2 (KJV) 1 And unto the angel of **the church in Sardis** write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. 2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

Revelation 3:7-10 (KJV) 7 And to the angel of **the church in Philadelphia** write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; 8 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. 9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. 10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

Revelation 3:14-18 (KJV) 14 And unto the angel of **the church of the Laodiceans** write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; 15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. 16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. 17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: 18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

*Full details of the 7 Letters from Heaven: Yeshua's assessment of the Church in the first Century is available for full study. If the Church was infiltrated by Satan within the first 100 years and the hearts of humans were so inclined to embrace lies and distortions of Satan who offered them the Broadway to Hell, it is not difficult to conjecture how much worse it is in the closing chapter of the human age.

Review Questions

1. Please share at least 3 things which struck your heart as you read this chapter.

Chapter 13

The Message and Mission of Yeshua

Part B: Message of Yeshua, Jesus was the Kingdom

Thus far in this Ground-breaking study there has been an intense focus on the Divine Personality of Yeshua Ha Mashiach. It is needful to know Him for Who He is as Emmanuel: Elohim made Flesh for the undertaking of the earthly assignment. With this strong foundation, it is now imperative to examine from the Holy Scriptures under the guidance of Holy Spirit, two inter-related issues: His Message and Mission. When the three Truths – His Person, His Message and His Mission - are properly framed and understood, they become solid pillars upon which to properly situate and understand the other two – His Message and Mission.

Interestingly, the New Covenant offers very graphic details of what He preached and what His Mission is. It is unfortunate the average saint has been programmed not to look at the whole counsel of Scripture in the right context but to rather fit into a denominational interpretation done in the past by those who framed such.

Yeshua, Jesus did not come to establish Christian Religion!

Contrary to what both Religious and Secular education claims, it is important we receive the truth that Yeshua, Jesus never came to establish Christian Religion or a religious organization on earth, just like other human founders of religions of the world.

Religion is a system of worship of a deity or deities based on repeated use of certain phrases of words and practice of rituals inside a prescribed and dedicated place of worship. By practice, Religion is often undertaken from the Soul realm of emotions and feelings and repeated actions called rituals. These are done on prescribed 'holy days' inside designated 'holy sites' or structures/buildings designed to project a certain aura. Because activities done within the buildings are not from the heart, the spirit-man is not necessarily changed or impacted.

Participators of Christian Religion have not been taught that they are the first level Church where Elohim Himself inhabits by His Spirit in their hearts

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (KJV) *19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

They also do not realize the Church is not the building but the saints who have been called out from the world to be the Kingdom of Priests and Kings that Yeshua, Jesus came to inaugurate.

1 Peter 2:9-10 (KJV) *9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; 10 Which in time*

past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

For this reason, Christian Religion offers people identity based on who they are associated with and not who they are on the inside. For this reason, success is measured based on carnal precepts: How many people can be attracted into a building to consume, as it were, the anointing on a person or persons and in the process, are open to exchange of their resources. That is why at its heart, Christian Religion gravitates towards what has been termed the Attendance, Buildings, and Cash or ABC syndrome. With unconverted hearts and un-renewed minds congregating in this way, human and religious empires are built which outwardly look like they are gospel projects. At their core, however, religious organizations are enemies of the Cross.

To even gather regenerated hearts unto a man or woman or around a denominational identity to which they owe primary loyalty rather than to Yeshua is as bad as to gather un-regenerated folks. Even if people are saved and supposedly love the Lord but the doctrines and liturgies (practices) are diametrically opposed to the kingdom pattern established by Yeshua, both leaders and the brethren therein may have a case to answer.

1 Corinthians 3:9-15 (KJV) *9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. 10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; 13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*

Over the years, Babylon has the Church in its grip causing her to downplay the message of The Kingdom and cavort with all manner of dogmas and creeds which produce men and women who are ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of truth. As such people have a form of godliness but lack the power to live right, the world is filled with the sorry spectacle of those who troop to religiously designed buildings on fellowship days to switch their moods and attitudes for say three hours when they do 'Church' only to go back to their vomit.

Examine the Example Yeshua

Amid the darkness of about 400 years in which the heavens over Israel closed and voice of Elohim ceased; just as John the Baptist was conceived by Zacharias and Elizabeth, the Kingdom of heaven invaded the earth realm as Holy Spirit planted Divinity in the womb of Mary for becoming the Second Adam or beginning of a new breed of sons of Elohim in the earth realm. He was incarnated so that in a physical Body, the Sin of Adam and Eve would be atoned for and humankind would be freed from the dominion of Satan. Then as the Second Adam, He would in the fullness of time re-establish and rule in the Kingdom of Elohim in the earth realm. Only Mary, Joseph, Elizabeth, Simon and Anna knew the nature of the personality.

He lived in obscurity for 30 years except for the encounter in the Temple at age 12 and was only manifested to Israel at the baptism of John in Luke 3:23.

Four Critical Instruments

Four critical instruments which Yeshua needed to function optimally in the earth realm and their implications for us who are sons of Elohim like Him are these:

1. A Body planted in the womb of Mary by Holy Spirit

The incarnation was about Yeshua receiving a physical body with which to function in the earth realm as a Human <Psalm 115:16; Hebrews 10:5>. For this to happen, Holy Spirit had to plant Him in the womb of Mary. He was in effect, conceived or born of the Spirit!

Luke 1:34-35 (KJV) *34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? 35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.*

Commentary: Humans need to be born of the Spirit before they can see or enter the Kingdom. This is the point which Yeshua made to Nicodemus, a religious leader who only knew about rituals that were done in the Temple.

John 3:3-8 (KJV) *3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*

No one can be born again until Holy Spirit quickens the previously 'dead'.

Ephesians 2:1 (KJV) *1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;*

2. Process of Time

Between Incarnation of Yeshua and Manifestation of His Public Ministry was the period of time for Process. It was the time Yeshua learned obedience by what He suffered as an 'ordinary human' during those years of obscurity.

Hebrews 5:8 (KJV) *5 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;*

Commentary: In the present dimension of the Kingdom <Kingdom within and Kingdom Nation>, it is appointed that we go through various processes which are peculiar to us as individuals. Just as fire does not destroy but rather brings forth the beauty of Gold, so it is appointed that what we go through will make us better, not bitter – if we abide in Yeshua Who has promised to be with us always until the end of the age (Matthew 28:20)!

None of us should run ahead of Elohim or lag behind Him. What He said He will do shall surely manifest in the fullness of time! He knows where He planted us for the process to be complete.

3. Infilling of Holy Spirit

Though conceived by Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary, Yeshua needed to function in power since His glory was willingly laid aside for the Incarnation to take place. He, therefore, did not start public ministry until Holy Spirit endued Him without measure.

Matthew 3:16 (KJV) *16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:*

Thereafter, all we see is a vessel Who had no personal opinion or direction but consumed with just one over-arching purpose: To do the will of His Father in Heaven and thus ensure manifestation of the Kingdom (John 5:30; John 6:38).

Commentary: As Yeshua was about to ascend to heaven, He commanded the disciples who were raring to go to wait for the promise of the Father – Holy Spirit – Who would activate the grace for ministry and release them into the Harvest. He also made it clear to them there was work to be done by the Kingdom Nation, in power of Holy Spirit before the Manifest Kingdom would appear in the earth realm at His second coming!

Acts 1:6-8 (KJV) *6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? 7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. 8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

It is sad that even up to this closing chapter of the human age, many Christians have allowed dogmas of their denominations to swerve them to reject Holy Spirit and His gifts! In so doing, they announce rejection of a vital instrument of Kingdom Life and Ministry. No wonder the spirit of religion thrives amongst such people!

4. Approval and announcement by the Father

Yeshua did no public ministry until Yahweh, His Father publicly validated and approved Him at the Baptism of John. This announcement was far more potent and useful than opinions of the Religious and Political leaders of the day.

Matthew 3:17 (KJV) *17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

The Father was to further validate Him on the Mount of Transfiguration when Peter suggested that He, Moses and Elijah were somehow of equal stature.

Matthew 17:4-5 (KJV) *4 Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. 5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.*

Commentary: Our lives as citizens of the Kingdom Nation and its Ambassadors will appreciate exponentially when we seek the Certificate of Approval which only Yahweh can give. Trying to win fame or public acclaim with photo-shopped posters and fliers may be pleasing unto the five senses but they do not in any way mean much other than vanity.

1. The Message and Mission

Armed with the four pieces of equipment Yeshua went to work for just three and half years! How He lived; What He did; What He preached and taught and the Commission He committed to trust of disciples should be examples we should emulate as Ambassadors of the Kingdom. We will examine in this sub-section, What Yeshua preached in the 3 and half years of His Public Ministry and the reality that He left His Church (including all of us of all generations in Him) in the earth realm to continue to declare the same message which will produce the same outcomes as He did (emergence of a certain kind of humans) until the Day He returns to consummate the Kingdom in the earth realm! This framework is the only one which keeps saints on the cutting edge of life and ministry which is lived and done on His behalf rather than for Flesh!

Consequence of preaching the gospel of Grace without framework of the Kingdom

One key reason why saints live carelessly, getting caught up in carnal pursuits is that they have neither being systematically taught the full Gospel of the Kingdom nor have they been challenged to give up their Self-nature and its carnal desires to enthrone Yeshua as Sovereign, submitting to His Kingship in every conceivable way. The result is Saints may indeed be born again by hearing the Gospel of Salvation by Grace, yet their lives release no savor of His Presence and Power. In this setting, they are generally unable to occupy their allotments neither are they actively cognizant of the reality that the coming of the King is the key to their ultimate fulfillment. In that setting, they cling to the present, forgetting the things to come. They are therefore unable to seek first the Kingdom!

What Yeshua, Jesus Preached was the gospel of the Kingdom, not rituals of religion!

Using Law of First Mention, let us trace from the Bible what was the first message Yeshua preached and what was at the core of both His ministry and assignment He committed to the trust of the disciples. After Yeshua was baptized by John, Holy Spirit led Him into the wilderness to suffer hunger and be tempted by Satan with the same things Adam and Eve experienced: Lust of the Eyes; Lust of the Flesh and Pride of Life! He Who came as the Second Adam to restore what the first Adam lost (The Kingdom of Elohim in the earth realm) needed to go through this step. He passed with flying colors as Matthew 4:1-11 demonstrates.

As Yeshua went forth towards Israel, His very first sermon echoed what the vessel chosen as His precursor – John the Baptist - had proclaimed to Israel ahead of His manifestation in Matthew 3.

Matthew 4:17-25 (KJV) *17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, **Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.** 18 And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. 19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. 20 And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. 21 And going on from thence, he saw other two*

brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. 22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him. **23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.** 24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them. 25 And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan.

Let us take note of these peculiarities of the very first outing of Yeshua, Jesus:

Matthew 4: Verses 17, 23: Yeshua did not invite the people of Galilee to go and seek Yahweh in the Temple and engage in dead religious works. He rather preached the gospel of the Kingdom! **In so doing, He declared that access into the Kingdom was by repentance!** The reason is simple: The new heart is received by Faith only when the old heart is rejected by genuine repentance! And it is the new heart which is the throne on which Yeshua sits by His Spirit! Let us recall the dialogue of Yeshua with Nicodemus.

John 3:1-7 (KJV) 1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. 3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

Matthew 4:18-22: Yeshua, Jesus did not promise His followers the 'good life' to enjoy. On the other hand, as He explained, those who accept His invitation to be part of the Kingdom were required to forsake all carnal pursuits and humanistic ambitions through death of the Self-nature, so He would become their all in all! He therefore proposed a radical shift of focus from pursuing their own ambitions to that of becoming instruments through which He shows up!

Matthew 16:24-26 (KJV) 24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. 25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. 26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

He later raised Paul the apostle to explain this exchange of our old natures for His Person:

Galatians 2:20 (KJV) 20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

It bears repeating that in preaching the gospel of the Kingdom, Yeshua did not offer a rosy pie in the sky to those who heard Him. He went for the jugular, so to say, to ask people to lay aside their ambitions and get out of their comfort zones to a new focus in which they became vessels for citizens of the coming Kingdom to be brought into the present time.

For the 12 disciples, it was to be the very reason they were created and called: To be fishers of men! They were in effect invited to buy into and make His Mission Statement their Own!

Matthew 4:23-24: We see Yeshua going through Galilee teaching and preaching the gospel of the Kingdom! It was a gospel which called for a radical turnaround from naturality to spirituality hinged on a changed heart, changed loyalty and total shift of focus from the present to the future; from temporal to eternal; from Self to Yeshua!

In preaching this gospel, the power of Holy Spirit was at work demonstrating the reality of Divine approval and the fact that Heaven was invading the earth realm. The Lord gave us commensurate authority to demonstrate the Kingdom with miracles, signs, and wonders!

In other words, the Kingdom was and is to be demonstrated not by mere words but also a display of the power of Elohim and His intervention into the natural realm! The Kingdom preached in the same power of Holy Spirit as Yeshua did have the evidential backing of heaven to shift burdens, heal sicknesses and deliver the oppressed. Yeshua graciously gave us that same authority to continue His mission – until the day He returns.

Luke 9:2 (KJV) *2 And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.*

Luke 10:9 (KJV) *9 And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.*

Mark 16:15-20 (KJV) *15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. 17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. 19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. 20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.*

Acts 1:8 (KJV) *8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

To preach this compelling but unpopular message which demands the death of the old man in Saints so that they can live wholly unto Elohim is an urgent need of the hour that will pave the way for the return of the King of Kings who would consummate the full phase of the Kingdom. The reason is simple: He will return for the benefit of those who gave Him scope of ruler-ship in this present life! Those who would lose control of their lives and trust the beneficence of the King with reckless abandon not having a Plan B in their walk with Elohim have seen the Kingdom and walk in the reality of it! Of such neither height nor depth, nor death nor life nor indeed any other thing can separate them from the love of Elohim in Yeshua as Paul robustly declared in Romans 8:28-39.

Definition

In other words, the primary definition of the Kingdom, as it relates to the individual saint is this: ***A state of life which is submitted to and therefore under the Sovereign Rule of Yeshua, Jesus as the old self-nature with its ambitions and carnal desires is rejected and renounced by the saint who henceforth***

lives as a vessel for expression of His Presence, Power, and fulfilment of His Mission. Yeshua Jesus yearns that this message be preached again all over the world before He returns – to both believers and unbelievers!

Matthew 24:14 (KJV) *14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the entire world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*

We can deduce that one of the reasons why the King has not returned is the Gospel of the Kingdom has not been preached worldwide for a witness yet! This was part of the Grand failing of the first Reformation: Through it, the Gospel of Salvation by Grace was recovered from the thick folds of Roman Catholicism where it was hidden. Unfortunately, the Gospel of the Kingdom was neither re-discovered nor was it declared! To the Omega Church, therefore, is this assignment given: To receive the Truth of the primacy of King Yeshua over our lives, live out the Kingdom life, proclaim and declare the Kingdom with signs and wonders following!

Review Questions

1. Explain what is meant that 'Yeshua, Jesus did not come to establish Christian Religion but to declare and demonstrate the Kingdom'
2. Why is genuine repentance so critical in the Gospel of the Kingdom?
3. What new thing(s) did you learn about the Kingdom in this chapter?

Chapter 14

Centrality of Repentance in the Gospel of the Kingdom

Before we move on, let us obey prompting of Holy Spirit to dwell more on the issue of Repentance. In the New Covenant writings Elohim makes it abundantly clear that Repentance from Sin is firstly the basis of entrance into the Kingdom (through a proper relationship with a Holy Elohim). The whole counsel of Scriptures also teaches a second reality: Repentance is the basis of a continued relationship with Him all through the earthly pilgrimage even unto the point of translation into the world to come at the point of death or the Rapture of saints.

Entrance into the Kingdom

When John the Baptist engaged in the ministry of forerunner, he gave Israel a sneak peek into the Message, Mission, and Method of the Messiah to come. Here was a roughly dressed man whose platform was in the wilderness. He lacked the finesse of the Levites and Priests who dressed in elaborate costumes. With ceremonial rites prescribed in the Torah, they were supposedly made ready to function as mediators between a Holy Elohim and an unholy people inside the elaborately designed Temple Herod built to appease the Hebrews of the day. Offering sacrifices for themselves and the people, they were a special, exclusively male professional caste of priests whose core qualification was that they came from the Tribe of Levi. As Hebrews chapters 7, 8, 9 and 10 shows, that is how the Levitical Order and its rites of ceremonial purity were set up.

Rituals of Religion are performed by rote – without heart engagement. Without any genuine repentance, people can learn rules of religion or denominations practice them repeatedly until they become habits or a lifestyle. In other words, Religion simply leads people to learn certain acceptable behavioral patterns – whether Prayer; Bible Reading; Singing of Praises or other activities which quiets their consciences while they remain in Sin!

Though of that Tribe (his Father Zacharias was a Priest), John repudiated as it were the Levitical Priesthood. He dressed in Carmel's hair, ate locusts and wild honey and made the wilderness his platform of ministry. Where the Levitical priesthood drew people to the Temple to transact with them on behalf of Elohim, John did the exact opposite: He drew them away from the Temple to encounter Elohim in their hearts!

John did this by calling them to Repentance, so they could be forgiven by Elohim. To make sure the people got his message right, John did two more things. The first was to ask them to prove their seriousness of purpose by humbling themselves to be publicly baptized in water! The scenario where Pharisees, Priests, Soldiers and Revenue officials would join the masses in the wilderness and submit to his Baptism in River Jordan is best imagined. It was a solid breakthrough which smashed Religion as then known to pieces. In this regard, John accomplished something that the Levitical Priesthood could not: Got people to rend their hearts, not their garments!

Matthew 3:1-10 (KJV) *1 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, 2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. 3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. 4 And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. 5 Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, 6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. 7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: 9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. 10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.*

The next thing John did was to point them to the Ultimate Solution for Sin. It was not a set of rituals involving animal sacrifices as the Torah required neither was it to do countless rituals. He pointed them to a Person Whose Mission was to take away Sins of the whole world! That One Person was Yeshua Ha Mashiach of Whom Heaven had elected him to be the forerunner with the special privilege to announce Him to Israel in a very public manner where both Yahweh and Holy Spirit gave assent.

Matthew 3:11-17 (KJV) *11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance. but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: 12 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. 13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. 14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? 15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. 16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: 17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

John went on to deliberately decrease from their hearts and minds so that Yeshua would occupy all the available space therein as John 3:22-36. The least any New Covenant Preacher or Teacher can do with people since the days of the ministry of John the Baptist is to emulate him and call people to Repentance decrease in their esteem and introduce them to Yeshua Who should be their all in all!

Acts 19:4 (KJV) *4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.*

Yeshua and Repentance

As we saw in Chapter 13, the very first message of Yeshua in preaching the gospel of the Kingdom was to require hearers to repent of their Sins!

Matthew 4:17 (KJV) *17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

That first message was to run throughout His earthly ministry. The reason is that Repentance is the only way through which a sinner can appropriate the Grace and Mercy of Elohim! Elohim detests pride, cover up and pretense which can be hidden when people engage in rituals.

Proverbs 28:13 (KJV) *13 He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*

Psalms 66:18 (KJV) *18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:*

Isaiah 66:1-2 (KJV) *1 Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? 2 For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.*

One reason the Old Covenant was fulfilled in Yeshua and taken away is it degenerated into carnal ordinances for ceremonial purity while the heart and mind of worshippers remained sinful!

Hebrews 10:1-4 (KJV) *1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. 2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. 3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. 4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.*

Hebrews 10:11-18 (KJV) *11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: 12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; 13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. 14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. **15 Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, 16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; 17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. 18 Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.***

By Repentance, sinners receive Grace to see the Kingdom and enter it spiritually!

In the theology of the Kingdom, repentance ushers the Sinner into the Kingdom which is a Holy one. When a sinner is genuinely convicted by Holy Spirit and shown that the only sacrifice for Sin is that which was paid by Yeshua at the Cross in His Own Blood, there is a release of penitence towards Elohim and Faith in Yeshua. In exchange, Elohim forgives and releases His Grace in Yeshua into the former sinner who is now made righteous (having right standing). In other words, Repentance involves deep godly sorrow for sin and confession of same to Elohim. Because it truly starts by the convicting work of Holy Spirit, repentance is entirely a work of Grace. This takes away any prospect of boasting by those who are thus saved.

Ephesians 2:1-8 (KJV) *1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. **8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:***

Repentance is not just about entrance into the Kingdom but also as a lifestyle!

Just as we enter the Kingdom by Repentance, we are to maintain our relationship with Elohim and other citizens of the kingdom by it! Those who are saved are not to glory in the historical experience.

Repentance should be a living reality of true Kingdom because, in many things, saints may stumble.

When a Saint stumbles on any matter, it is a sign of pride or hardness of heart (and worse still, a seared conscience) not to receive the conviction of Holy Spirit concerning what is done wrong!

John 16:8 (KJV) *8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:*

When we offend other people also, it is also necessary to genuinely confess and repent same to Elohim and repent and offer restitution to them – whether they were aware of it or not. This takes away any foothold Satan may have gained to damage and eventually break the relationship between brethren. When sin is committed against brethren even in simple matters as gossip and such are not promptly dealt with by repentance and restitution, what will result is Gathering of Strangers rather than Fellowship or Communion of Saints! This is a sad lot of many Congregations worldwide.

No saint has a right to refuse to forgive a sin that another repents of. Yeshua put it this way to Peter and us:

Matthew 18:21-35 (KJV) *21 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? 22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven. 23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. 24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. 25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. 26 The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. 27 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. 28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. 29 And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. 30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. 31 So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. 32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: 33 Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? 34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. 35 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.*

The Scope of Repentance

Both Yeshua and other New Testament writers show us the things to be repented of are the broad spectrum of Sin. This includes all Evil Thoughts, Words, Attitudes or Actions which are out of sync with the Character and nature of Elohim.

James 3:2 (KJV) *2 For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.*

If a Saint stumbles therefore, the best course of action is to be open to Holy Spirit for conviction and to genuinely repent of same.

2 Corinthians 7:9-10 (KJV) *9 Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. 10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.*

2 Corinthians 12:21 (KJV) *21 And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.*

2 Timothy 2:25 (KJV) *25 meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;*

In other words, while living holy 24/7 is the default position of all Saints, Repentance should be humbly engaged in whenever there is a stumbling!

1 John 2:1-2 (KJV) *1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

Don't let any Sin linger in heart or mind. Repentance should be prompt and timely. To defer an act of repentance is to give Satan a legal foothold!

New Testament Survey of Repentance

Matthew 9:13 (KJV) *13 But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

Matthew 11:20-21 (KJV) *20 Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: 21 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.*

Matthew 12:41 (KJV) *41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.*

Matthew 12:33-37 (KJV) *33 Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. 34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. 35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. 36 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. 37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.*

Matthew 15:18-20 (KJV) *18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. 19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: 20 These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.*

The Blood of Yeshua has paid the all-sufficient price for blotting out Sin in all its variants so Elohim, Whose eyes are so pure that they cannot behold iniquity will see the penitent through the prism of the Person of the Sinless Yeshua, Who functioned as the Lamb that took them away.

Matthew 21:28-32 (KJV) *28 But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. 29 He answered and said, I will not: **but afterward he repented, and went.** 30 **And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not.** 31 Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. 32 For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.*

Luke 13:1-9 (KJV) *1 There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. 2 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things? 3 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. 4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? 5 **I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.** 6 He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. 7 Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? 8 And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: 9 And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.*

Repentance brings Joy to Heaven as the population of the Family of Elohim and His Kingdom increases!

Luke 15:1-7 (KJV) *1 Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. 2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. 3 And he spake this parable unto them, saying, 4 What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? 5 And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. 6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. 7 **I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.***

Luke 16:19-32 (KJV) *19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: 20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. 25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. 26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. 27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: 28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. 29 Abraham saith unto him,*

They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. 30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. 31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead

The Great Commission had at its heart, preaching about Repentance!

Luke 24:47 (KJV) *47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*

The Alpha Church took Preaching of Repentance seriously!

Acts 2:38 (KJV) *38 Then Peter said unto them, **Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.***

Acts 3:19 (KJV) *19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.*

Acts 5:30-31 (KJV) *30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. 31 Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, **for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.***

Acts 8:20-23 (KJV) *20 But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. 21 Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. **22 Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.** 23 For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.*

Acts 11:18 (KJV) *18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, **Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.***

Acts 17:30 (KJV) *30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; **but now commandeth all men every where to repent:***

Acts 26:20 (KJV) *20 But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, **that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.***

Romans 2:4 (KJV) *4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that **the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?***

2 Peter 3:9 (KJV) *9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; **but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.***

Revelation 2:5 (KJV) *5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, **except thou repent.***

Revelation 2:16 (KJV) *16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.*

Revelation 2:21 (KJV) *21 And I gave her **space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.***

Revelation 2:22 (KJV) *22 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, **except they repent of their deeds.***

Revelation 3:3 (KJV) *3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.*

When Sin is not repented of, it can congeal into a stronghold of evil behavior which leads to Apostasy and the capacity to Sin without being convicted by Holy Spirit because conscience is dead.

1 Timothy 1:19 (KJV) *19 Holding faith, and **a good conscience**; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:*

1 Timothy 4:1-2 (KJV) *1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; **2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;***

Hebrews 6:1-6 (KJV) *1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, 2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. 3 And this will we do, if God permit. **4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, 5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, 6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.***

Repentance is to be made to Yahweh by Faith in what Yeshua did.

Acts 20:21 (KJV) *21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, **repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.***

Why is Repentance vital in Kingdom Life?

A life of repentance is one of deliverance from an evil conscience! The conscience of a Saint needs to be always pure. That purity is compromised whenever an evil thought, impure word or unrighteous attitude or action is committed.

1 Timothy 1:5 (KJV) *5 Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of **a good conscience**, and of faith unfeigned:*

1 Timothy 3:9 (KJV) *9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.*

Acts 23:1 (KJV) *1 And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, **I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.***

Acts 24:16 (KJV) *16 And herein do I exercise myself, **to have always a conscience void to offence toward God, and toward men.***

Sin breaks fellowship with Elohim and fellow humans! Saints should not take chances with eternity because no one knows when the Rapture will occur or when the cold hands of death will grip the mortal life. Through genuine repentance, the saint keeps the conscience pure at all times and thereby live like the Wise Virgins of **Matthew 25:1-13.**

Repentance is the Key to Conversion! No repentance, no Conversion!

Ministers should not be confused with their spiritual gifts, talents, quantity of people who gather unto them or the wealth that is accumulated through ministry. If they do not repent personally of sins and do not preach repentance, they have simply constructed the shortest highway to hell – through the Church.

Romans 11:29 (KJV) *29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.*

We can now see that in taking away genuine repentance for Sin, Satan injected the basis of a pseudo-gospel which in process of time led to the emergence of Christian Religion where people supposedly gather unto Elohim without a vibrant, personal relationship with Him!

Review Questions

1. Please share 5 things you personally learned from this Chapter about Repentance
2. What advice would you give Pastors and Christian Leaders?

Chapter 15

Kingdom Manpower Development Process

In the last two chapters, we dwelt extensively on the foundational concept of Repentance which was the first Message of Yeshua. The reason is simple: Repentance represents the human response to the Grace of Elohim already freely offered for membership of His family and citizenship of His Kingdom in the earth realm! Those who do not respond to His Gracious offer of Salvation remain in their sins.

Such people can engage in various manifestations of Religion by simply 'joining a congregation/ministry' or attaching themselves to a minister. The various activities they engage in will eventually weary the flesh and with time, their lifestyle may negatively impact genuine saints. In other words, if the god of this world blinds their eyes not to see the truth and experience the reality of Salvation, they make themselves Tares of his in the physical Church (2 Corinthians 4:3-4, Matthew 13:26-30, 36-43).

It is for this reason the Lord went out of His way, as it was to simplify access to the Family of Elohim and the Kingdom, so no one would have any excuse:

- **Preaching the Gospel of Salvation by Grace centered entirely on the reality that in Yeshua, Elohim Has in His matchless love fully paid the price for the Sins of hearers and the world.** He, therefore, offers reconciliation freely to any of the natural offspring of Adam who dares to accept. Contrary to modern day Judaizers, this offer is to both Hebrews/Jews and Gentiles, so they become His One New Man on earth and citizens of His One Kingdom. It was this reality that drove Paul to push the limits of world mission in his time.

Romans 1:16-18 (KJV) *16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;*

- **Hearers of the Gospel of Salvation by Grace respond by Faith which is evidenced by Repentance.** Their faith and consequent repentance derive from convicting work of Holy Spirit in their hearts (not the eloquence of preachers). As they believe in their hearts and confess His Lordship with their lips, they are made His new creation and are saved!

Romans 10:8-13 (KJV) *8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

The simplicity of this process (of offer and acceptance) confounds legalistic and religion-bound folks till this day!

Conversion is the immediate goal of Elohim! Those who respond in this way are Converted when it leads them to a total change of heart and mind about Sin and its fleeting pleasures. Holy Spirit makes them see the glory of the righteous life they have been graciously imparted with and they resolve in their hearts not to go back to the Old ways of living. In other words, the Lord is not asking people to repent of one sin or the other they just committed and feel bad about. He is asking them to renounce the old nature and lifestyle in favor of receiving His righteousness (right standing with Elohim on the merit of the finished work of the Cross). Repentance leads to Conversion when sin is seen for what it is: A toxic danger to the soul!

Acts 3:19 (KJV) 19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

Such converts are spiritually speaking, Babies, notwithstanding their biological ages, life experiences, education or other accomplishments and should be seen as such by those who led them to Yeshua or leaders of congregations and ministries they become connected to.

Two tragedies, therefore, played out in the Body of Yeshua, Jesus after the Alpha Church period and have persisted till today despite the first Reformation of 1517:

i. The inability of leaders to make undertaking the Great Commission, which bears fruit of new converts, as a primary reason why they exist. Instead of engaging in the ministry of reconciliation through which the Kingdom is expanded, ministers and ministries invest considerable resources to use the Media and various promotional strategies to attract those who are saved but in other ministries to their own 'unique anointing' and 'problem solving capacities' or 'greater vibrancy of their congregations'. The result is supposed 'Church Growth' without Kingdom expansion as sheep is migrated from congregation to congregation.

Often, this situation arises because it looks like 'hard work' to evangelize consistently and persistently in a Community where many seem to reject the gospel. What ministries and ministers who embrace the final reformation need to do is get back to the Father in prayers; receive wisdom and strategy from Him, wage effective spiritual warfare over souls of humans by subduing ruling Principalities, Powers and demons in charge of darkness in their territories so that with loving hearts they continue persistently, evangelizing from door to door and on streets until the harvest comes by the work of Holy Spirit in hearts of hearers.

Psalms 126:5-6 (KJV) 5 They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. 6 He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

ii. The inability of Congregations to put in place viable Kingdom paradigm for processing the saved. Consequently, the new converts are not deliberately nourished with appropriate spiritual food in the Word. Before long, they are inducted to serve as workers without conversion, sanctification or empowerment by Holy Spirit. Their natural talents and abilities become their passports to higher service

as well as their generosity to the leaders. To retain them, leaders serve them motivational speeches and often because Repentance is not preached, they may remain in Besetting Sin. This leads to stunted growth and abortion of the Divine purpose for their growth.

Hebrews 5:12-14 (KJV) *12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

These developments in the modern-day Church are the fruits of centuries of falling away from the pattern set by Yeshua which the Alpha Church followed with excellent results. Churchianity or Christendom was indeed a poor substitute of Gospel of the Kingdom!

The Kingdom Process of Growth

In the example set by Yeshua, His disciples were processed over a period of 3 and half years of Teaching, Training, Equipping, Activating before they were released or commissioned for service in Acts 2:1-4. That process was first summed up in this passage and expanded to include several benchmarks they attained as they responded to His love to grow in Grace.

Mark 3:13-15 (KJV) *13 And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. 14 And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, 15 And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:*

The Church would be a far better expression of the Kingdom when leaders intentionally direct those they lead to 'be with Yeshua'! This is about getting them to love the Lord, be in intimate relationship with Him, enjoy hearing from Him through study of His Word and prayers and embracing the leadership of Holy Spirit in every aspect of their lives.

Benchmarks of Practical Growth and Development as modelled by Yeshua and the Alpha Church

The relationship of disciples with Yeshua followed a pattern. As it was with them, so has He appointed same for all who are genuinely converted.

1. He called them

Matthew 4:18-22 (KJV) *18 And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. 19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. 20 And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. 21 And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. 22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him*

Commentary: Everyone who is genuinely saved should be regarded as having responded to His Call. Let it be repeated for emphasis, **Repentance is a response to a Divine Call!** To park saved saints at the

garage of Salvation and make them 'Church Members' is an affront on the Lord Who purchased them with His Own Blood!

1. He Taught them the Word – Gospel of the Kingdom

Matthew 4:23 (KJV) *23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.*

Teaching was central to the ministry of Yeshua. The Sermon on the Mount and various Parables were all instruments of Teaching. Through Teaching, the Word was systematically broken down to engage their hearts, minds, attitudes and walk with new Kingdom realities that were pleasing to the Father. For this reason, Peter, James, John and all the others except Judas Iscariot were translated from one level of understanding to the other and in the process, they grew in Grace.

When Yeshua gave them the Great Commission, it was not a charge to gather Crowds of Milk drinking babes with whom to boast about numbers and compare with other Religions as Christendom has done. It was rather a charge to make disciples of all nations through skillful use of the Word to change their hearts and mind-sets:

Matthew 28:18-20 (KJV) *18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

Ministry of the Word for making Disciples is one of the things which the Alpha Church emulated with passion. The Word is a tool employed by Holy Spirit in the process of converting people from Sin to Righteousness:

1 Peter 1:23 (KJV) *23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.*

Discipleship is the process of transiting from believing on Yeshua, Jesus to following His footsteps in all things:

1 Peter 2:21 (KJV) *21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:*

3. They waited on Him, serving without question.

Whatever He wanted, they got it done without asking questions. At this stage, their mind-set was that of Servants who did not necessarily know why they did what they were directed to do. The servile mind-set invariably meant they were not in intimate relationship with Yeshua. This accounts for why, for instance, they marvelled at the miracle of stilling the storm:

Matthew 8:23-27 (KJV) *23 when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him. 24 And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep. 25 And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. 26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye*

fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. 27 But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

4. He announced their transition as they grew in intimacy with Him

After walking with Him and serving for some time, the disciples came to a place where He could entrust them with His heart. It was a new place of intimacy where they could relate as friends with no barrier at all with Him. The basis of this transition was their obedience to make love of one another a central plank of Kingdom life:

John 15:9-15 (KJV) *9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. 10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. 11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. 12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. 13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14 **Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.***

5. They grew to be sons of Elohim as He was a Son and therefore His brethren

The disciples remained friends to whom He committed the mysteries of the Kingdom. When He went to the Cross and paid the Supreme Price for Salvation of humankind and recovery of the Kingdom lost by Adam, the basis of a critical transition to son-ship was made. By conclusion of His redemptive mission, the door was opened for them to become sons of Elohim.

John 20:15-17 (KJV) *15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. 16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. 17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: **but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.***

He now regarded them as brethren because by His sacrifice, as the Ultimate Son, those who received Him could also become the sons of Elohim, just as Adam was before he fell! This was the ultimate mission of Yeshua: To re-populate the earth realm with sons of Elohim again!

Hebrews 2:9-13 (KJV) *9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 10 **For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.** 11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. 13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. 14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

The Alpha Church was filled with sons of Elohim. Son-ship speaks of maturity which arises from a sold-out life which is demonstrated by total submission to the will of Elohim even unto death! Even when

martyrdom called, it was no big deal for them. They took responsibility for filling the earth realm with sons and there was no room for anyone to seek who to use to make money.

6. They became Priests after the Order of Melchizedeck of which He was the High Priest

Just as Yeshua fulfilled the Torah, the Levitical Priesthood became defunct the day He shed His Blood (when the veil ripped apart). In its place, the Gospel of the Kingdom called for a new type of Priesthood of which He Himself is the High Priest.

Hebrews 2:16-18 (KJV) *16 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. 17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. 18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.*

Hebrews 5:4-10 (KJV) *4 And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. 5 So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. 6 As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. 7 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; 8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; 9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; 10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.*

The Alpha Church walked in this Priesthood which was open to all saints and is marked by service to Elohim and humans. It was not a professional priestly caste to which only few people were called to stand between a holy Elohim and an unholy, dormant consumerist laity in a theater-themed ministry.

1 Peter 2:9-12 (KJV) *9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. 11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

When Rome went into an unholy marriage with the larger wing of the Church, one of the first things they did was to jettison the Priesthood after the Order of Melchizedeck. In its place, they revived a form of the Levitical priesthood with its exclusivity to males who spent long years in Seminary, sequestered to learn how to conduct rituals and mesmerize people to submit to their rites. Please share these truths freely in whole or in parts! Let us fill the earth realm with His Truth!

Review Questions

1. Please share 3 things you learnt from this chapter.
2. Based on the 6 Growth and Development process outlined in this lesson, where do you see yourself operating?
3. What will you do with the Truths learnt in this chapter?

Chapter 16

13 Dimensions of Kingdom Culture in the Alpha Church

Yeshua processed and developed the individual saints He called in a bespoke manner through the Words He spoke. Because those words were Spirit and Life, they brought conviction of sins and induced repentance in the hearers. The outcome was they grew in Grace, from one degree of glory to the other!

James and John were so hot tempered and full of anger that Yeshua Himself called them 'sons of Thunder'. They were possessed of a party spirit (denominational) to the degree when they encountered some people who used the Name of Yeshua to do miracles, they sought His permission to shut down their ministry. They even sought His permission to call down fire from heaven to destroy Samaritans for refusing them free access to pass through their City for which Yeshua rebuked them for having another spirit which was different from His. By the time Yeshua was through with James and John, His nature had been so formed in them that James became the first disciple to die for his faith. John became the Apostle of love who suffered much for the sake of Yeshua yet was not crushed.

1. A Culture of Process

The Alpha Church embraced the reality that the Kingdom was one of process. People came in as new born babes who drank milk. As they were fed with the Word under unction of Holy Spirit and held accountable by others, they grew in Grace.

1 Peter 2:1-2 (KJV) *1 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:*

2 Peter 3:18 (KJV) *18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen. A few examples will illustrate this reality:*

The ministry of Paul, leading apostle of his age, was essentially focused on transiting people to the degree they could be presented faultless before the Lord at His appearing.

Galatians 4:19 (KJV) *19 My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,*

2 Corinthians 11:2 (KJV) *2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.*

So also, did the epistle of Jude end on this theme

Jude 1:24 (KJV) *24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,*

2. A Culture of Servant Leadership

For this reason, leaders were charged not to exercise Lordship of the flock but rather to posture as servants on assignment to grow the flock of Yeshua, Jesus of which they had the privilege to be under-shepherds:

1 Peter 5:1-4 (KJV) *1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: 2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*

This was directly in consonance with the way Yeshua demonstrated in John 13:1-17 when He washed feet of the 12 Apostles. He Himself had specifically denounced the way the Levitical Priesthood and its attachments loved self-exaltation and honour:

Matthew 23:5-12 (KJV) *5 But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, 6 And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, 7 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. 8 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. 9 And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. 10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. 11 But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. 12 And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.*

He declared the nature and content of Kingdom Servant leadership as superior to the worldly and religious system of lordship of the flock:

Matthew 20:25-28 (KJV) *25 Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. 26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; 27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: 28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*

As we shall see in a later part, the Religion of Rome reconfigured leadership to be lordship of the flock. Protestants picked up this strain in their DNA and it has persisted till today that leaders are virtual lords of the flock!

3. The Melchizedek Priesthood was to be brought about by the Fivefold

By His sacrifice at Calvary, Yeshua cemented the reality that the Levitical Priesthood was defunct. All the ceremonial dressings, rituals and lordship it projected were mere shadows to signpost He Who became the reality of Holiness, Divine Presence and Power. Yeshua came as the **Chief Apostle or Sent One from heaven**. He was **the Chief Prophet** to whom all others from Abraham and Moses to Malachi pointed to. He was **the Chief Evangelist** Whose principal mission was to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). He was the **Great Shepherd** of the Sheep and Bishop of all souls in Him. He too was the **Chief Rabbi/Teacher** Whose Words were powerful, revealing mind of Yahweh the Father!

As He ascended onto heaven, Yeshua released the Fivefold offices to those in His Earthly Body (Church) so they would release the grace, anointing and capacities in each fold to create a spiritual synergy which would impact and empower His flock to be activated in their destinies and individual priesthods after the Order of Melchizedek. In other words, the ministry of the Fivefold was designed to turn the Body of Yeshua into a living, loving organism of functionally lively body parts.

Ephesians 4:11-16 (KJV) *11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

This was a sure insurance the Church would not be a dry religious organization and external entity. Unfortunately, that was exactly what Rome did: To turn the Church into an 'It' or religious organization people 'joined' or a Building saints 'went into' on certain 'holy days'. This DNA of Rome is still prevalent in the generality of the Protestant Movement unto this day and is one of the reasons why a final reformation is necessary.

Ephesians 5:25-27 (KJV) *25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

The Church is simply the 'called out people' or ekklesia

4. Culture of Simplicity

Yeshua Himself demonstrated simplicity throughout His Incarnate state. He shared accommodation with the disciples, ate with them, ministered to them just as they ministered to Him. He wore the same kind of robes and there was nothing to distinguish him from the apostles. He blended so much with them that Religious leaders bribed Judas Iscariot to positively identify Him with a kiss from a small group of just 12 people! As we know through History, Rome changed this simplicity of leadership and created a global Father figure whose pre-eminence was replicated in Archbishops, Bishops and Parish Priests. The DNA of that same complexity of isolated and elevated leadership who live in a bubble, far removed from the people still flows through the Protestant Movement till today!

5. A Culture of Love and Unity as the One Universal Body or Church of Yeshua

The Alpha Church lived out the instruction of Yeshua that Love, and Unity would be critical benchmarks by which the world would know redeemed them. In other words, when unbelievers see saints loving each other and walking in unity – despite their gender, locations, ages or other human differences, they would know without a shadow of doubt that they belong to Him!

John 13:34-35 (KJV) *34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

John 15:9-14 (KJV) *9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. 10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. 11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. 12 This is*

my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. 13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

John 17:20-21 (KJV) *20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*

No one was expected to walk alone. Led by Holy Spirit, they connected to be members of congregations

Hebrews 10:25 (KJV) *25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

It did not matter their geographical locations or specific congregations they were individually part of, all saints received the 12 Apostles at Jerusalem and Elders thereof as those put in place by Yeshua to whom they were accountable. Even Paul as the leading Apostle and Missionary of his age touched base regularly with the Apostles and made his ministry accountable to them.

Cell groups met in households where they studied the Word, Prayed and broke bread even from the first Day of Pentecost. Yet they were instructed to shun with vehemence the party spirit, not accepting Satan's plan to use loyalty to specific ministers to create parties and sects:

1 Corinthians 3:1-9 (KJV) *1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. 2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. 3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? 4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? 5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? 6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. 8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. 9 For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.*

1 Corinthians 3:21-23 (KJV) *21 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are your's; 22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your's; 23 And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.*

1 Corinthians 4:6-7 (KJV) *6 And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another. 7 For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?*

They saw themselves as part of the Church in the Cities where they were located, even though they met in smaller units. Most Epistles were letters to City Churches. In the final reformation, this degree of unity will return. The key is not in the gathering together under one person, group or network. It is rather to go back to the Word and embrace the whole counsel of Elohim as profitable for doctrine, reproof and instruction in righteousness.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (KJV) *16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

Ephesians 4:1-6 (KJV) *1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

1 Corinthians 1:10 (KJV) *10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

6. In Kingdom Culture, they lived as people called out of the world and no longer of it

Yeshua was very specific in raising an ‘other worldly’ people. Though in the world, His saints were not and cannot be of the world order. The reality of being a called-out people meant they were to live as Holy unto the Lord, separated from the evil influence of Satan who had corrupted the systems of the world. Yeshua interceded with the Father to preserve His own from the spirit of the age and its world system

John 17:9-19 (KJV) *9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. 10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. 11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. 12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.*

The apostle Paul admonished saints to take separation from the world system very seriously

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 (KJV) *14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*

Apostle John was used by Yeshua to explain why: Satan rules the world by the same principles with which he seduced Eve and Adam: Lusts of the Flesh, Lust of the Eyes and Pride of Life.

1 John 2:15-17 (KJV) *15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

Yet this call to separation was not a call to physical isolation! They were not to shut up themselves in Monasteries praying and contemplating all day. It was a call to be Separate spiritually so that they can Engage and infuse worldly culture with culture of the Kingdom to transform those who are responsive from inside out!

Matthew 5:13-16 (KJV) *13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

7. They emulated Yeshua to serve one another with joy, using spiritual gifts and other endowments.

Apart from Love, here was another thing every saint can and should do without difficulty because of the Grace of Elohim powering our lives: Service. Of this service, the greatest equipment was the spiritual gifts all saints are blessed with as well as other endowments.

Romans 12:3-8 (KJV) *3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. 4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.*

1 Corinthians 12:4-7 (KJV) *4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord 6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.*

1 Corinthians 12:25-30 (KJV) *25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. 26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. 27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. 28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? 30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?*

1 Peter 1:10-11 (KJV) *10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

Serving with joy and humility was what Yeshua demonstrated in John 13:1-17

8. The Paradigm of Church for them was School, rather than Theater

They gathered to study the Scriptures, to be accountable for living in accordance to same, for corporate prayers. Brethren lived like students of the Word. In a School paradigm, there is transition from one degree of knowledge and quality of Kingdom life to the other. This made the Teach, Train, Equip, Activate and Release process a fact of life. In this way, the Kingdom was continually replenished with fit for purpose ministers functioning in the priestly order of Melchizedeck based on the gifts and callings Yeshua as High Priest deposited in them.

When the Religion of Rome arose in the 4th Century, it tore this School paradigm out of the consciousness of saints. It replaced it with a Theater paradigm of ministry where saints gathered inside religiously designed buildings to watch performance of rituals by 'Priests' who wore special clothing. In so doing, they became a passive/dormant laity fit to bring money and gifts into the Treasury to sustain the one two or very tiny professional clergy in their Parishes and Dioceses. This Theater paradigm is one of the DNA of Rome which Protestants inherited and have even perfected in the age of Satellite Television, cable and Social media.

9. Sacrifice of life was a given for all saints

It was part of the Culture of the Alpha Church that the beginning of true spiritual life was sacrifice of the Old nature! Yeshua laid out for them in clear language that sacrifice of Self and all they held dear was necessary to live out the new life in Him:

Matthew 16:24-26 (KJV) *24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. 25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. 26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*

Matthew 10:32-39 (KJV) *32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. 33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. 34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. 35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. 36 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. 37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. 39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.*

Their obedience was so complete that laying down their lives for His sake was no big deal! In this way, the fear of death was decisively rooted out, so they could live the Kingdom life. Of the first Apostles, only John died a natural death – after repeated attempts to kill him by the Roman authorities was frustrated including a case where he was reported to have been dropped into a pot of boiling hot oil! Peter was reported to have opted to be crucified upside down out of respect for his Master. Paul joyfully looked forward to his execution which was by decapitation!

2 Timothy 4:6-8 (KJV) *6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of*

righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

10. Surrender of the will to Elohim became lifestyle of saints – even unto death, just like Yeshua

The lives of saints in the alpha Church had another hallmark: With death of the self-nature, their ambitions to gain the world were released in a decisive manner. The result was they surrendered their will to their Master so by His Spirit, they could be directed to live the perfect will of Yahweh in all things! If He wanted any to serve full time – as was with Peter, James and John - so was it. If He wanted any to be in the Market Place and serve there for a season or all time, so was it (Joseph of Arimathea was a business man for instance with a responsibility ordained from heaven to provide grave of Yeshua. For this reason, he had favor of access to Pontius Pilate the Governor). If He wanted any to serve in hybrid ministry (both in pulpit and Market Place ministry) – either for a season or all the time, they simply submitted. So were people like Paul the Apostle.

Yeshua modelled this lifestyle of living for the will of Yahweh while in the Incarnate state:

John 4:34 (KJV) *34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.*

John 5:30 (KJV) *30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.*

John 6:38 (KJV) *38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.*

11. They lived entirely for the World to Come by seeking first the Kingdom

The saints in the Alpha Church knew – without any shadow of doubt – that the present world would pass away one day. They were persuaded that food, clothing, shelter and even need to marry and have children should in no way dominate their consciousness. Those were things they were informed that their heavenly Father knew their need of and would provide according to His will, in His timing. In Matthew 6:19-34, Yeshua told them to seek first His Kingdom and its righteousness, trusting their heavenly Father's wisdom to provide what they needed, not their lusts.

They knew that as Yeshua told Pontus Pilate, His Kingdom was not of this world.

John 18:36-37 (KJV) *36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. 37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.*

They therefore regarded their tenure on earth as a pilgrimage. While alive, they used their gifts and other divine endowments to occupy or do Kingdom Business with the clear understanding that The King would require account when He returns (Luke 19:11-27).

Hebrews 11:13-14 (KJV) *13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.*

1 Peter 2:11 (KJV) *11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;*

Contrary to false promises that preachers make to saints today, the Alpha Church embraced the truth shared by Paul concerning what the present dimension of the Kingdom was not and what it was/is.

Romans 14:17-19 (KJV) *17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. 18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. 19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.*

When the Roman Empire went into union with the larger wing of the Church which had grown weary of persecution and suffering for Yeshua, it offered them an alternative to the Kingdom to come: Present satisfaction with the security, wealth and power of the State. Drinking from that poisoned Chalice, the Church was reconfigured and manifested a DNA of worldliness. The Protestant Reformation did not stop this trend but rather expanded it. In Germany, the Church was established as Lutheranism. In England, it was established as Church of England. This scenario was replicated all over Europe. With time, the Church embraced the partisan politics, economic, social systems of their host nations in a union. That DNA has persisted till today, necessitating the final reformation!

12. A Culture of making the Great Commission the reason why they lived

Left alone, saints in the Alpha Church would have loved to be called to be with the Lord when saved. The number of years they were granted was regarded their lives as a loan for the purpose reconciling the lost to the heavenly Father. For this reason, the Great Commission was their life!

2 Corinthians 5:17-19 (KJV) *17 if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*

They engaged in 'Go Ye' as He commanded and covered the then known world in record time!

Matthew 28:18-20 (KJV) *18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

They saw the gift of Holy Spirit as empowerment for the Great Commission not 'anointing for drawing people to themselves to become denominational folks!

Acts 1:8 (KJV) *8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

When Rome and the larger wing of the Church went into union, this Divine Command to 'Go Ye' was turned to 'Come Here' as into elaborately decorated buildings. That DNA of Rome has persisted even after the Protestant Reformation and is very prominent till this day!

13. A Culture of Holiness was therefore a way of life

For the Alpha Church, Holiness was not a creed or slogan, but the way of life marked by Separation from worldly influences and temporal priorities. Their whole spirit, soul and body were consecrated not to live for self but to be instruments of fulfilling Divine Purpose!

Review Questions

1. Which of these 13 Dimensions of Kingdom Culture ministered most to you or challenged?
2. What will you do with the lessons in this chapter?

Chapter 17

More Dimensions of Kingdom Culture

Sequel to the 13 Dimensions of Kingdom Culture we shared in lesson 16, it is needful to consider additional dimensions of what made the Alpha Church a spectacular expression of the Kingdom in the earth realm. What they believed, the values they lived by, their attitude to life and expectations were radically different and even diametrically opposed to the world around them!

1. They understood sonship as a state of maturity, not a gender issue

Sonship, as was explained in the previous lessons is the state of spiritual maturity in the walk with Elohim by which saints take responsibility for His Kingdom business in the earth realm. Accordingly, it spoke of something beyond gender. It spoke of intimacy in relationship with the Father based on the reality of a new spiritual Identity and position in Yeshua. At the new birth, Holy Spirit sealed the Saints into the Body by taking basic residence in their spirit man.

Galatians 3:26-29 (KJV) *26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

Those who pressed into greater realms of thirst were filled with Holy Spirit – in their spirit-man from where He showed up through spiritual gifts and miraculous manifestations. This why they knew no man after the flesh!

2 Corinthians 5:16 (KJV) *16 Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. They lived in Kingdom Purpose as Ambassadors of King Yeshua.*

In effect, Sisters or born again and spiritually mature women are simply sons of Elohim in female bodies just as spiritually mature brothers are sons of Elohim in male bodies! As explained in the Book, Women in Ministry, the issues Paul addressed in the Ephesian and Corinthian Church was in relation to conduct of married Sisters in public meetings in the season they were coming to the gospel as late starters. (eBook version of Women in Ministry is available for free download at www.kingdombooksclub.org)

2. The Consciousness that they were Ambassadors of the King and the heavenly Kingdom was deep!

This was a remarkable aspect of Kingdom Culture in the Alpha Church. Yeshua their Master saw Himself as a sent one from heaven. He lived as a Person on assignment and therefore very focused. This same mind-set dominated the consciousness of saints in the Alpha Church. The language of their marching orders was clearly ambassadorial in outlook and the gift of Holy Spirit was essentially seen as the heavenly letter of credence they presented to the cities, nations and cultures they encountered:

Acts 1:8 (KJV) *8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

We are sent ones!

3. Theirs was a culture of watchfulness based on full persuasion that return of King Yeshua would be swift and sudden

Yeshua taught them to be expectant of His return and their full rewards would be therein:

Acts 1:8 (KJV) *1 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth*

Matthew 24:36-44 (KJV) *36 But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only 37 But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, 39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. 41 Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. 42 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. 43 But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. 44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.*

The Parable of the Wise Virgins of Matthew 25

All generations of saints lived in consciousness of His imminent return. Because of this, they did not take chances with eternity.

Hebrews 9:27-28 (KJV) *27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: 28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*

4. In Kingdom culture, eternal rewards had greater value than temporal ones.

In Matthew 7:7-11; Yeshua assured disciples and all saints that because Yahweh is their heavenly Father. In Matthew 19:20, Yeshua had promised the disciples that they were assured one hundredfold for anything they suffered on His behalf. While they could enjoy measures of blessings in the present life, saints in the Alpha Church were fully persuaded of the superior rewards in the world to come and used the present life as an investment in it. Their value system was radically differently from the lusts for stuff in the world around them.

5. The Alpha Church lived on the beneficence of Yahweh as a Father Who cared for their holistic wellbeing

Yeshua demonstrated this culture by providing for all their needs – shelter, food and esteem. In teaching them about prayer, He asked the disciples not to make their basic needs an issue just like the Gentiles did

Matthew 6:25-32 (KJV) *25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?*

26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? 27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? 28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: 29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? 31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things

Matthew 7:7-11 (KJV) 7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: 8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. 9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? 10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

The Alpha Church considered it a given that every allocation for the individual assignments/destinies of saints and their Kingdom communities would be released by an all-knowing Father in due season.

2 Peter 1:3 (KJV) 1 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

6. They did not just preach the gospel, they were also the extended hands of the mercy of Elohim, showing compassion on the weak, poor and outcasts of the mainstream

Yeshua practiced compassion as part of His ministry. The anointing was not just for preaching the gospel, it was also for doing good!

Acts 10:38 (KJV) 38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: **who went about doing good**, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

Matthew 14:14-21 (KJV) 14 And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick. 15 And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. 16 But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat. 17 And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes. 18 He said, Bring them hither to me. 19 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. 20 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. 21 And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children.

He commanded them to make compassion a central part of their ministry

Matthew 25:31-40 (KJV) 31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed

me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. 37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

James 1:27 (KJV) *27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.*

7. Grace and Faith constituted fundamental ground norm of Kingdom Culture.

For the Alpha Church, the foundation of Grace and Faith was a defining feature of Kingdom Culture. This was no flaky ‘name-it-and-claim-it’ or ‘positive confession’ faith. It was real and substantive. Salvation was by Grace through Faith. Everything they could do was by His Grace at work in them. By Faith they confronted challenges of life and brought divine intervention to bear on issues of life. The Kind of faith Yeshua taught them was such that Mountains moved when they engaged with challenges.

Mark 11:22-24 (KJV) *22 And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. 23 For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. 24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.*

The way the writer of the Book of Hebrews defined faith and its centrality to Kingdom life was very clear:

Hebrews 11:1, 6 (KJV) *1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. 6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

Hebrews 10:35-39 (KJV) *35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. 36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. 37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. 39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.*

21. Prayer was their life wire

In teaching them about prayer, Yeshua spoke of communion with Elohim that was unceasing and persistent. This led the Alpha Church to develop regular communication with Elohim concerning every issue and challenge of life. Their prayers were marked by submission to the perfect will of Elohim, just as He taught them:

Matthew 6:10 (KJV) *10 Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*

- Divine Interventions when they prayed

They learnt to praise Him in all things and gave thanksgiving as indicator of their faith expectations that what they prayed for was 'done deal'!

Philippians 4:4-6 (KJV) *4 Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. 5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. 6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God*

22. A Culture of healthy, Excellent attitude to life challenges

As someone once said, 'Attitude determines altitude'. In this, the disciples displayed a healthy and positive attitude to all challenges they encountered.

Acts 4:23-31 (KJV) *23 And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. 24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: 25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? 26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. 27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, 28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. 29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, 30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. 31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.*

For this reason, not a few people wondered what made them 'tick'. In seeking to know the reason for the hope in them, opportunities were presented for them to share the testimony of Yeshua and love of the heavenly Father.

23. Miracles, Signs -and Wonders followed their ministries

The culture of the Kingdom was one in which heaven normally intervened in affairs of humans. Mark 16:15-20

The reality of the miraculous was embraced to the degree that the Shadows of Peter became point of contact for healing. In the same way, Hand kerchiefs from the body of Paul were points of contact for miraculous healing.

Acts 5:14-16 (KJV) *14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.) 15 Inasmuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. 16 There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.*

24. The lived in the triple Principles of Liberty in the Spirit; Divine Order by Holy Spirit and Submission to Authority of Leaders placed in their lives

Acts 19:11-12 (KJV) *11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: 12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.*

25. It was a culture of a healthy balance between Liberty and Order

Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. This was not the negative form of liberty which breeds chaos and confusion. True liberty is one in which Holy Spirit creates the enabling atmosphere for all saints to discover, pursue and fulfil their destinies and life assignments without negative constraints.

2 Corinthians 3:17 (KJV) *17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*

At the same time, Holy Spirit is Spirit of Order! When there is order, Grace is not squandered or held in vain. Where there is Order, the liberty of a saint will not constrain manifestation of destinies of others.

To maintain this healthy balance of liberty and Order are Authorities Yeshua placed in His Church as under-shepherds. As various scriptures reveal, their assignment is for good not evil. Those who discern, embrace and submit to authorities Elohim set in their midst often find it easier to breakthrough than those who live like flotsam and jetsam, always out of order.

Romans 13:1-7 (KJV) *1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. 2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: 4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. 5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. 6 For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. 7 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.*

Hebrews 13:7, 17 (KJV) *7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation 17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.*

26. Disorder was abhorred and decisively dealt with

In the culture of the Alpha Church all kinds of disorder met with adequate correction or discipline.

For Gossips who tear apart fellowships with their poisonous tongues, here is the recommended discipline:

Romans 16:17-18 (KJV) *17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. 18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.*

For those bound by strongholds of immorality, the sword of authority could be heavy:

1 Corinthians 5:1-5 (KJV) *1 It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. 2 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. 3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, 4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

27. No room for amusements and worldly entertainment

The saints were just so focused on Kingdom business and consumed with seal of the Lord that there just was no room for worldly amusements!

2 Timothy 2:4 (KJV) *4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.*

The idea of opening gates of their beings to 'consume' spectacles which would pollute their souls with worldly contamination was not something they were willing to risk!

Psalms 1:1-3 (KJV) *1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.*

Review Questions

1. Please share which of these 14 additional dimensions of Kingdom Culture which address some areas of your life or ministry?

Chapter 18

Understanding the New Covenant – Part 1

Part B: Extracts from Constitution of the Kingdom

The Kingdom Yeshua preached about and taught His disciples for 3 and half years has been distorted by the enemy to mean something else that is more important than Himself. Not a few saints have bought this lie and in the process, denied Yeshua the pre-eminence He so rightly deserves!

2 Peter 2:1 (KJV) *1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.*

The Kingdom Yeshua taught had three inter-related themes and components:

In preaching and Teaching of the Kingdom, Yeshua spoke of it in three terms which represent various facets of the same reality: What it meant to the individual saint (Kingdom within or now); what it meant for the collective or Kingdom Community of saints who believe on Him (Kingdom Nation) and how both morph into the future when He returns to the earth realm (Kingdom Come). Let us briefly examine these themes:

1. Kingdom Now or Kingdom within – this happens when people exchange their old sinful nature for the righteousness of Elohim in Yeshua. The Kingdom is received in the heart or spirit-man which is within the newly minted saint and is lived on this side of eternity.

Luke 17:21 (KJV) *21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.*

Kingdom now is the realm of life lived totally under the sovereign rule of Yeshua. This describes a state of life where there is a conscious vacating of the seat of the heart for Him alone to occupy. In this way, the will – which is the greatest expression of our humanity is willingly laid down so that Holy Spirit can lead in all things. That is why one of the critical proof of son-ship is described this way:

Romans 8:14 (KJV) *14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*

They are primarily citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven and every single day is lived as a step in the journey of preparation for the world to come.

Philippians 3:20-21 (KJV) *20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*

To this end all their days in the earth realm on this side of eternity and all endowments including spiritual gifts, life, education, jobs/businesses, houses, finances and other blessings are considered as assets from the King with which to 'occupy' or do Kingdom Business on His behalf.

Luke 19:11-13 (KJV) *11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. 12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. 13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.*

2. Kingdom Nation – this describes all saints who have submitted to His sovereign rule and therefore embrace Kingdom Culture as their lifestyle.

Yeshua taught them about the need to be united – irrespective of their ages, gender, locations or human leaders who were used to bring them to Him. In John 17, He earnestly prayed to the Father to keep them united. This is why the Royal Priesthood of saints called out of the world and consecrated to Elohim collectively make up the Kingdom nation – separate and distinct from the kingdoms of this world under the ruler-ship of Satan (2 Corinthians 4:3-4).

1 Peter 2:9-12 (KJV) *9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. 11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

Paul described the Body as the One New Man of Yeshua which arises from breaking down of the partitions of racial culture between Hebrews/Jews and Gentiles.

Ephesians 2:11-19 (KJV) *11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; 12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. 14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: 17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. 18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. 19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;*

Ephesians 3:6 (KJV) *6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: 7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. 8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; 9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ*

In the same way, we are not to allow our natural races/skin color, geographical locations or congregational homes and ministers we connected with to becloud our sense of unity with all saints world-wide! We need to mature in Him to the point that we can feel at home with any group of saints who are truly worshipping the Father in Spirit and in truth. We need to be delivered from the bondage

of labels and sectarianism (based on our relationship with specific leaders) since they trap saints in immaturity as Paul warned the Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 3:3-7 (KJV) *3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? 4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? 5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? 6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.*

3. Kingdom Come – this is the Crown Jewel of the Kingdom message. It describes the phase of life in the earth realm when Yeshua returns to rule and reign. It is the time when seating on His Throne in Jerusalem as world Capital, He will rule the world in righteousness. The Peace and Joy which has eluded this present world - wrecked by wars, terrorism, fears and all manner of crises - will become a universal reality.

In a real sense, it will represent the culmination of the assignment of Yeshua: To reveal what the earth realm would have been like if Adam and Eve had not fallen for the seductions of Satan.

Isaiah 65:25 (KJV) *25 The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.*

This will be a period of 1000 years when Satan is bound so that there is no evil influence on humanity or the earth itself:

Revelations 20:1-6 (KJV) *1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, 3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. 4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*

Two Golden Threads

From Genesis to the Book of Revelation, two Golden threads run throughout the Holy Scriptures. The first is that the Kingdom Adam and Eve lost in Eden will be recovered in the earth realm one day. The second is that from the Day the Seed of the Woman was announced as the Ultimate Solution, all of the Holy Scriptures speak about Yeshua Ha Mashiach, Jesus the Messiah.

It is in this regard all the Torah was a School Master to keep Israel and the world in a holding brief until He appeared.

Galatians 3:13-24 (KJV) *13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: 14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. 15 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. 16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. 17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. 18 For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. 19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. 21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. 22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. 26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*

All the religious rites of Judaism – including the Holy Feasts and rituals were shadows of the reality to come when He appeared on the world scene.

Hebrews 10:1-4 (KJV) *1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. 2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. 3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. 4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.*

In the year 2016, the Lord blessed the Omega Church with a ground-breaking download from the Throne of Grace titled Constitution of the Kingdom. We are impressed that it is needful to use some extended lessons to review some of the expositions in Part E of that download. Some of the truths already shared in this Course may be repeated by as Paul said, it is a very safe thing to do in the process of learning.

Philippians 3:1 (KJV) *1 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.*

The reason why we are led to study this previous work is that it presents a fairly comprehensive overview of the New Covenant which Yeshua inaugurated in the earth realm with His Blood. The New Covenant establishes the reality of both Kingdom Now and Kingdom Nation because they are squarely based on it. The New Covenant also establishes the Kingdom to Come or Manifest Kingdom. This is because only those who are in the New Covenant relationship with Elohim can be part of the Manifest Kingdom of Yeshua in the world to come and live forever with Him in endless eternity. An understanding of the Kingdom therefore will be incomplete without first understanding the New Covenant.

Preamble to Part E of Constitution of the Kingdom: The New Covenant

The New Covenant is the perfect layout of the better approach through which Elohim wants His lost humans to come into and sustain a vibrant personal relationship with Him based on His Gracious provision of a perfect sacrifice for Sin which is Yeshua, Jesus.

The New Covenant is a perfect one whereas the Old was imperfect. It is a spiritual one whereas the Old was largely made up of carnal ordinances. Where the blood of animals was used to seal the Old, the Blood of Elohim made flesh in Yeshua, Jesus seals the New.

Because of the influence of Replacement Theology, the New Covenant is subtly cast as a Gentile construct or made for Gentiles whereas the Old was for Hebrews/Jews. Nothing could be further from the Truth! The New Covenant is the more perfect way Elohim set out for Hebrews to live and walk in His righteousness, based on better promises

Hebrews 8:1-13 (KJV) *1 Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; 2 A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. 3 For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. 4 For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: 5 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. 6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. 8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: 9 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. 10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: 11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. 12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. 13 In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.*

Hebrews 9:1-14 (KJV) *1 Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. 2 For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. 3 And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; 4 Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; 5 And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. 6 Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. 7 But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: 8 The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: 9 Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; 10 Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. 11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and*

more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; 12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. 13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: 14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? **15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.** 16 For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. 17 For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. 18 Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. 19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, 20 Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. 21 Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. 22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. 23 It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: 25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; 26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Hebrews 10:1-17 (KJV) 1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. 2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. 3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. 4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. 5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: 6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. 7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. 8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; 9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. 10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. 11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: 12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; 13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. 14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. 15 Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, 16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; 17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. 18 Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

The original plan of Elohim in giving the Torah was that through it, Israel would represent Him in the earth realm as a Kingdom of Priests (Exodus 19:5-6). Unfortunately, because of hardness of heart and unbelief, the Torah was turned into a tool of sustaining a religious system. The New Covenant became necessary after Elohim determined that the Torah had served out the function of a School Master or Tutor.

Galatians 3:10-25 (KJV) 10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. 11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. 12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. 13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: 14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. 15 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. 16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. 17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. 18 For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. 19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. 21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. 22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

Galatians 4:4-6 (KJV) 4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

The need to reveal Himself in a more intimate way was therefore consummated by the Incarnation of Yeshua. In effect, Elohim determined that instead of worshipping Him from afar, He wanted communion with Him based on a very intimate relationship – a heart to Heart relationship which was spiritual!

Basis of the New Covenant

The Basis of the New Covenant is the Incarnation of Elohim in the form of Yeshua Ha Mashiach, Jesus the Messiah to accomplish what the Torah was clearly incapable of doing: give humans right standing with Yahweh, our heavenly Father on the merit of His Shed Blood. This was to fulfil three sets of prophecies:

a. Prophecy indicating that Elohim knew Adam and Eve would lose the Kingdom and a Perfect Sacrifice to atone for their Sin needed to be of Divine Origin. In His Omniscience, Elohim knew this truth even before creating Adam and Eve!

Revelation 13:8 (KJV) 8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

b. Prophecy which came forth when Adam and Eve sinned. It is significant that Elohim released the Prophecy of Redemption via Seed of the Woman even before He pronounced punishment for their Sin.

Genesis 3:15 (KJV) 15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

c. Prophecies that were subsequently released concerning the Incarnation of He Who would be the Messiah.

Isaiah 7:14-15 (KJV) *14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. 15 Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.*

Isaiah 9:6-7 (KJV) *6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called **Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.** 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*

The very idea of Elohim made Flesh is so mind boggling that multitudes – both Hebrews/Jews and Gentiles stumble as they try to wrestle with the concept with their natural minds. Because the natural mind does not normally receive the things of the Spirit, they reject what Elohim graciously releases to them in Love and go about to construct various religious ways of attaining to righteousness.

1 Corinthians 2:14 (KJV) *14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

This is the basis of all religions in the earth realm: Trying to construct religious systems of trying to find and please Elohim while rejecting the only pathway He ordained for relationship!

Romans 10:1-4 (KJV) *1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. 2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.*

About the New Covenant

The New Covenant is structured in a way to reveal the full mind of Elohim. But the heart condition of people determines how much of His Person and Will they can see and receive

Titus 1:15-16 (KJV) *15 Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. 16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate*

Psalms 18:24-26 (KJV) *24 Therefore hath the Lord recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his eyesight. 25 With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright; 26 With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward.*

It is for this reason that the Lord wants saints and especially those who are called to minister to yield themselves to diligent study of the Word under unction of Holy Spirit in order to truly understand the New Covenant.

2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV) *15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

When people do not truly study the Word, but try to teach it, they jeopardize the spirituality of those who hear them by giving them milk of the word which keeps them in arrested babyhood syndrome!

Hebrews 5:12-14 (KJV) *12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

It is truly a matter of real concern that humans invest years and considerable resources to learn different trades and be certified professionals in different fields of endeavour. Unfortunately, when it comes to the spiritual calling of ministry, saints casually claim to be called and dash off into same. While it is good to respond to the call, it is obviously necessary to then submit to a process of studying the very basis of true Ministry: understanding of the New Covenant. When study is neglected, human eloquence can be used to substitute need to feed saints the pure Word, rightly divided. When faith of saints stands on such sandy foundations, they are in grave danger of being un-prepared for the storms that will invariably rise up in future.

Matthew 7:26-27 (KJV) *26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.*

Worse still, saints they teach, or lead can live in blissful ignorance and thereby be in jeopardy!

Hosea 4:6 (KJV) *6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.*

Unfortunately, among those who see the need to be trained, the vast majority end up in Denominational Seminaries where various distortions of truth have already taken place. In that case, they learn a part of the truth or a perspective based on what a human or group of humans defined for followers several years ago.

We trust Holy Spirit to systematically unveil the New Covenant to us in a way that we can understand the scope, breadth and height of the glorious Grace of Elohim freely given to us and all humanity in the Person and assignment of Yeshua Ha Mashiach, Jesus the Messiah and receive same by Faith, with grateful hearts. Thus empowered, we trust Him to use us to liberate captives by simply releasing the Truth that is already made flesh in us!

John 8:32 (KJV) *32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

Review Questions

1. Please share in clear, concise language, at least 5 specific things you understood from this preamble to the New Covenant

Chapter 19

Strategic Framework of the New Covenant

To properly understand the New Covenant, we need to first receive a revelation of its overarching Strategic Framework. This is because the New Covenant is one single and indivisible revelation which has various parts that fit into each other. To understand some part and not study and understand other parts will lead to a deficit of knowledge and understanding of the full Covenant.

Even in documenting the life and times of the King, even Yeshua in His Incarnate state, Holy Spirit inspired four different vessels who received and wrote some special details and angle of His biography committed to their trust. While each of the four gospels are good in themselves, a fuller understanding of Him will be gained when all accounts are studied and understood in the right context.

A systematic approach in studying and understanding of the entire texts which make up the New Covenant becomes imperative. Unfortunately, Satan and the Flesh often hinder saints from this approach.

Danger of Cherry-picking the New Covenant

The generally 'popular' approach which leads to all degrees of error is to cherry pick nice sounding passages within bigger texts and use same to advocate a pre-determined purpose while ignoring other truths within the same passages.

A typical example is Ephesians Chapter 4. If there is any text containing a simple, uncomplicated and actionable revelation of the Governmental/leadership system of the true Kingdom Church and how it should operate as a living, loving organism connected to Yeshua the Head and each other and sustained by what every joint supply based on spiritual gifts released to all who are redeemed, it is the section found in Ephesians 4:7-16. Unfortunately, this section is conveniently overlooked, glossed over or ignored as if it is arcane.

Almost all preachers of all denominations will preach, teach and expound on Ephesians 4 Verses 1-6 to champion the need of unity within their denominations or ministries. Very few would preach and teach those 6 verses within the context they were given: to advocate unity of all saints, irrespective of their races, ethnicities, gender, ages, locations, background or other natural limitations. Very few preachers and teachers would tie it up with John 17 as a call to universal unity of the Body of Yeshua. In effect, a Minister would conveniently use Ephesians 4:1-6 to preach and teach unity of his/her 'own church' but feel no remorse, shame or conviction in working aggressively against unity with other ministers and saints in the same compound, community, city, county, state or Nation!

In the same way, many preachers and teachers use Ephesians 4 verses 17-32 extensively to instruct saints on godly living because they speak of virtues which will keep each congregation healthy and strong.

Unfortunately, Orthodox Protestant Churches including Evangelicals and free-for-all Pentecostals will not touch Ephesians 4 verses 7-16 with a long pole. To compound matters, some denominations which have rejected Holy Spirit and Spiritual gifts as functional in this day, and age regard those portions of the same chapter as obsolete. The point is that when saints grow up in denominations whose foundations are rejection or negation of some basic truths of the New Covenant, they are already in danger of being fed cherry picked versions of the Truth. Foundationally, they are thus raised in error.

Psalms 11:3 (KJV) *3 If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?*

The same is true of modern day Pentecostal and Charismatic preachers who have rejected the discipline of prayerful and systematic study of the Holy Scriptures, relying on their own intuitions and 'sensing' of what the people who flock to them 'need to succeed' and 'achieve their 'dreams, aspirations and ambitions', they pluck passages indiscriminately and hurl at their followers as fire crackers to excite their souls. In so doing, they draw the hearts of their follower-fans away from the King and His Full Kingdom into a soul tie with themselves and their denominations/personal ministries. In this Nimrodic order of Charismatic witchcraft, the followers are basically bewitched to believe every word spoken by the preachers. Because faith works as a principle, they may seem to 'receive the blessings' promised because they fervently believe, act on and confess what they were told. In this way, the word of Elohim is handled deceitfully; no wonder multitudes go to 'Church' regularly but do not know or walk in Truth!

2 Corinthians 4:1-2 (KJV) *1 therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; 2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, **not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully**; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.*

2 Timothy 3:7 (KJV) *7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

Weakness of the Theater Paradigm of Ministry: Outcome is Works of the Flesh!

This anomaly is actively fed by a faulty paradigm of ministry called the Theater perspective. The theater perspective is when people flock, as a dormant laity, into a specific building on certain 'holy days' to 'watch a performance' by a 'star'. The star preacher or teacher is the object of all attention and affection. Dressing the part of a 'successful' personality who is schooled in the fine art of Marketing and Public Relations, their job is seen to inspire the congregation to believe the vision for their lives and pump up their faith to believe whatever is said from the pulpit without any cross checking of the Scriptures. Excited, they empty their wallets in tithes and offerings to 'activate' the promises they receive personally. They leave the building as co-dependents who are not converted or transformed within.

In this way, they are ill equipped to face a world where they are encouraged to engage in the same rat race with those who do not believe. They compromise, just like others, sin when the flesh calls and have no personal assurance of Salvation other than their physical exertions inside the 'Church building' and entry in tithe records. In pursuing their ambitions for success, everything takes second place, including Elohim and the Kingdom. They speak the language, act the part, speak in tongues but really, they are professors, rather than possessors of the Kingdom.

Unfortunately, because Yeshua was not enthroned as King in their hearts, but rather their Self-nature was their god, such assumed believers may discover, only too late, that while they seemed to have gained the good of this world and even enjoyed temporal pleasure, eternal life was lost because their spiritual lives were built on sinking sand!

Matthew 7:26-27 (KJV) *26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.*

They profess to know Him but in every good work they deny Him! With flesh enthroned, their works accumulate until the day they are translated, holding onto a false hope that they will 'make it' into eternity. But the Holy Scriptures reveal an opposite reality!

Titus 1:16 (KJV) *16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.*

1 Corinthians 6:9-11(KJV) *9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

Galatians 5:16-21 (KJV) *16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. 18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*

Why the School Paradigm is superior

The proper paradigm in which the New Covenant can be properly understood and lived out is the School paradigm. This is one in which the whole Congregation is taken through the Whole Constitution of the Kingdom in a systematic way so that all saints can understand the aspects of the mysteries of Elohim and present state of the Kingdom which are revealed.

Deuteronomy 29:29 (KJV) *29 The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.*

This is the pathway for saints to walk in intimate personal relationship with Elohim. This would entail embracing the reality of Yahweh as Abba or personal Father; Yeshua as personal King for whom the Throne of the heart should be vacated to reign as Sovereign (Romans 12:1-2, Galatians 2:20); and Holy Spirit as He Who teaches and guides us in all things, leading us into perfect will of the Father in all things (Romans 8:12-16). The school paradigm is one in which the Teaching Ministry is pre-eminently positioned as ordained to bring the entire Body to perfection:

Ephesians 5:25-27 (KJV) *25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

In practical terms, this turns the life of saints around where instead of pursuing ambitions, they die to self and live for He Who redeemed them with His Precious Blood. The life they live going forward is no longer the old vain life, but they rather become vessels of honour through whom the King manifests His Nature, Presence and Power! In practical terms, the Kingdom is within them! In this sense:

- They seek first the Kingdom or make it their priority by occupying with every gift and calling as commanded by the King (Matthew 6:19-34; Luke 19:11-27);
- Reconciling the Lost to the Father (2 Corinthians 5:17-21);
- Making disciples of all humans appointed to Salvation (Matthew 28:18-20);
- These saints graduate from Babyhood and its selfish impulses which is partly fueled by thirst for milk and attention. They grow in intimacy with their King to become His friends to whom He bares His heart regularly, just as Yeshua did with the twelve in John 15:12-15. They are not static in that state but rather press in to mature as sons of Elohim, becoming that for which Yeshua was incarnated: To re-populate the earth realm with sons of Elohim whose lives run opposite to their contemporaries as we saw in Hebrews 2:10 previously cited. They minister as Priesthood of Melchizedeck!

The Kingdom and Law of Process in the New Covenant

Elohim could have restored the Kingdom Adam lost in one moment, day, month, year or decade. But just like Creation, He employed the Law of Process. It took about thousands of years from the Fall of Adam and Eve and the full ministry of the appointed School Master, the Torah before the fullness of time when Yeshua was Incarnated or made human.

Galatians 4:3-5 (KJV) *3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: 4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.*

He could have restored the Kingdom riding on a Chariot from heaven to chase out forces of Imperial Rome as the Hebrews/Jews of His day expected. But heaven adopted a long process which is almost 2000 years! Only the Father knows when the next phase of the restoration of the Kingdom will kick in as Yeshua hinted in Matthew 24:36. It is for this reason that all citizens of the Kingdom are supposed to watch, pray and wait for!

The Strategic Process of restoration of the Kingdom

The entire New Covenant offers us this strategic process in restoration of the Kingdom lost by Adam and Eve in Genesis chapter 3. That restoration hinged on one reality: Emmanuel - Elohim becoming like humans in Yeshua to function as the Messiah or Savior.

In real terms, Yeshua is the center and circumference of the Blessed Kingdom of Elohim! Any theology so called - such as the one popularized by a brother in the Caribbean basin - which preaches a Jesus Who is a subsidiary to the Kingdom is out of order!

The real Yeshua, Jesus is all in all as express image of the Father (Hebrews 1:1-3) and only access to the Father (John 14:6).

The Overall Process in Bullet point

The New Covenant contains all these truths which combine to be the process of restoration of the Kingdom in the earth realm and consummation of all things.

1. Process of the Incarnation (Matthew 1,2; Luke 1)
 - Angelic Announcement of Implantation of Holy Seed in Mary
 - Birth of Emmanuel (Matthew 2)
2. Growth in obscurity for 30 years as a normal human
3. Manifestation and affirmation by Yahweh the Father and Holy Spirit at Baptism of John (Luke 3 21-23)
4. Temptation in the Wilderness by Satan to gain victory over the world – Lust of the Flesh; Lust of the eyes and Pride of Life (Matthew 4:1-11)
5. Teaching and preaching ministry for 3 and half years to expound the Doctrines of the Kingdom concerning appointed lifestyle of those who believe (4 Gospels) and what will happen when He returns.
6. Demonstrating the power of the Kingdom through multiple signs, wonders and miracles (Recorded in the 4 Gospels)
7. His Passion and Death on the Cross as Lamb of Elohim Who took away legal hold of Satan over all who would believe (The Gospels)
8. His Resurrection which proved His Divinity. (The Gospels; 1 Corinthians 15)
9. His post resurrection life for 40 days in the earth realm (John 20; 21; Acts 1:1-8)
10. His Ascension into Heaven to be exalted so that promises of the Father can be accessed and effected in His Name (Acts 1:9-11; Philippians 2:5-11)
11. The Alpha Church – which was driven mainly by people of Hebraic/Jewish stock and how they totally paid the price to live like their King and fervently preached the message of the Kingdom. It is noteworthy that except John who lived to a ‘ripe old age’, all the other Apostles were martyred.
12. Times of Gentiles. Warnings of what would happen to the Church in the latter years, when Hebrews/Jews would close-up and reject the Truth, saints of Gentile stock sought to re-define the Gospel of the Kingdom and use it to further nationalistic, cultural, or personal interests (Acts 28:25-28; Romans 9, 10, 11).

13. Things which should constitute priorities of the elect remnant, so the Bride would be ready for the King on that day and time only the Father knows (Acts 1:5-8; Luke 19:11-27).
14. Two Kingdoms and worlds existing on one earth: The Kingdom of Elohim and the kingdom of Satan. The difference between Kingdom Life and worldly life; How Kingdom Life is life of King Yeshua manifesting through saints as His assigns in the earth realm. In other words, it is all of Grace! We are saved by Grace through Faith; sustained by Grace as we continue living by Faith. As we abide in Him, grace flows (John 15). Those who continue to walk in Faith are transitioned into eternity on the merit of His Grace.
15. Resurrection of Dead in Yeshua/The Catching away of saints (Rapture) to experience three things: Judgement Seat of Yeshua; Enjoy life in Heaven for a brief space of time; Marriage Supper of the Lamb. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 15:50-58). This rapture is preceded by Resurrection of those who died in Yeshua over the years.
16. Life in the earth realm after saints are taken away – reign of the anti-Christ amid gross darkness of iniquity. Diligent students of the Holy Scriptures will know the process leading to emergence of this coming world ruler and the type of economic, social and political system which he will preside over. Yet, contrary to what many religious texts teach, many saints who missed the rapture will be saved only that it would be accompanied by gross suffering and martyrdom. (Matthew 24; 2 Thessalonians 2; Revelations 20:1-6)
17. Return of King Yeshua with the glorified saints to vanquish armies of the anti-Christ massed against Israel seeking to destroy her (Jude 1:14-15). Yeshua, Who is also King of the Hebrews/Jews will save them by defeating the world armies at Battle of Armageddon (Revelation 19).
18. The Manifest Kingdom will be established in the earth realm with Yeshua reigning physically from Jerusalem. The remnant who overcame till the end and who returned with Him will be co-heirs and co-rulers of the Kingdom with Him. Contrary to much religious perspectives, the return of Yeshua will not mean destruction of the world. Those living on earth will get a free pass into the Manifest Kingdom and the saints serving as Priests and Kings will teach them principles of the Kingdom. Some will repent genuinely while others will pretend to have repented. Before this period is activated, Satan will be bound for 1000 years. There will be no evil influence on the world. This will make room for universal Righteousness, Peace and Joy. (Revelation 20:1-6).
19. At end of 1000 years, Satan would be loosed for a season. This will afford him the opportunity to tempt those who were given a free pass into the manifest Kingdom. Sadly, after enjoying the rule of Yeshua and enjoying all the blessings, those whose hearts were not converted will still fall for solicitation of Satan and will be condemned to eternal damnation with him. (Revelation 20:7-9).
20. Terrible Judgements: Satan finally consigned to Lake of fire permanently. (Revelation 20: 10) The Great White Throne Judgement where all sinners of all ages will meet their Waterloo and be condemned to eternal torment. This includes all so-called Christians who lived in sin and did not repent before they died (Revelation 20:11-15).

21. Destruction of the Old earth and the first and second heavens and seas (Revelation 20:11).

22. The new Heavens and earth herald eternity with Elohim by the saints triumphant (Revelations 21, 22). Let us note that at this point, the Kingdom which was restored by Yeshua is fulfilled. He hands over all things to the Father Who becomes all in all. At this stage of life, the Mystery of Elohim is accomplished as stated in Revelation 10:7.

One of the saddest realities of life is that many saints have allowed false doctrines to de-sensitize and dull their spiritual senses! There is a strange type of amnesia concerning things to come. Let us take heed to this warning at close of the New Covenant:

Revelations 22:10-21 (KJV) *10 And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. 11 He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. 12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. 13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. 14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. 15 For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. 16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. 17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. 18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: 19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. 20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. 21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*

Those who understand this frame work will live every day in the light of eternity, occupying their allotments. They are in no doubt of two possibilities

- They will finish their mortal course and be translated by death to await sounding of the Trumpet which will lead to resurrection to be connected with Him forever. Or,
- They will be alive on the Day of the Last Trump and will be caught up 'raptured' to meet with the Lord and be with Him until when the time to consummate all things is due.

In the process, the elect remnant is preserved from the corruption that is in the world through lust as expressed by its culture of self-centeredness and gratifications emanating from Lust of the Flesh, Lust of the Eyes and Pride of Life. Understanding this strategic framework is the greatest insurance against error, heresy and apostasy. It secures the destiny of a saint on Truth, rightly divided and enables them to treat extra biblical revelations with the caution they deserve. Those who understand the strategic framework will discern the times and seasons rightly and therefore be found in Him without sin.

Luke 21:36 (KJV) *36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.*

1 Thessalonians 5:1-3 (KJV) *1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. 2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. 3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.*

Review Questions

1. Please share 5 things in this lesson which resonated most in your heart
2. Why is it important to understand the Strategic Framework of the New Covenant texts?

Chapter 20

Status and Response of Saints

Status of and Response of Saints to Kingdom Realities of the New Covenant

There is no way we can exhaust discussion of the New Covenant. To ensure fuller understanding on a heart level, some things shared previously may need to be re-emphasized and given more emphasis, from a more practical angle.

What is best to do going forward is to come into an understanding of the status of humans for whom the New Covenant was sealed in the Blood of Yeshua. Let us remember that the Old Covenant was essentially one involving Elohim and the Hebraic lineage of Abraham otherwise now known as the Jews. Any one or family among the Gentiles could convert to the way of life the Torah admonished required if they submitted to the rite of circumcision and went forward to learn at the feet of Rabbis.

The Torah itself was good and holy, coming from Elohim.

Romans 7:12 (KJV) *12 Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.*

The problem was that humans conceived in sin and living the sinful life were trying to observe what was holy while their nature was essentially evil. Ultimately, all that the Torah could accomplish was to reveal to Hebrews first and all mankind, the utter sinfulness of human nature. The Torah ultimately had the value of revealing to Hebrews and humanity, their need for a Saviour or Messiah!

In the fullness of time, as we also saw in previous lessons, Elohim made provision for settling the Sin issue by the Incarnation, Life, Death and Resurrection of Yeshua. In so doing, Elohim announced the folding up of the Old Covenant and inauguration of the new. When Yeshua was about to start His public ministry at the baptism of John, Yahweh announced that Yeshua was the Ultimate Torah given to humanity:

Matthew 3:16 (KJV) *16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: 17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

The second time, Yahweh spoke audibly from heaven, there was clarity that Yeshua alone would be the voice through which He would communicate to Israel and humanity:

Matthew 17:1 (KJV) *1 And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, 2 And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. 3 And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. 4 Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. 5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.*

A: Status of the brand-new type of humans for the earth realm

John 8:32 (KJV) *32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

The New Covenant created a brand-new type of persons in the earth realm who satisfied His desire for relationship and fellowship with humans. The status of those who received Yeshua is described as:

1. Sons

John 1:11-12 (KJV) *11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

As previously stated, it is significant that Yeshua told Mary on the resurrection morning that his disciples (who before the Cross in John 15 were regarded as friends) were now regarded as brethren! Why was this so? Because by sealing the Deal of the New Covenant with His poured-out Blood, the basis for humans to be and live as sons of Elohim was settled!

John 20:17 (KJV) *17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.*

That we are sons of Elohim – in a vibrant personal relationship with Him, not religious devotees of an ‘unknown distant god’ is a defining truth of the New Covenant which spirit of Religion works hard to obscure!

Romans 8:14-16 (KJV) *14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:*

Hebrews 2:9-15 (KJV) *9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. 13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. 14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

Sonship is both a position given by Elohim by Grace as well as the end of a process of growth by Grace! We start Kingdom life as babes who need milk:

1 Peter 2:1 (KJV) *1 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:*

As saints serve the Lord out of sincere hearts and obey His commandment to love one another, there comes a time He transitions us, like His first disciples into the status of friends:

John 15:14-15 (KJV) *14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.*

By continuance in Yeshua, abiding in Him and giving Him space to abide, no matter the circumstances, the saint who is growing in intimacy takes responsibility for the Father's Kingdom Business in the earth realm. Through dealings of the Spirit, circumstances the Lord allows us to go through and receiving of strong meat of the Word, saints grow in intimacy with Yahweh to a state of living and functioning as His sons.

2. True sons take responsibility as Co-labourers in the vineyard by seeking first the Kingdom to come above all else in the present world.

Yeshua came to work the vineyard of Yahweh the Father for 33 and half years of which the first 30 was spent in obscurity. His mission was to reconcile lost sons to the Father and empower them to be co-labourers with Himself in the vineyard. He asked the disciples to recognize the ripeness of the harvest and pray the Father for more labourers.

Matthew 9:37-38 (KJV) *37 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; 38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.*

John 4:31-38 (KJV) *31 In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. 32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. 33 Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat? 34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. 35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. 36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. 37 And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. 38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.*

Everyone who is redeemed by the Blood is automatically inducted into this assignment. One of the core assignments of every generation since the Incarnation is to participate in completion of the Father's business which Yeshua inaugurated. The Alpha Church understood this reality and was invested in it.

The work of the vineyard involves:

2.1 Reconciliation of lost Children back to their Father

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 (KJV) *17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. 20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. 21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

2.2 Seeking and Proclaiming the Kingdom to come above all else and making investments into the heavenly realm while on this earthly pilgrimage.

The present world is destined to fold up one day. Majority of people burn their lives out with accumulation of wealth by all means and at all costs simply because they do not realize that it is a fleeting, passing phantom. The reality that universal Righteousness, Peace and Joy will come upon the earth only when Yeshua returns to rule and reign in the Kingdom is something saints only are uniquely designed and equipped to proclaim. That is why Yeshua asked saints to seek first the Kingdom above all else in the earth realm. By so doing, saints can make wise choices in the light of eternity.

Matthew 6:19-21 (KJV) *19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

Matthew 6:24-25 (KJV) *24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. 25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?*

Matthew 6:31-34 (KJV) *31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*

Matthew 24:14 (KJV) *14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*

Mark 16:15-16 (KJV) *15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

Revelation 11:15 (KJV) *15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*

3. Dual Citizens; Ambassadors of the Kingdom of Heaven in the Earth Realm

All who are redeemed by the Blood are not just part of the Family of Elohim, they are also Citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven. Their real headquarter is in heaven to which they should resort regularly by Prayer and communion with their King. For this reason, true Kingdom citizens see themselves as dual citizens: of heaven and of the nation Elohim planted them.

John 17:9-18 (KJV) *9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. 10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. 11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. 12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled*

in themselves. 14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

For this reason, the nature and glory of their King should manifest in them at all seasons and drive their decisions. They cannot have the same preferences as natural people within their families and environments.

Philippians 2:12-16 (KJV) *12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. 14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings: 15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; 16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.*

1 Peter 2:9-12 (KJV) *9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. 11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

They cannot participate in divisive partisan politics – filled with lies, self- projection, hatred, animosity and strife for pre-eminence - like unbelievers. They cannot be found in racial crises like the world around them. They have more affinity with other blood washed saints than with natural extended family relationships which opt to be out of the Kingdom.

Such saints are not passive or reactive. They take on the role of active Ambassadors of the Kingdom representing the King in all things, for which He vested them with Holy Spirit and power

Acts 1:8 (KJV) *8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

Elohim specifically told Ananias how the Ambassadorial assignment of Paul would pan out:

Acts 9:15-16 (KJV) *15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: 16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.*

Part B: Response of Saints to all that Elohim Has already done by the Blood of Yeshua and how they walk in the earth realm as citizens and Ambassadors of His Kingdom

1. Faith

Saints are called to just believe report of the New Covenant to access its awesome blessing and be prospered thereby. The principle of Faith is absolutely central to everything humans can do with an Invisible Spirit that is Elohim.

Hebrews 11:1, 6 (KJV) *1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. 6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

This extends to every realm of life from Salvation to transition into the next world!

1.1 Salvation. The gift of salvation is free and has already been paid for long ago at Calvary. However, it can only be accessed by Faith!

Romans 10:8-10 (KJV) *8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

Grace of Elohim is freely available to all saints. However, it is by Faith that we can access and draw down from the unlimited bank of Grace!

Ephesians 2:8 (KJV) *8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

1.2 All the blessings of the New Covenant including Healing; financial blessings and divine protection are all accessed by Faith. It is a lifestyle of the Just! However, let it be noted that Faith does not supplant due process of Holy Spirit which works patience and fortitude in saints as they go through certain approved situations.

Hebrews 10:35-39 (KJV) *35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. 36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. 37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. **38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. 39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.***

2. Rest in the done deal of Calvary

All saints are called to receive what has already been accomplished on their behalf. The sacrifice of Yeshua has already been accomplished and will not be repeated.

Hebrews 9:24-28 (KJV) *24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: 25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; 26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. 27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: 28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*

Amid gross darkness of iniquity, the mystery of Lawlessness and fear which pervades the earth realm, those who truly know what Yeshua accomplished at the Cross have an anchor which cannot be moved! So also, saints are to rest in the reality that all things which pertain to life and godliness have been accomplished by His Grace and all we need to do is receive and give thanks!

2 Peter 1:3 (KJV) *3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*

Those who refuse to receive the blessings as done deal, end up in doubt, unbelief, fear and above all religiosity. They in effect want to 'help' Elohim and burn out themselves trying to do so!

3. Abide in Yeshua, the true Vine

While the redeemed are zealous to do many things, the New Covenant identifies a few needful things which make lives of the redeemed so different. One of them is to abide in Yeshua and give Him space to abide in them by His engrafted Word.

John 15:1-8 (KJV) *1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. 3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. 6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. 8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.*

It is for this reason that the redeemed deliberately make study of the Word a lifestyle

2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV) *15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

Colossians 3:16 (KJV) *16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

By abiding in Yeshua and allowing His Words to abide in us, the plan of our Father for union with Him is effected as Yeshua prayed.

4. Obedience

Those who are in the New Covenant have the Grace of Elohim within them to desire and to do His good pleasure in all things.

Philippians 2:13 (KJV) *13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

With Holy Spirit Who sealed them into Yeshua within their hearts, the truly redeemed are not supposed to struggle with obedience. Obedience is proof of true love of Elohim!

John 15:10, 14 (KJV) *10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.*

14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

5. Love

The New Covenant was instituted in the Love of Elohim as John 3:16 reveals. King Yeshua commanded saints to make it the central operating system of Kingdom Life to the degree that it would be what saints are known for

John 13:34-35 (KJV) *34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

John 15:10-12 (KJV) *10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. 11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. 12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.*

1 John 2:9-11 (KJV) *9 He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. 10 He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. 11 But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.*

6. Unity

As saints live in love, it acts as a glue which binds them together with Elohim and each other. When saints walk in love, Kingdom synergy is released to impact their world. Unity is so important that Yeshua interceded for it.

John 17:20-23 (KJV) *20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*

The basis of unity is so clear that walking outside it is abnormal!

Ephesians 4:1-6 (KJV) *1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

7. Demonstrated by Power of Holy Spirit

The New Covenant is a practical one to be demonstrated in divine power and not merely professed. That is why Holy Spirit was also given as basis for saints to fulfil ministry

Acts 1:8 (KJV) *8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

The power we receive from on high is manifested through two broad avenues

7.1 Spiritual gifts which make all saints active parts of the Body of Yeshua.

The gifts are used entirely by prompting of Holy Spirit to impart and build up other saints by what every joint supply (Ephesians 4:16)

1 Corinthians 12:7, 11-12 (KJV) *7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. 11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. 12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.*

7.2. Saints – both individually and collectively do not just live for themselves, they are the extended hand of Yeshua through which He Impact upon the environment (location, city, state or nation) we operate in.

Matthew 5:13-16 (KJV) *13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

8. Holy unto Elohim

Our lot mere professors of the Kingdom! The holiness DNA of their heavenly Father is active within their spiritual blood steam. For this reason, emulating Yeshua to have victory in the heart and all realms of life is a given!

1 Peter 1:15-16 (KJV) *15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; 16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.*

Emulating Yeshua in how He walked in victory and taking heed to His words that actions are influenced by motions of the heart keep saints away from impurities of thought and word

Hebrews 1:9 (KJV) *9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*

True holiness has two dimensions:

- Separated of the heart, mind, will, emotion and being from all evil
- Consecrated of all aspects of the being unto the Lord for well doing
- Renewal of the mind by the Word to think pure thoughts

Romans 12:1-2 (KJV) *1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

Philippians 4:8 (KJV) *8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

Review Questions

1. Kindly share which aspect of this lesson touched a specific area of your spiritual need.

Chapter 21

Suffering and the New Covenant

One of the major reasons why Elohim is taking us through the depths and breadth of the New Covenant in the way this part of the course is turning out is that across the world, something terrible is happening. Knowing that he cannot stop the spread of the gospel, Satan has introduced all manner of schemes with which to negate, distort or divert it. The situation is worse when saints are too busy to study the Holy Scriptures for themselves in order to discern truth from error. Consider these realities:

- For about 1700 years, Satan has successfully positioned Christian Religion as a reality in the earth realm, supplanting the true Gospel of the Kingdom based on the New Covenant in the Blood of Yeshua, Jesus. Though the theologies, dogmas and liturgies of various brands of Christian Religion run counter to the New Covenant, many 'believers' shrug those differences off as normal, believing that somehow, Elohim is impressed with the numbers who are bound in Christian Religion.
- Satan has also successfully foisted on humanity, various personality cults of 'anointed' preachers whose theologies are tainted by secular humanism and self-help pathways to 'success, health, happiness'. In this, they attract an ever-increasing company of saints desperately seeking to escape poverty and various challenges of life including sickness, unemployment and assumed effects of witches and wizards that are constraining their destinies.

As they hug the spotlight with their photo-shopped faces in fliers, billboards, TV programs and on social media like Facebook, the impression they create is that it is okay for human preachers to increase in the consciousness of their followers more than Yeshua their King. Clearly shunning New Covenant Life and Truth, they create their own realities with which they hold captive saints committed to their trust by taking away their liberties and turning them to co-dependents. In the true fashion of Nimrodic Babylon, they trap destinies of saints <who they claim to own> and use them to make money and fame. (Revelation 18:13).

It is interesting that believers can be so desperate for blessings that they do not care a trip to hell to get what they want. In several countries, there are spooky reports of childless women being subjected to such indignities as physical violation of their bodies or strange 'baths' at mid night in specific rivers by assumed 'miracle workers' who promise them the power to conceive and bear children. If a believer can fall for any kind of scheme to get a 'blessing', the New Covenant is made of no effect!

The New Covenant and the Ministry of Suffering

Let us outline aspects of the New Covenant which is not popular in contemporary Christianity: Suffering. Suffering is caused by various pressures on the soul of a saint. If left unchecked, the pressures can cause severe internal damage to the heart, mind, emotion and will of the saint. But when understood and

rightly responded to, suffering becomes an instrument of perfection. In other words, what the enemy meant for evil can turn out to be for our ultimate good when we respond in the right Kingdom way!

Unfortunately, many saints are ignorant of the positive value of suffering. Because of the preponderance of the utilitarian gospel (whose focus is to draw people into 'church' for what they will get from Elohim, not necessarily to worship Him in Spirit and Truth) many saints detest to hear anything to do with Suffering! Strangely, some sects and denomination are built entirely on anti-suffering theology which makes them very popular!

Suffering for His Name sake

The New Covenant proposes that all saints have a measured life! If we give space to He Who created and redeemed, He will use our beings as vessels for expressing the quantum of His Nature, Presence and Power which will impact and transform a specific number of people! Unfortunately, the greatest factor standing against our being mere vessels through which Elohim manifests His good wishes is that god called 'SELF'! Self has its own plans and wants to make its own way to the top. It often wants to do this at the expense of others, avoiding any suffering or pain.

As a solution, the Lord appoints that through the Mirror, Fire and Hammer of His Word, the negative dispositions of Self can be discovered. Through dealings of Holy Spirit and circumstances He orchestrates through other humans, Self is faced with pressures from the outside which can lead to breaking of the outer man. In the economy of heaven, this is a good thing because at this point, Elohim can use the empty vessels, stripped of Self-delusion and pride to manifest His determinate counsel!

John 12:24 (KJV) *24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.*

When saints have no moral and ethical boundaries, they detest sufferings and open themselves up for demonic invasion. When we understand what we sign up for in embracing the New Covenant, we discover that the power of both Satan, the World and the Flesh to oppress is negated when Suffering is embraced as a Kingdom principle in the present dispensation.

To receive and walk in this truth as reality is to be truly successful!

Suffering for the sake of Name of Yeshua, Jesus or as part of testimony of saints as those redeemed from the world is an intrinsic part of the process which Elohim appoints for true saints. His plan is that through what saints suffer, they are stripped of carnal and worldly things they clutch at and are thereby processed in character to conform into the image of His Son, Yeshua Jesus.

Romans 8:28-30 (KJV) *28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

Scope of Suffering

Suffering can take many forms. They include but are not limited to:

1.1 Rejection by family and friends for embracing Faith in or worse still, Lordship of Yeshua

There are many saints across the world at any given time who are rejected because they abandoned the religion of their families (including Orthodox Christendom) to embrace Salvation by Grace. In many cases, family may not bother if one takes the gospel easy. Their opposition may arise when the believer becomes a disciple who enthrones the Master as King! Once the life is radically different, they become hostile and employ every trick in their bags to douse the fire of zeal for the King and His Kingdom.

1.2 Passed by in terms of promotion at work or academic grades because of the faith of a saint.

There are saints who experience rejection in their work places when colleagues and superiors become uncomfortable with their presence and the virtue proceeding therefrom. Instead of being convicted and repent, they become hostile and antagonistic! Wiser colleagues are drawn closer when they notice the superior lifestyle of the saint who used to be like them in terms of their lewd conversations.

1 Peter 2:11-12 (KJV) *11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

1.3 Generally, true saints can seem to be to unbelievers as the off scouring of the world and treated as 'strange' because one opted out of riotous living.

1.4 False Accusations by people intent to hurt saints.

There are some people – including those who are born again who can lend their vessels to Satan to use as instruments of causing pain and much suffering. Their tongues are filled with deadly poison as they speak lies and all manner of evil which, if saints are not careful, may cause deep hurt and a root of bitterness. Saints must learn to forgive such people, realizing that Satan is the real enemy. Where this is not done, Satan would have succeeded in doing great damage!

Hebrews 12:14-15 (KJV) *14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: 15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;*

1.5 Rejection by Religious people who are held by Traditions of humans and prefer to remain in ignorance of the Truth. At times, we are tempted to feel hurt because other brethren who are blinded by the spirit of religion attack us for walking in the light. To feel bad would be a terrible fleshly response to a ringing endorsement! It calls for joyful celebration that we are accounted worthy to suffer for His Name sake!

Matthew 5:10-12 (KJV) *10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*

It was this response of joy which marked the alpha Church as worthy of serious consideration:

Acts 5:40-42 (KJV) *40 And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41 And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. 42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.*

Why we need to embrace Suffering: To be like the Master is highest ideal of true disciples!

Yeshua Himself made it clear that we His disciples cannot be above Him. The highest we can aspire to is to be like Him and partake of whatever process He appoints us. He Himself made it clear that those who will serve Him in the earth realm should embrace a life of suffering, rejection, dependency on Him and rejection by those under the loop of Satan!

Matthew 10:16-25 (KJV) *16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. 17 But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; 18 And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. 19 But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. 20 For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. 21 And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. 22 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. 23 But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come. 24 The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. 25 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?*

Matthew 10:33-39 (KJV) *33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. 34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. 35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. 36 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. 37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. 39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.*

The example of Yeshua

The first 30 years of His life was lived in obscurity, regarded no more than a Carpenter's son! His identity was subsumed in that of Joseph and Mary

Matthew 13:55-58 (KJV) *55 Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? 56 And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things? 57 And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house. 58 And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.*

The last 3 and half years witnessed pressure, rejection and scorn by Religious and Civic leaders leading to His brutal crucifixion and death on the Cross. It is important for saints to always remember that our King went through suffering and that ultimately, it worked out for His good. Such knowledge will strengthen us to embrace our own processes.

Matthew 16:21 (KJV) *21 From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.*

Hebrews 2:9-10 (KJV) *9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*

Hebrews 5:8 (KJV) *8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;*

Hebrews 12:1-2 (KJV) *1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Philippians 2:5-11 (KJV) *5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

General Exhortations of Suffering

A survey of the New Covenant reveals that the subject of suffering for our Faith in Yeshua is as central to your identity as Holiness, Love and Unity!

Romans 5:3-5 (KJV) *3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*

Romans 8:17-18 (KJV) *17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. 18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

2 Corinthians 1:5 (KJV) *5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.*

2 Corinthians 1:6 (KJV) *6 And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.*

2 Corinthians 1:7 (KJV) *7 And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.*

Philippians 3:10 (KJV) *10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;*

Colossians 1:24 (KJV) *24 Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:*

2 Timothy 2:12 (KJV) *12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:*

1 Peter 2:19, 21-23 (KJV) *19 For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. 21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:*

1 Peter 4:13-14, 16 (KJV) *13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. 14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. 16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.*

Example of Paul

Paul received suffering as part of his call in

Acts 9:15-16 (KJV) *15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: 16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.*

1 Corinthians 4:9-14 (KJV) *9 For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. 10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised. 11 Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; 12 And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: 13 Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day. 14 I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you.*

2 Corinthians 11:20-30 (KJV) *20 For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face. 21 I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit wheresoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also. 22 Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. 23 Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. 24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. 25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; 27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. 28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. 29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? 30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.*

Once when he was going through intense suffering, he travailed in seeking deliverance. The answer of the Lord changed his attitude to difficulties and challenges for ever:

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 (KJV) *7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted*

above measure. 8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. 9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

From Prison, wrote remarkable and profound portions of the New Covenant. Even at the end when all that was before him was execution by beheading, Paul could write with a triumphant spirit:

2 Timothy 4:6-8 (KJV) *6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*

We need to look away from the pain that suffering suggests and look up to Yeshua our King, understanding without doubt that whatever we go through because of who we are in Him and What He is in us is process which will lead to a glorious outcome in time and in eternity!

Hebrews 12:1-3 (KJV) *1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.*

When we understand suffering as process, we will embrace those things allowed in the Sovereign will of Elohim to come our way. Instead of running away, so to say, we receive grace to embrace and even dance in the fire, knowing with certainty that the outcome will be our glorification!

Romans 8:28-39 (KJV) *28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. 31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. 34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Warning: There is wrong kind of suffering!

This includes suffering because of sin, being a busy body; being lazy or slothful

1 Peter 2:19-20 (KJV) *19 For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. 20 For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.*

1 Peter 4:15 (KJV) *15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.*

Let us note that even when saints are buffeted for their fault and suffer, taking ownership of their sins in transparency and brokenness to the Lord will attract the mercy of Elohim in due season!

Proverbs 28:13 (KJV) *13 He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*

2 Corinthians 7:8-11 (KJV) *8 For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. 9 Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. 10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. 11 For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.*

Ultimately, suffering is an instrument through which Yahweh perfects us, stripping away any confidence in the flesh to bring us to a state of total dependency on Him alone.

Philippians 3:3-14 (KJV) *3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. 4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: 5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; 6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. 7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

When we know this truth, we will not be like the friends of Job who taunted him, suggesting that his sufferings were outcome of secret sin or the wrath of Elohim.

Review Questions

1. Please summarize this lesson
2. State 3 points which particularly ministered to you as a person.

Chapter 22

A Covenant of Holistic Blessings and True Prosperity – Part A

In warning against cherry picking of the Constitution of the Kingdom, the issue of Suffering and Prosperity/Blessings is one which shows clearly the dangers of taking one provision and leaving off the other. There are saints who have embraced suffering as in lack, powerlessness and even being sick and diseased as sure evidence that they are in the perfect will of Elohim. This tendency is evidence of a Religious spirit at work.

On the other hand, there are those who bristle in anger when they hear of suffering for His Name sake! They claim Yeshua came to do all the suffering and saints are to just 'enjoy life'. This leads to a view of prosperity which is so one sided that there is no doubt the Religion of Self-preservation is at work.

Because the Constitution of the Kingdom is given by Elohim and is supreme, saints have no business coming to it with pre-conceived notions and preferences! The healthy approach is to come to the Holy Scriptures with the innocence of childhood, open to hear what the Lord is saying and receiving grace to live same out as practical experience!

Matthew 18:1-4 (KJV) *1 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? 2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, 3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. 4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*

Part A. The New Covenant and perspectives of Blessings and True Prosperity

The point needs to be stated that in the New Covenant, **suffering is not an inheritance of saints but an instrument of process for perfecting their lives so that they can walk in the fullness of blessings – both in time and in eternity!**

In studying the Constitution of the Kingdom with an open heart, here is how it describes the outcome of Suffering in the lives of true saints:

1 Peter 5:10 (KJV) *10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.*

For instance, a saint may suffer lack for a specified number of years and through that process, develop empathy and compassion for the poor he or she may be assigned by Elohim to minister to in future. If that saint escapes or bypasses the process and grabs wealth prematurely, it may become a snare, instilling pride, arrogance and indifference to need of the poor.

In the same way, a saint ordained to exercise great power and authority in the Kingdom may be required, as part of the process, to serve faithfully under very difficult situations or strong leaders. Through that experience, they are stripped of murmuring and are imbued with a divine perspective of

serving with humility which will become major assets when they are eventually elevated. The key is to recognize that authority comes from Elohim and to honour the Mantle, despite failings of the bearer.

Process precedes Manifestation!

Concerning Yeshua and His disciples

There are those who wrongly assume that Yeshua asked all those who were part of His ministry to leave all else, become financially and physically poor in order to be acceptable to Elohim. The reality is that all those called by Yeshua had various types of specific assignments. The 12 disciples were to be intensely taught, trained, equipped, activated and released to lead the Alpha Church. For that reason, they needed to be full time disciples since He had only 3 and half years to complete their preparation before returning to Heaven.

Mark 3:13-15 (KJV) *13 And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. 14 And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, 15 And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:*

There were others like the women who ministered to Him and were used by Yahweh as instruments of providing for His needs and those of the 12 who were set apart.

Mark 15:40-41 (KJV) *40 were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; 41 (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.*

Luke 23:55-56 (KJV) *55 And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. 56 And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment.*

As Luke 23:55-56 states, they had enough resources to procure what was needed for taking good care of His dead body.

Joseph of Arimathea was obviously a wealthy disciple who did not serve 'full time' as in leaving his business to stay with Yeshua 24/7. There was no need for that because his core assignment was simply to fulfil the prophecy that Yeshua would be buried in the grave of the rich! In the fullness of time, what Peter, James and John could not do, Joseph was able to accomplish without struggle: Access to Pilate to ask for and receive permission to bury Yeshua in his own tomb. He was obviously wealthy!

Matthew 27:57-58 (KJV) *57 When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: 58 He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered.*

It is noteworthy to also state that what Elohim condemned and asked saints to avoid is submission to and being yoked with is Mammon which controls behaviour of those who seek wealth at all costs – including their spiritual welfare. This often-misquoted scripture did not condemn wealth or financial prosperity:

1 Timothy 6:10-12 (KJV) *10 the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. 11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. 12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*

On the other hand, a careful reading of subsequent verses reveals that Paul charged rich brethren to use their wealth to make heavenly investments!

1 Timothy 6:17-10 (KJV) *17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; 18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; 19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.*

Part B. What Yeshua accomplished at Calvary includes release of the Blessings Satan hijacked from offspring of Adam!

To understand any issue, the most profitable thing to do is to trace its foundation. When Elohim created humanity, the divine intent included the ability:

- i. To superintend over the earth realm
- ii. To enjoy His full benefice – the provisions to make life full

Genesis 1:26 (KJV) *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. 29 And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.*

As we have heard several times, by deceiving Eve and Adam, Satan craftily took away their mantle of ruler ship in Genesis 3:1-7. Consequently, Adam and Eve and by extension, generality of humanity lost the right and privilege to ‘enjoy’ the good of the earth. Rather back breaking labour, lack and pain became the new norm:

Genesis 3:16 (KJV) *Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. 17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: **cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.***

At Calvary, Yeshua paid the price in full for saints to be delivered from both the curse of works inherited from Adam and Eve as well as curse of the Law pronounced by Moses on all who failed to live by all

provisions of the Torah! He delivered saints so that they can live and walk in the original blessings Elohim ordained for His sons in the earth realm.

John 19:30 (KJV) *30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.*

Galatians 3:13 (KJV) *13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: 14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*

2 Corinthians 8:9 (KJV) *9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.*

It is true that the full measure of this inheritance will obviously kick in for universal experience when He returns to rule and reign in the earth realm and in the realm of endless eternity. These scriptures describe that phase of life:

Isaiah 65:17 (KJV) *17 For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.*

Isaiah 66:22 (KJV) *22 For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain.*

2 Peter 3:13 (KJV) *13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*

Revelation 21:1 (KJV) *1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. 2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. 4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. 5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. 6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. 7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.*

Even in this present time we can walk in a measure of the blessings as a fruit of repentance and obedience:

Isaiah 1:18-19 (KJV) *18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. 19 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:*

Part C. Scope of the World saints must be aware of - And beware when seeking Kingdom Blessings

Before we examine the full scope of New Covenant provisions for Blessings which saints can enjoy in this present life in the next lesson, it is critical that we first understand the danger of seeking such from a

worldly mind-set or perspective. The reason is simple: The World runs on an opposite paradigm which is contrary to The Kingdom. Motives matter to the Lord and because He is all seeing, He does not want to see impure motives as the root of anything we are requesting from Him:

Psalm 51:6 (KJV) *6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.*

It wars against both the Kingdom and the souls of saints. It is important that saints note that the world can manifest in these dimensions:

1. Within the thoughts and imaginations of the human nature. We are what we think. Some body may not have material things but may be very polluted with worldly thoughts and imaginations, waiting for the day of opportunity to acquire them! The Omniscient One is not fooled by external looks or what lies on the outer sphere but what goes on in the inside.

2. By the Carnal realm through things which are seen, spoken, heard, felt, tasted. These dimensions of the soul are always seeking to dominate the hearts (spirit-man) of saints, making it impossible to be led by Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:5-9 (KJV) *5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*

We should never forget that since the Fall of Adam and Eve, the world has been under the ruler-ship of Satan who uses the same principles of Lust of the Flesh, Lust of the eyes and Pride of Life to manipulate humans to do his bidding. Those who are in Yeshua have overcome him and should guard their hearts and minds from being influenced by his devices!

1 John 5:19 (KJV) *And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.20 And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.*

Specific Manifestations of the World

For the benefit of brethren who may want to know, there are many specific ways in which the spirit of the world can manifest. The list here is not exhaustive but can give us a guide. Armed with this guide, the saint with a lively conscience is able to discern the nature of motives which drives quest for wealth or success. Is it in fulfilment of destiny or for pursuit of humanistic ambitions? Is it for purpose of being a channel of blessing or for purpose of unhealthy competition with contemporaries in the Kingdom or the world?

1. All things which feed the soul through the five carnal senses to give them pre-eminence over the spirit-man

2. The things that the world glory in which keep them satisfied to remain outside the Kingdom of Yahweh, rejecting His salvation in Yeshua

These include:

2.2. Love of money which enthrones Mammon in the heart of those who are subject to its control

2.3. Acquisitiveness – wanting all things which appeal to your senses without necessarily needing them.

2.4. Things and pursuits which clog our hearts and minds with things that do not glorify The Father and negate our ability to be focused on the Great Commission

2.5. Things and pursuits which make us selfish and self-centered, unable to manifest the nature, presence and power of Yeshua

2.6. Addiction to particular fashion labels, consumer item labels or other superfluous quests which make saints slaves to the plans and designs of other people who may be outside the Kingdom.

2.7. A lifestyle which makes us spend far more on our comfort and convenience to detriment of investment in the Great Commission

2.8. A lifestyle of ‘getting’ and not ‘giving’ which negates Kingdom life. Acts 20:38

2.9. Profiteering and attempts to acquire wealth through oppression of the weak and ignorant

2.10. The Political system based on lies, exaggeration, tension and deliberate pulling down of others who occupy positions that are desired.

2.11. The financial system which leads people into debt through craftily devised credit offered to people, not to really blessed but rather to enslave them. Using credit to finance ostentation and consumerism tends to worldliness.

2.12. The Fashion system which is wired to seduce men or women into immoral thoughts, language or deeds.

2.13. Amusements and worldly Entertainment that subdues or negates our spiritual sensitivity as the soul realm is activated with much excitement that pours incredible amounts of hormones into the body system.

2 Timothy 2:4 (KJV) *No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.*

2.14. Importation of liturgical practices in Congregational worship which feed the five carnal senses and suppresses genuine spirituality

2.15. Using worldly methods of public relations and marketing to promote ministries and congregational work.

The way the Lord set up the New Covenant, all that saints are and can ever be should be fruit of their relationship with Him, not the works of their own hands. The reason is that at Eden, Satan essentially offered Eve independence from Elohim as Genesis 3:1-7. The coming of Yeshua to take our place at the Cross essentially reversed that trend. Just as we come into the Kingdom by Grace through Faith, all that we do therein should also be by His Grace and activation of our Faith.

Jeremiah 17:5 (KJV) *Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.6 For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited.*

Since Calvary, anything which is not a fruit of Faith and Grace is of the flesh and regarded as sinful!

Romans 14: 23 (KJV) *And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*

The Father desires to Bless His Own according to His Word and for His good pleasure, not for sake of ostentation, competition, strife or vain glory. He just wants us to trust Him and rest on His promises!

Jeremiah 17:7 (KJV) *Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.8 For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.*

John 6:27 (KJV) *Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.*

Our Father wants to use the revelation in this Lesson to sanctify and prepare His sons ahead of release of why, how and what He blesses them in Lesson 23 tomorrow, if the Lord tarries.

Bible Reading: Please study again the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew Chapters 5, 6, 7 and reflect on New Covenant Realities.

Review Questions

1. In true transparency, which of the specific manifestations of the world listed as #2.2 - 2.15 of Section C you have discerned at the root of any desire to walk in the blessings of the Kingdom?
2. Please share how you will apply this Lesson.

Chapter 23

The New Covenant, Holistic Blessings & Prosperity

The New Covenant offers the highest realm of holistic Blessedness in the earth!

Just as Preachers and Teachers should make the Cross a central part of their message, it is also important that saints are enabled to know what the New Covenant says of their Blessings both in time and in eternity. This balance will enable saints to walk in Truth and be thus delivered from effects of various winds of doctrines by those who can twist scriptures to confuse them. Saints deserve to know the whole counsel of Elohim - including both 'frowning' and 'smiling' scriptures to use a term popularized by A.W Tozer of blessed memory. When they know the Truth, not only are they set free as John 8:32 says. They would have received the right insurance against those who will manipulate their ignorance to advance fleshly agendas.

Ephesians 4:13-15 (KJV) *13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ*

Holistic blessedness is not accumulation of material assets or high social esteem. It is rather the manifestation of Kingdom life which is far superior to the best wealth humans can ever accumulate. Two scriptures in the New Covenant and two in the Old speak of how those who are of Elohim enjoy a richer dimension of prosperity than those in the world who accumulate stuff externally but are scattered within, laden with the weight of sin.

Matthew 5:3-12 (KJV) *3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. 5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. 6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. 7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. 8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. 9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. 10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*

Romans 14:17-18 (KJV) *17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. 18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.*

Isaiah 26:3 (KJV) *3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*

Isaiah 12:3 (KJV) *3 Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.*

Saints are to be engaged with destiny and be productive, not passive and unproductive!

Without any shadow of doubt, the saints Yeshua redeemed and left in the earth realm are not to be static and unproductive. He created and redeemed each saint for a specific purpose. Getting to know that specific purpose or Divine Assignment should be their highest individual priorities. Once a saint understands the Divine Assignment, he or she is required – by the paradigm of the New Covenant - to trust Elohim and thus release Faith for receipt of the Allocation of Resources to fulfil same. Because assignments vary, allocations are made to measure. No saint should be made to feel guilty of being blessed, as long as such came from Elohim and is used by His leading and for His purposes.

That is why saints need to discern the channels through which the allocation of resources (Finances, material provisions) will be released. When these things are discerned, and settled in prayer, the saint proceeds into life with confidence.

There is just no room in the New Covenant for saints to be idle and unproductive. Idleness leaves so much spare time to waste in the hands of those who are unproductive. Such a lifestyle invariably becomes a snare to unity of the Body.

1 Thessalonians 4:11 (KJV) *11 And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;*

Romans 12:11 (KJV) *11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;*

The two parables of the unproductive Fig trees illustrate the reality that the Lord does not endorse lazy, unproductive living – both for those who are in full time or part time ministry or indeed any saint! The first is Matthew 21:19-21. The second is this one:

Luke 13:6-9 (KJV) *6 He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. 7 Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? 8 And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: 9 And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.*

There are many well-meaning saints who, though called, tend to retreat away from Business, Professional or Civic life because of the corruption therein. What they should be made to know is the heart preparation which precedes getting into such endeavors, not running away! Saints are not to be isolated, living in self-enclosed monastic communities. Yeshua rather prayed the Father that they may be separated from satanic and worldly influence to engage with their communities:

John 17:9-18 (KJV) *9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. 10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. 11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. 12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest*

keep them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

The separation enables saints to be catalysts of transforming the cultures of their generations and societies as they engage from the place of strength, not weakness. In other words, saints are separated for Yeshua to fully be formed in them. Thus equipped, they are to be engaged with the communities, businesses or professions wherein He sends them!

Matthew 5:13-16 (KJV) *13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

Part D. Basis of Prosperity and Blessings for the Remnant on this Side of Eternity

The New Covenant which is sealed in the Blood of Yeshua also advances the clear thesis that on this side of eternity saints can enjoy the measure of Blessings and Prosperity as ordained specifically by Elohim. The reality is that Elohim as Creator made ample provisions called Allocations that are needful for fulfilment of all Destinies or Divine Assignments of His saints in the earth realm. If saints will root out Greed and place all their Trust in Him, they will discover to their pleasant surprise that He has enough for the NEED of all His Own! Beyond provisions for their NEED, Elohim can cause saints to walk in the overflow of His Blessings to those who pay the price of death of the Self nature and demonstrate the capacity to utilize same for Kingdom purpose.

Matthew 19:29 (KJV) *29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.*

There are two things the Lord does not want to happen to His saints concerning blessings:

1. He does not want them to Covet wealth or so strongly desire such to the degree that it becomes an idol competing with Him in their hearts

Matthew 16:26 (KJV) *26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*

2. He does not want anything material or financial to shift their focus away from Him and the Kingdom.

Those who give Him space to work out these two imperatives are on safe ground to be His appointed channels for receiving perishable wealth that can be used to further Kingdom objectives.

1 Timothy 3:17-19 (KJV) *17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; 18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; 19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.*

That is also why the Lord prefers to process His saints, forming the nature and character of Yeshua in them through the things He allows them to suffer before He decorates their lives with material

blessings. This approach breeds spiritual stability which cannot be shaken by wealth. When saints are processed in this way, to release what is in their hands for the good of all and care of the less privileged will be easy, just as it was in the Alpha Church:

Acts 4:34-37 (KJV) *34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, 35 And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. 36 And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, 37 Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.*

Grand Purpose of Elohim in release of Prosperity to His Saints

He Who gives saints power to get wealth does not do so to equip them to compete with the world or to boast. Rather, His higher purpose is to empower saints to advance His Kingdom purpose in the earth realm! He is in Heaven while saints are in the earth realm. Whatever that needs to happen in the Kingdom, Elohim uses the vessels of His saints to effect same.

Psalm 35:27 (KJV) *27 Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.*

Therefore, those who resist the dealings of the Lord – as we saw in Lesson 22 - to strip them of wrong motives for seeking wealth are not doing themselves any favor!

Proverbs 1:32 (KJV) *32 For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.*

9 Major Bases of the Blessings Saints can Walk in on this Side of Eternity

Let us proceed to examine 9 major bases on which saints can walk in divine blessings (finances and material things) on this side of eternity.

1. The Fatherhood of Yahweh. This guarantees provision of all that pertains to life and godliness on this side of eternity. Our All-knowing and All wise Elohim does not just bring us into this world to be left alone. He is a responsible Father Who knows the need of His Own, has made ample provisions for same and is willing to respond when needs are expressed in prayer.

Matthew 6:19 (KJV) *19 says that saints have the sure provisions of their heavenly Father if only they can focus on the Kingdom to come and make it the reference point for all earthly pursuits and decisions!*

Matthew 7:9-11 (KJV) *9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? 10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?*

2 Peter 1:3 (KJV) *3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*

2. Divine Election. There are vessels Elohim Has specifically chosen to be anointed for receiving and distributing great wealth. It has nothing to do with their family background, education/training or

abilities. They just have that golden touch as a gift from Him which receives great wealth as a Kingdom inheritance. If this is your portion, do not despise or be afraid of it. Embrace it and die to self so Abba will use you to provide for the vast majority of those who need help. Proof of divine election will be attitude to the resources. The individuals concerned do not clutch at same as their own neither do they allow such to become idols competing with Elohim in the heart. They rely on Holy Spirit to lead them in making investments or blessing those the Lord has appointed to use them to touch.

3. Fruit of Holiness and Righteous Living. Holiness is profitable. Walking faithfully with Elohim has always attracted blessings. Abraham was a man of uncommon wealth and we are inheritors of his estate, so to say.

Galatians 3:13-14 (KJV) *13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: 14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*

Job 36:11 (KJV) *11 If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures.*

Psalms 35:27 (KJV) *27 Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.*

In the Sermon on the Mount, Yeshua elevated the concept of prosperity beyond the material realm. He spoke of the wholeness of spirit, soul and body which comes from Elohim on the righteous.

4. Fruit of Faith in Yeshua. Saints in Yeshua who release their Faith in His Name are assured they will receive the fruit of blessings.

Mark 11:24 (KJV) *24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.*

Mark 9:23 (KJV) *23 Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.*

Mark 10:27 (KJV) *27 And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.*

It is noteworthy, Yeshua Himself invites saints to locate what would make their joy full and request accordingly!

John 16:23-24 (KJV) *23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. 24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.*

5. Power of Prayers which rely on 'It is written'. Those who have Faith in Yeshua and His name are called to cash their cheque/check by prayer whenever the need for provisions arise.

Matthew 7:7-9 (KJV) *7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: 8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. 9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?*

6. Outcome of Diligence in whatever business or job the saint is engaged in. Diligence speaks of persistent pressing in to excel in whatever one is doing. This calls for focus and openness to innovation. Diligent people are guaranteed success in their assignments.

Romans 12:11 (KJV) *11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;*

Proverbs 22:29 (KJV) *29 Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.*

7. The Favor of Elohim. When Elohim smiles on an endeavor, success is a logical outcome. Favor changes the dynamics of life because it is an anointing which makes those so blessed to be acceptable and loved by other humans, just as Elohim loves them. In business, it translates into greater patronage and unusual return on investments. For those who are employed, it translates into unusual promotions at a rapid pace. It also translates into not being judged harshly for mistakes made. Mary found Favor with Elohim when she was chosen to be instrument of the Incarnation of Yeshua.

Luke 1:28 (KJV) *28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.*

Luke 1:30 (KJV) *30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.*

While in His Incarnate state, Yeshua enjoyed favor with Yahweh His Father as well as with people:

Luke 2:52 (KJV) *52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man*

If it was so with Him, so should we as sons of Elohim press into that state where legalisms of the world system are suspended in our favor!

The Alpha Church also walked in Favor at a crucial time – right after Pentecost which led to great growth as people were attracted to the Faith:

Acts 2:46-47 (KJV) *46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, 47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*

Favor is released when the Mercy of Elohim rejoices against Judgement as James 2:13 says. The activator of Favor is a merciful heart.

Proverbs 3:3-4 (KJV) *3 Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: 4 So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.*

8. Fruit of Seed sown which yield commensurate harvest in due season.

One of the most potent spiritual and natural laws which rule the earth realm is that instituted by Elohim after the Flood. To know and walk in this Law is to think, say and do the right things which in turn produce the outcome of goodness and blessings.

Genesis 8:22 (KJV) *22 While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.*

It is noteworthy that Yeshua referenced this reality during the Sermon on the Mount:

Matthew 7:12 (KJV) *12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.*

In the Pauline epistles, we also see how this Law was invoked:

Galatians 6:7-8 (KJV) *7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.*

Seeds of Life are sown on various levels:

Certain thoughts, words and deeds are seeds which will yield the fruit of blessings and prosperity in due season. Saints should also avoid jealousy and envy at the wealth or prosperity of other saints. Rather, they should rejoice with those who are blessed by Elohim.

Romans 12:15 (KJV) *15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.*

8.1. Thought Life. Our lives are affected by the quality and nature of our thoughts. Saints should have thoughts that are pure, positive and productive. They should avoid defeatist and negative thoughts.

Philippians 4:8 (KJV) *8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

Poverty mentality is a snare!

Proverbs 23:7 (KJV) *7 For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee.*

8.2. Words. Words are like seeds which will germinate and produce harvest in due season. Saints should avoid defeatist, negative words which imply they are failures or will miss the mark of both holiness and provisions. Rather, saints should speak the accomplished works of Calvary over their lives, families, situations and needs! By faith filled words, mountains of lack can be moved!

Mark 11:22-24 (KJV) *22 And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. 23 For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. 24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.*

The Lord will empower saints to complete projects. He assigned to them! But saints need to partner with Him by speaking to the 'Mountains' to move!

Zechariah 4:6-10 (KJV) *6 Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. 7 Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it. 8 Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 9 The hands of*

Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you. 10 For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth.

8.3. Actions of honor. They are deliberate and systematic provisions of material needs of both natural parents and spiritual leaders who Elohim uses to invest in our spiritual lives.

Ephesians 6:1-3 (KJV) *1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. 2 Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; 3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.*

Galatians 6:6-7 (KJV) *6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. 7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 (KJV) *12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; 13 And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.*

This is an inconvenient truth: Just as leaders are charged by Kingdom principle to release every grace, anointing and revelation in them to saints without charge in Matthew 10:8-9, the saints also have a vicarious responsibility to be channels through which Elohim provides for such legitimate leaders. Where faithful leaders live in lack, it is a clear indicator the saints assigned to them and who they selflessly invest in have hardened their hearts to dam the flow of divine blessings. The reproach they and their families potentially face would not be a good report of the saints in the courts of heaven.

8.4. Compassion and Blessing of the Poor. Those who are poor and destitute are still the creation and children of Elohim. Having a heart of compassion for them and going ahead to make provisions for them is regarded by Elohim as a loan to He Who is their Creator

Proverbs 19:17 (KJV) *17 He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.*

Proverbs 14:31 (KJV) *31 He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor.*

Psalms 41:1-3 (KJV) *1 Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. 2 The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. 3 The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.*

1 Peter 3:8 (KJV) *8 Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:*

1 John 3:16-18 (KJV) *16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? 18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.*

Please do not reproach the poor beggars who approach you. If you don't have, move on but at least treat them as humans. If you have something, please give them cheerfully with a word of encouragement if the time permits.

8.5. Making the Kingdom a priority at all times. A generous heart which makes consistent investments into things of eternal value reflects the tendency to make the Kingdom first priority!

Matthew 6:19-21, 33-34 (KJV) *19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also*

33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

1 Timothy 6:17-19 (KJV) *17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; 18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; 19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.*

Those who walk in this blessed path do not struggle with placing large offerings in the Congregation or Ministry they are part of. They also do not get entangled with legalistic, fearsome interpretations of tithing. Releasing the first fruits of what Elohim has blessed them with is done in knowledge that resources are needed in His House to advance the gospel.

Proverbs 3:9-10 (KJV) *9 Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: 10 So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.*

For such people, tithing is not a legalistic and borne out of fear of caterpillars and canker worms Elohim will send to eat up their resources if they fail to do. That Old Testament approach to preaching of Malachi 3:9-11 is severely deficient. If preachers and teachers can instruct saints to see their tithing as a conscious investment into the Kingdom, it will produce more fruit than laying of guilt feelings and stoking of fear.

The sold-out Kingdom life has a guarantee of Divine Blessings in Time and eternity. The Words of Yeshua will always be true in all generations:

Matthew 19:27-30 (KJV) *27 Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? 28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. 30 But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.*

This Open Cheque/Check to get the 100-fold blessings can be cashed if those who are sold out want same because it is already written, and Elohim is true to His Words. The reality however is as they

continue to press into the heart of Yahweh, most sold out saints become too invested in Kingdom business to the degree they do not really have time to seek 100-fold blessings lest it blocks their spiritual arteries. Thus, their excited expectations for the Crowns of eternity cause their minds to be dim towards worldly goods. But the Word of King Yeshua on the subject remains active until today!

9. Kingdom Advancement Investors. These are those saints who discern vessels on special Kingdom assignment to the whole Church and intentionally make themselves channels in the hands of Elohim for providing the divine supplies of resources. They do so with understanding, in humility and with great joy, knowing they too are on assignment from the King.

This was the case with the saints at Philippi concerning the special ministry of Paul the apostle. It was because of the scope of his assignment he forsook all else. The saints at Philippi stepped up the plate when their contemporaries in other cities fell short. In response, Paul declared their lot of blessings was an assured one. Those who claim verse 19 of this passage but do not live the reality of verses 15-18 are cherry picking the scriptures:

Philippians 4:15-19 (KJV) *15 Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. 16 For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. 17 Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. 18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God. 19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

Part E. The full scope of Blessings a saint can cash as cheque (USA: check) when required

Ephesians 1:3 (KJV) *3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:*

2 Peter 1:3 (KJV) *3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*

1. Spiritual blessings

This includes:

1.1. **Salvation by Grace**, not works of religion! (Ephesians 2:1-8)

1.2. **Sanctification of the heart** to purge it of all natural inclinations so the saint can walk in purity of heart, mind, speech and actions on a 24/7, 365 days a year basis (1 Thessalonians 5:22-24 Romans 12:1-3).

1.3. **Baptism in Holy Spirit** (John 17:7; Acts 1:8; Galatians 1)

1.4. **Fulfilment of the Great Commission to the highest realms possible** – without any limitations (Acts 1:8)

1.5. **Taking one's place in the Body to function at optimal capacity:** Releasing and receiving virtue without limitations (Ephesians 4:13-16; Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:7-31)

1.6. Pleasing Elohim in all things and receiving His Certificate of Approval with which eternity is approached with joy and confidence – just like Paul, Peter, Stephen and others (2 Timothy 4:6-8; 2 Peter 1:13-14; Acts 7:55-60)

2. Physical Blessings

These include:

Financial prosperity – which releases ability to support those in full time ministry, leaders who are a blessing, the poor and those Holy Spirit may lay a burden to support. The instruction in 1 Timothy 6:17-19 is truly sobering: Wealth can be used to invest in the world to come!

Galatians 6:9 (KJV) *9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. 10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*

Good jobs – income from well-paying jobs gives saints the resources to care for leaders and more saints/people than their immediate needs.

Successful Businesses which add value to the society and provide employment/empowerment for many saints.

Good homes where we live in peace and can fulfil ministry of hospitality to saints in transit just like the household of Stephanas which addicted themselves to ministry of the saints

1 Corinthians 16:15 (KJV) *15 I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,)*

Good assets like cars can be deployed for Kingdom service to convey brethren, not for ego tripping.

3. Social Prosperity

3.1. They include: ‘Clean’ and holy lives which are above the pay grade of this generation

3.2. The gift of strong, stable families while there is a meltdown of this vital institution world-wide

3.3. Ability to get into the estate of Marriage without struggle for those who are called into it

3.4. Clean, holy and powerful life and ministry by those called to singlehood or widowhood (Matthew 19:10-12; 1 Corinthians 7)

3.5. Excellence of life by children in a world where the young are pulled in different directions by pressures of their generation (**Psalms 144:11-15**)

3.6. Pre-eminence of excellence by saints in their sectors of endeavor

The Torah promised pre-eminence in life for those who lived by it. Those who are redeemed by the Blood have the inherent capacity to walk in that realm of pre-eminence!

Deuteronomy 28:12-13 (KJV) *12 The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou*

shalt not borrow. 13 And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them:

For a fuller measure of Divine Blessings which are part of inheritance of New Covenant saints, please read the first book of this Commission titled Legacies of Christ. The eBook version is available for free download on the website www.kingdombooksclub.org

May the truth of the Holy Word quicken you to walk in your divine inheritance, without struggle!

Romans 10:17 (KJV) *17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

Note: Please teach the saints these truths for their deliverance from ignorance!

Review Questions

1. Out of the 9 points in Part D: Basis of Prosperity and Blessings for the Remnant on this side of eternity) which items specifically challenge you to adjust?
2. Why is it necessary to teach about New Covenant provisions on Blessings and True Prosperity from Elohim even as we teach on the Cross and dying to self?

Chapter 24

A Covenant of Service and Simplicity

Those who preach without understanding the New Covenant tend to exhort believers to a way of life which feeds their ambitions and desires. Often those desires are cast as 'climbing to success'. Because flesh is activated, many who believe allow their ambitious heart desires to be unleashed through thoughts, words and deeds which are self rather than Yeshua centered. They want to use Him to achieve their dreams and ambitions because there is a twisting of certain scriptures which justify this view point, though evidently out of context. Two scriptures that are misused when people want to shove their way to the 'top' are these:

Deuteronomy 28:13 (KJV) *13 And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them:*

Philippians 4:13 (KJV) *13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*

Unfortunately, everyone is in play for their self-centered purpose to work. They should desire what people already have in terms of position and if possible, push them out in order to take over. Many who claim to be Spirit-filled go this way of the world whenever convenient. Driving their lives is a scarcity paradigm which suggests resources are shrinking while population is increasing. The outcome: Competition, strife and desire for pre-eminence. This creates an atmosphere of strife and tension, rebellion and reliance on arm of the flesh which is unhealthy.

Some New Covenant Foundational Realities

The New Covenant runs on a paradigm which is opposite to the world and its self-centered system. It is one based on these realities:

1. Elohim has enough resources to provide for all His creation and does not withhold what is good from His Own saints, redeemed by the Blood of Yeshua!
2. The provisions are enough for the need of saints, not their greed
3. The Covenant is for a corporate Body essentially. Yeshua laid down His Life to bring His Body in the earth realm into being.
4. Saints within the Body need to know and take their place therein
5. Every part of the organic Body is gifted with capacity to serve others and receive service from others. This include various expressions of Love.
6. The greatest saints therefore are those who pour out most in service, operating in the 'Give' rather than 'Receive' paradigm

Acts 20:35 (KJV) *35 I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.*

1. Attitude of Contentment and preference for the eternal blessings. Though Elohim made provisions for material blessings, as saints of the Alpha Church became more dead to self, they did not clutch at the present dimensions of those blessings but rather lived in Contentment with whatever Elohim provided. In this way, they maintained a laser focus on the world to come and eternal rewards for the faithful.

Hebrews 13:5-6 (KJV) *5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. 6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*

They therefore were delivered from Lusts which destroy spirituality

2 Peter 1:3-4 (KJV) *3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

For this reason, no preacher or Teacher could sway them away from this fixed focus on eternal rewards. In this way, they overcame Satan in the very strategy he employed against Adam and Eve: offering them what they already had with intent to make them independent of Elohim. The exhortation of Jude for them to earnestly contend for the Faith was therefore heeded.

2. Rather than seek to accumulate and clutch at wealth which would ensnare their souls, saints in the Alpha Church essentially released such from their hearts and hands. They opted for a vastly superior paradigm: live on the benefice of their Heavenly father, a day at a time! Truly, they heeded the command of Yeshua in Matthew 6:19-34.

New Covenant was also Established on Altar of Service

The New Covenant is one that was established on the altar of Service. Sacrificial Service, that is! The basis of the New Covenant involved an extraordinary act of service which is the Incarnation of Elohim in the form of human kind! The emptying of His glory to walk in Human state meant these things were experienced by Yeshua on our behalf:

- i. Conceived in the womb of Mary (Luke 1:29-36)
- ii. Born like a helpless baby entirely dependent on Joseph and Mary (Luke 2: Matthew 2)
- iii. Had to undergo normal human development (Luke 2:52)
- iv. Had to submit to baptism of John at Jordan to fulfil all righteousness (Matthew 3:13-17)
- v. Faced normal human experiences. These include:

Homelessness Matthew 8:20; Provoked to righteous indignation John 2:13-17; Hungry Matthew 4:2

Thirsty John 19:28

He suffered all these things for our sake to function as the Lamb of Elohim! It was to serve both the Father and us that He gave up His glory!

Details of the Serving Covenant

Though the Messiah, Yeshua demonstrated service all through His life. He taught, trained, equipped the disciples until they were ready to be activated in Holy Spirit. He also preached, taught, healed, delivered and did signs and wonders across villages and cities of Israel

Acts 10:38 (KJV) *How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.*

But in one instance, He made it graphical by practical demonstration

John 13:1-5 (KJV) *Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. 2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him; 3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; 4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. 5 After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.*

Commentary: We see Yeshua taking off His garments and rather girding Himself with a serving instrument, a towel to serve the disciples. The act of washing the feet of others which was filled with dust is a great expression of service.

6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? 7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. 8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. 9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. 10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. 11 For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

Commentary: Yeshua indicated those who are in communion cannot refuse to receive service. When they do so, it is an indicator of arrogance and pride. All saints should receive service or blessings from others when given.

12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? 13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. 16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. 17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

Commentary: Yeshua commended the act of Feet washing to His disciples. The principle is that serving is leading and leading is all about service. This ordinance which has great significance can be a helpful reminder that leaders are to serve rather than being served!

Yeshua Taught on Service

Yeshua took time to teach about the critical importance of service

Matthew 25:20-21 (KJV) *20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedees children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. 21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.*

Commentary: We see the lobbying mission of Mother of James and John was to secure them places of honour by the Throne of Yeshua.

22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

Commentary: The sons of Zebedee were too quick to answer the prophetic inquiry of Yeshua concerning suffering as pathway to the Crown of Life. James became the first apostle to be martyred. John suffered greatly for the testimony of Yeshua.

23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

Commentary: Yeshua made it clear that exaltation in the Kingdom is at discretion of the Father. His election of vessels would settle those issues.

24 And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.

Commentary: The 10 were angry because they were also filled with competitive spirit.

25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

Commentary: Unbelievers seek exaltation over others so they will be served. That is why they compete for honour and positions.

26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; 27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: 28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Commentary: Yeshua then gave out a core principle of the Kingdom: service! To serve is to minister to others with a pure heart. Those who serve are conduits of blessings to many!

The Apostles Emphasized Service Further

The Apostles of Yeshua also emphasized service. Peter cast service from a pure heart of love as the finest expression of Kingdom leadership

1 Peter 5:1-4 (KJV) *1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: 2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*

Paul was used by Holy Spirit to describe the core principles to be used in serving: the right heart and attitude. In this regard, Holy Spirit uses Paul to show everybody can serve each other, regardless of status.

Colossians 3:17-25 (KJV) *17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. 18 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. 19 Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. 20 Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. 21 Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. 22 Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as men pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God; 23 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; 24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. 25 But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.*

The whole purpose of spiritual gifts is to enable all saints to serve by grace! In other words, all saints in the Kingdom have enough scope to exercise themselves in serving others.

Ephesians 4:15-16 (KJV) *15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

Paul had occasion to single out one vessel, Timothy who was commended for his stellar services to the Body:

Philippians 2:19-23 (KJV) *19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. 20 For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. 21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. 22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel. 23 Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me.*

Service is therefore seen as one of the highest expressions of true spirituality! It involves deliberately keeping our self-interests out of the way so our lives will bear the mark of the Cross: Poured out as a drink offering to Elohim for the benefit of others! Some of them may not even know the extent to which He uses you to be a blessing to them. Some may turn against you. Some may laugh at you, thinking they have used you to their self-advantage. Yet, if the Spirit of service is what propels, you will count it all joy!

In so doing, you are not even expecting anything, so to say because you see it as your reasonable service in appreciation of the great sacrifice which Yeshua made to recover you. What a world there will be when saints switch on this critical Kingdom Light!

Luke 17:7-10 (KJV) *7 But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? 8 And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? 9 Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. 10 So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.*

It is in consistent, sacrificial service that there is breakthrough into the realm of manifestation when the Divine Time is due. Those who hug the spotlight in self projection/promotion, desiring to be known and seen often tend to miss the mark.

But those who serve diligently, even in the 'wilderness process' have an appointed time when Elohim manifests His glory and grace in them like He did with Joshua and John the Baptist.

Joshua 3:7 (KJV) *7 And the Lord said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.*

Luke 1:80 (KJV) *80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.*

When that time comes in the life of those who are faithful, neither Satan, hosts of hell nor humans can stop their manifestation!

It is also a Covenant of Simplicity

Another feature of the New Covenant is it is one of simplicity. This simplicity is manifested in several ways.

1. Relationship of Elohim with Humans

When Israel encountered Elohim on the Mount on the day of receiving the Torah which marked beginning of the Old Covenant, His Presence and manifestation of power was too awesome that Moses was required to act as a step-down transformer between Him and them. From that day, the concept of priests who are holier than the people to act as mediators between Him and them arose.

Exodus 19:9-25 (KJV) *9 And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the Lord. 10 And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes, 11 And be ready against the third day: for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai. 12 And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death: 13 There shall not an hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it be beast or man, it shall not live: when the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount. 14 And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified the people; and they washed their clothes. 15 And he said unto the people, Be ready against the third day: come not at your wives. 16 And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. 17 And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. 18 And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. 19 And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice. 20 And the Lord came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the Lord called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up. 21 And the Lord said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish. 22 And let the priests also, which come near to the Lord, sanctify themselves, lest the Lord break forth*

upon them. 23 And Moses said unto the Lord, The people cannot come up to mount Sinai: for thou chargedst us, saying, Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it. 24 And the Lord said unto him, Away, get thee down, and thou shalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee: but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the Lord, lest he break forth upon them. 25 So Moses went down unto the people, and spake unto them.

Exodus 20:18-19 (KJV) 18 And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. 19 And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

In the New Covenant, Elohim is introduced to us as Abba, an affectionate term for Father. He simplified access to Himself by the sacrifice of Yeshua on the Cross:

Hebrews 10:19-23 (KJV) 19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; 21 And having an high priest over the house of God; 22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

To that extent, tapping into the New Covenant is as simple as Faith manifested as a heart condition of trusting Him and His Word and utterance of the lips!

Romans 10:8-12 (KJV) 8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

It is no longer about trying and failing to keep 613 laws which make up the Torah! It is no longer about being born a Hebrew or Gentile. Access to Him was simplified by Faith in the shed Blood of Yeshua which draws down grace for start of a vibrant personal relationship! As saints lay hold of His grace in prayer and obedience, they grow in Him by work of Holy Spirit within. This intimacy is possible by abiding in Yeshua so Holy Spirit uses His Word to do the work of maturation within (John 15:1-8).

2. Incarnation of Yeshua

Access to Elohim and relationship with Him was simplified because Divinity became humanity in Yeshua! This mind-boggling operation is the simple and incontrovertible basis of the New Covenant! As shared in a previous chapter, “basis of the New Covenant involved an extraordinary act of service which is the Incarnation of Elohim in the form of human kind”! That emptying of glory to walk in the natural realm meant all the limitations of humanity were experienced by Yeshua.

He suffered all these things for our sake to function as the Lamb of Elohim! It was to serve both the Father and us that He gave up His glory!

Hebrews 4:14-16 (KJV) 14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. 15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the

feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

This simplification of the New Covenant became the greatest stumbling stone of Hebrews/Jews and majority of humans – including many sects who claim to be Christians! The biggest question which agitates their minds is this: how could Elohim become human?

Matthew 1:23 (KJV) *23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.*

Interestingly, those who bring themselves to believe this seemingly complex theological puzzle by Faith find the joy of the New birth within their hearts!

2 Corinthians 5:17 (KJV) *17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

3. The Lifestyle Modelled by Yeshua

Yeshua chose a simple lifestyle and called on all who would represent Him in the earth realm to do likewise. This lifestyle involved:

3.1. Access. He was accessible. The 12 Apostles had 24/7 access to Him. They lived with Him, ate together and were in close proximity despite being their Lord.

3.2. Involvement. He was involved in the life of people. He was no distant CEO figure who lived in gilded surroundings removed from their realities. He knew the weaknesses of Peter (impulsiveness and brashness) which were distinct from those of James and John (hot temper, sectarianism) and dealt with them on personal levels. He visited the home of Peter and ministered to his sick mother in law (Matthew 8:14-17). He dined regularly in the home of Lazarus, Mary and Martha and allowed them to refresh his physical being with food and rest. Yeshua truly demonstrated personal relationship in His walk with the disciples.

Yeshua did not allow disciples to place barriers between Himself and those who had need to come near Him.

Matthew 19:13-14 (KJV) *13 Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. 14 But Jesus said, suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.*

3.3. He did not create administrative processes which kept people away or far. For Him. Leadership is service and that involves stooping low to meet people at their point of need.

The woman with issue of Blood – who was unqualified to come near a Rabbi - had access to Him:

Matthew 9:20-22 (KJV) *20 And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment: 21 For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. 22 But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.*

In that same Matthew 9, we see Yeshua also went to homes of Gentiles to minister to their needs – something religious leaders of His day would not do:

Matthew 9:23-25 (KJV) *23 And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise, 24 He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. 25 But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose.*

The time has come for saints to deliberately refuse to fund ostentatious displays of worldliness by preachers who compete for attention with rock stars and seem to love it when they are adored and idolized. The remnant cannot be indifferent when it comes to choose between being on either side of the Lord or that of Religion! Mature saints will refuse to use divine resources they are going to give account of as stewards on the Last Day to fund so called ministries that have gone the way of Babylon: where CEO like figures are distant, removed from the congregations they are supposed to Pastor. Such Nimrodic personalities are rather building personal brands and religious corporations which are enslaving saints afresh, taking away the liberty Holy Spirit gave them in Yeshua!

3.4 Yeshua lived in contentment, one of the marks of simplicity. He did not go about accumulating so much stuff. He rested in the benefice of His Father in heaven Who used specific human beings to minister to His material needs.

Christian religion failed woefully when it forsook the lifestyle and teachings of the One they claim as founder. Today, the more prominent Religious leaders are, the more they forsake simplicity. They put in place complex structures which make them plastic personalities without heart, receiving adoration and service from those they are supposed to serve! The accumulation of consumer goods and even addiction to brands (food, clothing, drinks) can clutter the heart with complex desires which end up taking eyes of Christians off their heavenly Father and His Kingdom!

4. The Teachings of Yeshua and apostles emphasized simplicity of trusting Elohim whole heartedly as our part in the New Covenant.

Whenever we can come to that place of trusting our heavenly Father, it is easy walk in the basic New Covenant command to seek first His Kingdom:

Matthew 6:19-34 (KJV) *19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. 22 The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. 23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! 24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. 25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? 26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? 27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? 28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: 29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass*

of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? 31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Hebrews 13:5-6 (KJV) *5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. 6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*

Yeshua, Jesus summed up the New Covenant with simplicity as the lifestyle of loving Elohim with all our beings and loving neighbors as ourselves! That was why He instituted the Golden Rule.

The Gospel is simple and uncomplicated!

The New Covenant is not a religion of rituals and endless activities which must be performed at certain times in religiously designed buildings called 'Churches'. It is rather a lifestyle of relationship with Elohim that is based on His love. Whenever the enemy wants to smite saints, one of the first things he does is to craftily take their eyes of this simplicity of the gospel!

2 Corinthians 11:3 (KJV) *3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.*

The fact that everyone – irrespective of race, ethnicity, gender, age, socio-economic situation or location can be saved by believing in the heart and confessing with the tongue speaks volumes about simplicity of the gospel.

Romans 1:16 (KJV) *16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

We who are disciples and ministers of Yeshua and the Kingdom should emulate Paul and live in simplicity

2 Corinthians 1:12 (KJV) *12 For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.*

Those who are unable to receive the gospel in its simplicity often wrestle with complexities which both the human mind and Satan creates to block their understanding of truth.

1 Corinthians 1:22-23 (KJV) *22 For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: 23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;*

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 (KJV) *3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

Psalms 119:130 (KJV) *130 The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.*

As we shall see at a later stage, the superflousness of the Christian Religion has its root in the marriage of convenience between the Roman Empire and a wing of the Church which was tired of persecution. Unfortunately, the Protestant Reformation did not root out this aspect of the DNA of Rome leading to what is seen today in Pentecostal and Evangelical circles with ostentatious leadership!

Let us walk in New Covenant realities by returning to simplicity of life and ministry! The more we follow the simple path, the more we can take the gospel from the ornate buildings to the Community to impact it for transformation as Salt and Light (Matthew 5:13-16). In the New Covenant, the Church is the people – those redeemed by the Blood, not buildings! It is time to invest far more in people so they can be empowered to be able citizens of the Kingdom and Ambassadors of King Yeshua, Jesus anywhere and anytime.

That is the essence of the revelation of the Teach>Train>Equip>Activate>Release model of ministry which is modelled by Global School of Ministry and Global Advanced Mentorship Program. It is time to yank off and dump the blinders of Christian Religion and embrace the liberating truth of the gospel which empowers!

John 8:32 (KJV) *32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

Review Questions

1. Kindly share 3 things which ministered most to you.

Chapter 25

New Covenant Saints and the World

The New Covenant recognizes two peoples and two worlds on the same earth.

Philippians 3:1 (KJV) *1 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.*

In the Old Covenant, there were two worlds, two broad sets of people groups living on the same earth created by Elohim. On the one hand, were the Hebrews/Jews whose special status was based first on the covenant Elohim made with Abraham and secondly the Torah He gave them on Mount Sinai. The blood of animals and Circumcision was the instruments used to seal the Covenant.

Genesis 17:7-14 (KJV) *7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. 8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. 9 And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. 10 This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. 11 And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. 12 And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. 13 He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. 14 And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.*

Exodus 24:6-8 (KJV) *6 And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basons; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. 7 And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. 8 And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.*

When the Old was fulfilled by Yeshua, He inaugurated the New Covenant which was sealed in His Blood, released by Grace for all who would exercise faith to receive. The New Covenant divides humanity into two broad groups: The Kingdom or government of Elohim and the World ruled by the prince of the power of the air, Satan.

Ephesians 2:1-3 (KJV) *1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*

1 Corinthians 6:9-13 (KJV) *9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of*

God. 11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. 12 All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. 13 Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.

Separation of these two types of people is basic

Kingdom citizens and Ambassadors are holy unto Elohim the Creator and represent their King, Yeshua in thought, word, and deed. Holy Spirit rules their lives. Righteousness is their defining lifestyle. Those who refuse Lordship of Yeshua or backslide from Him remain in their sins, living by works of the flesh. As 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 says, they are ruled by the god of the world, Satan. Because of this, Sin and unrighteous conduct define their lifestyle.

Galatians 5:15-24 (KJV) *15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. 16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. 18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. 24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*

For this reason, Yeshua interceded that Yahweh His Father would preserve them from the influence of Satan:

John 17:6, 9, 11 (KJV) *6 I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.*

9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are

John 17:6:14-18, 20 (KJV) *14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world 17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.*

20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

The Call to Separation

One of the most difficult pills for most saints to swallow is the reality that the Word is clear **that** their lives should be opposite to those of people in the world! There are constitutional limitations on degrees

of relationship permissible. The core concept to bear in mind is those who refuse to embrace the love of Elohim in Yeshua are ruled by an 'opposite' spirit!

For this reason, relationships like business partnership, marriage, and certain kinds of intimate fellowship are constitutionally barred. Most saints who proceed along the forbidden lines have done so with much scars to show. In no way is the Constitution suggesting isolation of saints, it is rather recognizing the dangers of getting unequally yoked (relationships that are foundationally tilted against the saints by partners who may have selfish agenda)

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 (KJV) *14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*

All that is in the world system – the best it offers is summed up as Carnality and therefore extremely toxic to spiritual life and growth of saints!

1 John 2:15-17 (KJV) *15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

The world system and its screaming advertising of its 'goods' is based on the premise that lusts of the flesh, lusts of the eyes, and pride of life can be used to activate cravings for 'unclean things' by saints. Where saints see, live, and walk by Faith, they will be led by Holy Spirit in all things with no occasion of stumbling. But where saints are not diligent, they open the gates of their beings – eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin the spirit of the world. To love the world and submit to its lust based behavior is to repudiate the Fatherhood of Yahweh!

Why saints must beware of the world, exercising great caution and wisdom not to be caught up in it:

i. The world system is ruled by Satan whose chief goal is to blind eyes of the greatest majority so they cannot see the end of their rebellion which is eternal damnation.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 (KJV) *3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

1 John 5:19 (KJV) *19 And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.*

ii. Satan controls the world system through Principalities assigned to corrupt all mountains of society with values which are anti-Kingdom.

This includes: Fashion and accessories deliberately designed to stoke sensuality and make humans objects of seduction. Other principalities drive partisan politics which is filled with strife, contention, and works of the flesh. Others like Mammon are assigned to stir covetousness and love of money for its own sake and assumed powers derived from having much.

iii. The Kingdom operates by the process of influence Holy Spirit exerts from vessels of saints to impact the world. Where a relationship reverses the divine purpose, and creates the environment for Prince of the power of the air to use an unbeliever or backslider to influence a saint, a spiritual abnormality is at work. Heaven does not approve such unequal yokes.

Separation is not isolation but platform for Engagement!

Saints are not called to live in monasteries, physically removed from those who are still under dominion of Satan. The separation is in terms of identity, character, lifestyle, choices made so they can be a witness that proves the reality that Yeshua is Who the Word says He is. In other words, when saints live an 'other worldly' life, they bear witness that the gospel is real!

We need to be reminded again and again that the call is to separation, not isolation! The reason is saints must of necessity engage with their host communities and other people without an attitude of 'holier than you', cultural warring or fighting government through agitation-propaganda. The world cannot be transformed by saints abusing and quarrelling with those who prefer to live under dominion of Satan.

Assignment of Saints in the World

#.1. Transform worldly culture by changing lives of people through effective Evangelism!

In every generation since Rome married the Church, there has always arisen 'leaders' who urge saints to do everything possible to 'climb' the Mountains of Society as a way of 'establishing the Kingdom'. This ultra-dangerous theology has no foundation in the Holy Scriptures. There may be saints who Elohim in His determinate counsel elects for Civic leadership for which He vests them with governmental authority. There are those He elects to use in Business and blesses them with the election of receiving and distributing great wealth. For the vast majority of saints however, the Lord uses them to transform worldly culture from a clear paradigm. He separates them from Satan and worldly influence and then uses them to transform the world within their loops of influence by changing lives of people, one at a time.

Kingdom citizens and ambassadors are on assignment in the earth realm as 'sent' people who are to complete the work of reconciliation started by their Master amongst those who are fiercely opposed to the Kingdom and righteousness.

Matthew 10:16 (KJV) *16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.*

Matthew 28:18-20 (KJV) *18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of*

the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

It is no wonder the Alpha Church had this testimony: They turned the world upside down by Preaching Yeshua and the Kingdom!

Acts 17:6-7 (KJV) *6 And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; 7 Whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus*

Kingdom citizens and Ambassadors are to transform the world in a catalytic manner: from inside out! That is why the greatest instrument of transforming worldly culture is the Great Commission. The reason is simple: when people are saved and sealed by Holy Spirit, they are translated from worldly culture to Kingdom Culture. As they reach out to other people they know with the gospel, more people are inducted into the New Life in Yeshua.

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 (KJV) *17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. 20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. 21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

When sinners are led to Yeshua and through teaching transitioned to be disciples, their value system changes from worldly to Kingdom culture. The more such people are raised in a Community, the more the critical mass they are affects their host community! In this way, they affect more lives and the Community values and ethos change.

Matthew 13:33 (KJV) *33 Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.*

#.2. Transform their communities through 'other worldly' lifestyle

Another way saints can change Kingdom culture is by how they live lives markedly different from and superior to their unbelieving relatives, neighbors, colleagues and friends.

Philippians 2:12-16 (KJV) *12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. 14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings: 15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; 16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.*

As the Salt of the earth and Light of the world, their clean, holy lives challenge, inspire and impact those who are in darkness of evil thoughts, attitudes, words and deeds.

Matthew 5:13-16 (KJV) *13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

In making fashion statements, saints are to choose what glorifies Elohim and keeps their conscience clear. Whether in fashion or choice of what to eat, a saint is not supposed to be selfish doing just what he or she wants. There needs to be consideration of spiritual lives and wellbeing of immature or less spiritual saints who can be influenced by what they see older or more prominent saints do.

Romans 14:12-23 (KJV) *12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. 13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. 14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean. 15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. 16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of: 17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. 18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. 19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. 20 For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. 21 It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. 22 Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. 23 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*

#.3. By having a heart for the Community translating to projects which make a positive difference

In this regard, both as individuals or Kingdom communities, saints must of necessity impact their environments and be vessels Holy Spirit uses to release the quantum of Grace and Divine presence which can transform worldly culture. To refuse to engage with our communities in this manner makes a saint and the Kingdom community irrelevant and fit for trampling under foot.

Each Congregation of the New Covenant is not supposed to turn a blind eye to the practical social needs of their host communities. It is wrong for saints to drive long distances, park their vehicles inside enclosed car parks to enter 'Church buildings where they engage in certain activities for two or three hours only to drive back home thereafter, oblivious of the crying needs of folks living nearby. Congregations and ministries need to provide within the grace level Elohim grants them, food for the homeless (and Shelters where need be); educational enhancement programs for youths struggling with certain subjects; day care centers, children play groups and nurseries serving the wider community at very low cost or even free of charge.

#.4. By Intercession and Spiritual Warfare

As saints stand in the gap for their communities, the mercy of Elohim is extended to them so they are not destroyed by their sins before time.

Jeremiah 5:1 (KJV) *1 Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it.*

Ezekiel 22:30 (KJV) *30 And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.*

When saints congregate at a Consecrated location or building, they can cash the check of Faith on the promise Elohim made to Solomon:

2 Chronicles 7:13-15 (KJV) *13 If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people; 14 If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. 15 Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place.*

Ephesians 6:10-12 (KJV) *10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places*

Through prayers, the lot of communities – including educational needs, lifestyle of youths and even matters such as existence of Pubs and places people commit sin such as Casinos and brothels can be closed after the ruling principalities are brought under subjection! Through intercession, a forgotten Community, Neighborhood or City can find favor from City, State and National Governments. No Kingdom Community is allowed to be indifferent to the situation and fate of the wider Community wherein it is planted! While Politicians and Community leaders wrestle with each other of the opposing camps, the Living Church does not war according to the Flesh or with carnal resources!

#.5. Saints have responsibilities to temporal rulers and governments

Saints are dual citizens of the Kingdom of Elohim which is spiritual governance of their conduct and of the nation where they live which has human rulers (who may be unbelievers). Such nations may have laws and governmental systems which may combine to create adverse environment for saints. Despite this reality, saints are called to engage with contemporary leaders, governments and laws in a manner which honors Elohim and promotes His Kingdom. ***The response of saints to human rulers and governments should not be based on their pain but for sake of Yeshua.***

1. Pray for human leaders

1 Timothy 2:1-6 (KJV) *1 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; 2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; 4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; 6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*

2. Give them their due in terms of honour, respect, submission and pay their taxes as and when due

Saints have no business abusing their elected officials. They should also submit to the authority of earthly rulers and obey laws. Where there is need to make conscientious objection to any law, such can be pursued with great grace.

Romans 13:1-7 (KJV) *1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. 2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: 4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. 5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. 6 For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. 7 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.*

They are to discharge their civic responsibilities - including payment of due taxes with great grace.

Matthew 22:16-21 (KJV) *16 And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men. 17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? 18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? 19 Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. 20 And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? 21 They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.*

1 Peter 2:9-17 (KJV) *9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. 11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. 13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; 14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. 15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: 16 As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. 17 Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.*

Those who use the name of the Lord to advocate rebellion as a way of life and lawlessness as a culture risk making the gospel of no effect. The Gospel has evidence!

If we live by the Word which dwells richly in us, it will produce abundant life which makes us sufficient in Yeshua rather than clones of the world! That way, we can discern and escape the snares of the world system which hunts for souls of saints!

Review Questions

1. Why are saints forbidden from being unequally yoked with the world or those who reject Yeshua?
2. Among the 5 Assignments Saints owe the world, which ones impacted you most?

Chapter 26

6 Paradigms of The True Church

Understanding the True Church

One of the most outstanding features of the New Covenant is it births the Church! Many of those who rail against the Church make a mistake of fighting the wrong foe! They may be referring to Christian Religion which is an error or wrong notions of the Church.

What the Church is not

The Church presented in the New Covenant is not any of these:

1. Organization of humans;
2. Buildings with religious designs people go into on certain 'holy' days and hours;
3. A Carnal entity that is known by what is seen, heard or felt;
4. A Business entity programmed to generate revenue for its owners and managers;
5. An entity measured by numbers of people connected to it.

The New Covenant Church in Reality

The New Covenant Church has its origin in Elohim. He conceived her, birthed her, keeps her and will ensure it consummates its destiny in Yeshua at end of the age. Instead of getting caught up in definitions, let us see how the New Covenant presents the Church in terms that are rich with imagery:

A. The Body of Yeshua

There is an overarching presentation of the True Church as the very Body of Yeshua in the New Covenant texts.

Romans 7:4 (KJV) *4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.*

Romans 12:3-10 (KJV) *3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. 4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness 9 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. 10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;*

1 Corinthians 12:12-30 (KJV) *12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. 14 For the body is not one member, but many. 15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? 16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? 17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? 18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. 19 And if they were all one member, where were the body? 20 But now are they many members, yet but one body. 21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. 22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: 23 And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. 24 For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked. 25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. 26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. **27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.** 28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? 30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?*

This imagery presents the Church the way Elohim sees it as a direct fruit of the Incarnation and completed earthly assignment of Yeshua, just as He Himself reported to the Father in John 17.

Implications of understanding the Church as the spiritual Body of Yeshua in the earth realm

A.1 The Church can walk in the fullness of its inheritance only when it truly understands and walks in the reality that it is the very spiritual Body of Yeshua, Jesus the King of Kings! This awesome truth is truly mind boggling and shifts the paradigm of power away from Satan consciousness to Body consciousness. Let us see why:

Colossians 1:12-29 (KJV) *12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: 13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: 14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: 15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. **18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.** 19 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; 20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. 21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled 22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: 23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister; 24 Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: 25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; 26 Even the*

mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: 27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: 28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: 29 Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

Colossians 2:6-10 (KJV) *6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: 7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. 8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. 9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. 10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power*

A.2 Saints will walk in holiness, knowing it is spiritual suicide to allow members of their bodies to serve Satan and the flesh

1 Corinthians 6:15-19 (KJV) *15 Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. 16 What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. 17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. 18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. 19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*

A.3 The Body of Yeshua will reject the paradigm of Church as both a dry, impersonal religious organization and as a religious building people go into on certain 'holy' days and hours.

A.4 The Church will be seen for what it is: A living, loving organism of actively empowered Body parts functionally relevant to the needs of each other.

When ministers embrace this paradigm, they will invest to make Ephesians 4:11-16 come to pass. The outcome is a situation where all saints discover, are activated in and walk in their spiritual gifts.

Ephesians 4:13-16 (KJV) *13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

B. The Bride of Yeshua

This is another mind-boggling profile of the true Kingdom Church. The eternal reality is Yeshua, Jesus sometime in time was Incarnated in order to be the Perfect Human Whose Holy Blood was poured out as a Bride Price for a spiritual Bride! This Bride includes saints already triumphant after running their earthly races as well as the militant wing which is still living in time!

Ephesians 5:22-27 (KJV) *22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24*

Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Commentary: Yeshua never leaves His Church the way He found it. He is at work, perfecting the Church for the fullness of glory so it can be fit for the marriage supper to come!

Verse 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Commentary: The picture in verses 31,32 is that of cleaving of a wife to her husband!

Implications of understanding and embracing this truth of the Church as Bride of Yeshua:

B.1 As the Bride of Yeshua, the message is simple: Saints are one with Him in a legal, spiritual contract! Once a sinner is convicted, repents genuinely and puts total faith for redemption in the Blood that Yeshua shed on the Cross, He or she has partaken of the Bride Price – the money given by a Groom to parents of a Bride! That Bride Price is His Blood!

1 Peter 1:18-20 (KJV) *18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; 19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: 20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,*

1 Corinthians 6:20 (KJV) *20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

B.2 Chastity/Holiness. We do not own our beings to do whatever we like. Just as it is abominable to see a married woman habitually living in adultery, so is it an abomination for saints to live under the influence of Satan to the extent that he controls their behaviour which is what Sin and sinning is all about! Understanding this truth will compel saints to love righteousness and hate iniquity and not open any doors to the Adversary to control their behaviour away from the nature of Yeshua which is righteousness! As Hebrews 1:9 states, this was one of the secrets of the remarkable life of Yeshua.

True Kingdom leaders are not those who have the largest congregations or built the largest Cathedrals or most prominent on TV, Cable and Radio. They are rather those who are passionately invested in the faith that none of the souls committed to their trust should slip away and perish. Beyond that they make it a covenant commitment to present all saints within their loop faultless before Yeshua at His coming, which they look up to in eager anticipation!

2 Corinthians 11:2 (KJV) *2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.*

Galatians 4:11-12, 16, 19 (KJV) 11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain. 12 Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all.

16 Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?

19 My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

Colossians 1:28-29 (KJV) 28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: 29 Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

Leaders who despise this commitment behave like hirelings who flee when wolves appear like Yeshua described in John 10.

B.3 Security. Husbands do not abandon their wives in dangerous environments to manage on their own strength. On the other hand, they are invested in doing all necessary things to keep their wives secure from robbers, rapists and other types of evil people. Before He ascended back to heaven, Yeshua gave His word concerning security and safety of His Bride.

Matthew 28:20 (KJV) 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

He Himself assured that once two or three people are gathered in His Name, there is an automatic manifestation of His Presence! We do not need as it were to enter a special religiously designed building or make some incantations before this happens! We are His Church and anywhere we are, He is right there! If we embrace this truth and walk in it, mountains will move without struggle!

Matthew 18:19-20 (KJV) 19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

His apostles also amplified that message:

Hebrews 13:5-6 (KJV) 5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. 6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

1 Corinthians 10:13 (KJV) 13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Jude 24-25 (KJV) 24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, 25 To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

B.4 Abide in Yeshua. Understanding this truth will motivate saints to cling to and abide in Yeshua in all situations, knowing we are betrothed to Him for all eternity (John 15:1-8)!

C. The Agency of the Kingdom which will continue His work in the earth realm until consummation of all things.

Before He left the earth realm for Heaven, Yeshua mandated the Church to continue His Mission of reconciling the Lost to The Father. It is only through this process of conversion from Sinner to Saint that the Kingdom is populated.

Matthew 28:18-20 (KJV) *18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen*

Acts 1:4-8 (KJV) *4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. 5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. 6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? 7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. 8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

Birthing on the Day of Pentecost, the Alpha or early Church laid hold of its identity as a Divine reality and went forth with nothing but His Mandate; His Presence and Power. It turned the world upside down!

Acts 2:1-4 (KJV) *1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

Acts 17:6 (KJV) *6 And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;*

We on whom end of the age has come must also learn to die to self, take away all confidence in all things carnal and release our vessels 100 percent for Holy Spirit to use to complete the work. Getting back into the core Kingdom Business of reconciling the lost to our heavenly Father through Faith in the finished work of the Cross is the urgent need of the hour, if we truly are expectant of return of the King of Kings! Interestingly, this reconciliation Commission is not reserved for a select few called anointed Evangelists but is rather an assignment every true saint can get involved with.

Matthew 24:14 (KJV) *14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 (KJV) *17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. 20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye*

reconciled to God.²¹ For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Very often, most saints make the mistake of thinking that the Church and the Kingdom are one and the same. The reality however is that the Church is an agency of the Kingdom on this side of eternity!

A. Called out people or in Greek, 'Ekklesia'!

The true identity of the Church therefore is this: we are the Called-out people of Elohim who are to collectively manifest and function as agency of the eternal Kingdom planted in the earth realm to impact the world on this side of eternity:

1 Peter 2:9-12 (KJV) *9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. 11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

Philippians 2:12-16 (KJV) *12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. 14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings: 15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; 16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.*

Our identity is distinct from the World. We have no business being like it. We are rather catalysts of divine transformation. On encountering the True Church, those in the world will know both by fruits as well as by focus.

Matthew 5:16 (KJV) *16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

The Grace of Yeshua in us which we appropriate by Faith is manifested in the good works which come forth as fruit!

Titus 2:7 (KJV) *7 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,*

Titus 2:14 (KJV) *14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

Titus 3:8 (KJV) *8 This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.*

Titus 3:14 (KJV) *14 And let our's also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful*

The sweetest part of the deal is that in the Church, Yeshua made room for all who believe to come and partake of His Headship and position as Groom! Hebrews/Jews and Gentiles are all called, have

responded, are responding and are equal stake holders in the New Covenant Church! In the New Covenant Church, all middle walls of partition were broken and set aside by the broken Body of Yeshua so that all have access as Hebrews 10: 19-25 says. Amongst the redeemed, divisions based on racial, ethnic, gender, age or socio-economic status becomes irrelevant!

Galatians 3:26-29 (KJV) *26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

Ephesians 2:11-22 (KJV) *11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; 12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. 14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: 17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. 18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. 19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*

Ephesians 3:1-11 (KJV) *1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, 2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: 3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, 4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) 5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; 6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: 7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. 8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; 9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: 10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, 11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:*

The Church will be consummated in Yeshua at end of the age. That is why His return is organically linked to fulfilment of the lifespan of the Church. In other words, the True Church has a start and end date. Both are linked to Yeshua. It started after He left the earth and Yahweh sent Holy Spirit to take His Place as Comforter of all saints.

John 14:16 (KJV) *16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. 18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. 19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.*

John 16:7 (KJV) *7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you*

The Church has a Day of Consummation of its assignment

The New Covenant reveals with clarity that the Church that was activated in the earth realm on the Day of Pentecost has a Day appointed, known only to the Father when its assignment will be consummated before the Kingdom is established in the earth realm. That day of consummation will involve resurrection of saints who died in Yeshua and catching away (otherwise called Rapture) of those who are alive. The reason is that flesh and blood (mortality) cannot inherit the Kingdom. It is necessary for Saints to be like Yeshua the Head Whose resurrection and bodily ascension indicates that the earth realm during the Manifest Kingdom will be ruled by saints who have translated from mortality to immortality. Only two things can affect this translation: Death or the Rapture!

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (KJV) *13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

1 Corinthians 15:49-53 (KJV) *49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. 50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

Its next phase will be brief: The Judgement Seat of Yeshua for assessment of the quality of their work in the earth realm (2 Corinthians 5:10) and Marriage Supper of the Lamb where rewards will be distributed to the deserving. (Revelation 19:1-9) Thereafter, the Lord will return with the saints triumphant to vanquish armies of the world led by the anti-Christ. With Satan chained, there will be no evil influence on the earth realm as Yeshua rules the earth realm as King of Kings with Jerusalem as His Capital city. Saints will rule and reign in a physical sense as Priests and Kings across the cities and nations of the earth realm for 1000 years. After a few more things including eternal damnation of Satan; the Great White Throne Judgement, endless eternity will begin when the Mystery of Elohim will be accomplished and He will be all in all for His saints (Revelation 19:11-21); 20; 21; 22).

The awesome inheritance of saints who suffer for His Name sake or deny themselves present luxuries to complete their course is just plainly unspeakable!

1 Corinthians 2:9 (KJV) *9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*

Romans 8:16-19 (KJV) *16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. 18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.*

Let us close with this awesome prayer by Paul for the Church:

Ephesians 1:15-23 (KJV) *15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, 16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; 17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: 18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, 19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, 20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.*

B. The True Church is the Spiritual Building of Elohim in the Earth Realm.

The individual saint is the 'Church' of Elohim by His Indwelling Holy Spirit. In the same way, all saints are regarded as individual building blocks – lively stones – which collectively make up His Spiritual House on earth. In other words, we 'do not go to Church', rather we are the Church!

Ephesians 2:18-22 (KJV) *18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. 19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*

1 Peter 2:5 (KJV) *5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*

Implications of this Truth

F.1 If we accept this truth, we will die to self so that our lives are poured out to love Elohim without restraints as well as our fellow brethren of like precious faith.

F.2 Knowing this truth will drive us to pay whatever price that is required of us to walk in wisdom to maintain unity of the Body in the Bond of Peace (Ephesians 4:1-6; John 17).

F.3 Knowing this truth will enable us to bend over backwards to recover those who err (Galatians 6:1-2).

The True Kingdom Church is a supernatural organism of sons of Elohim united together as lively stones! That is why Unity based on Love is at the heart of the Church. Satan knows this and brings His biggest and most potent arsenals to war against unity of the Body.

Review Questions

1. Kindly indicate which of the 6 paradigms of the True Church (A – F in the chapter) that ministered most to you
2. What will you do with the revelation in this Chapter?

Chapter 27

The Individual Saint: Profile of the Saint as Work in Progress

The individual saint: A profile

In the previous chapter, we focused on the True Church of Yeshua as an organic spiritual entity which is agency of the Kingdom in the earth realm. In that regard, the picture is that of an organism containing living parts which are held together by Blood of the Lamb and Holy Spirit.

With that picture of a Body in mind, it is needful to examine what the individual parts are. The individual part here is no other than the saint. One of the greatest failures of Christian Religion which exposes its fundamental deficiency is the inability to receive and walk in the report of the New Covenant concerning the awesome identity and profile of saints.

Sainthood is a reality of Grace, not works! It is an inheritance saints derive from their relationship with the Father, standing on the merit of the finished work of the Cross. In other words, one who truly believes and embraces Salvation in Yeshua, Jesus alone based on the Blood He shed experiences an immediate transition of status: from sinner to saint!

2 Corinthians 5:17 (KJV) *17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new*

Sainthood is who brethren are by their New nature! This judicial reality is the basis on which Elohim views the redeemed and makes them part of His family and Kingdom. Lest this truth is misinterpreted, let us note quickly also that there is nowhere in the Word that is implied that once people are saved, there is no more work to be done in them. On the other hand, the New Covenant presents an interesting picture:

1. Judicially, those who are saved have right standing (righteousness) with the Father. They are consecrated or set apart for His holy use.
2. Though saints by His Grace, Elohim invites them to a lifelong process of being conformed into the image of Yeshua, Jesus and even orchestrates the process!
3. Those who stop growing and pressing into Him end up rusty and potentially risk falling away!

Let us examine what the New Covenant says of these three tranches of truth so that we can walk in the fullness of Truth.

1. Judicially, those who are saved have right standing (righteousness) with the Father. They are consecrated or set apart for His holy use.

In the New Covenant, Salvation from Sin and its master, Satan is a free gift. We do not earn it by works or humanistic attempts to please him. It is not by the weight of our prayers or what we abstained from.

No one gains divine approval on the merit of the quantum of religious exertions, rituals performed or acts of self-flagellation!

Romans 6:23 (KJV) *23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Ephesians 2:1-8 (KJV) *1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

Romans 5:15-18 (KJV) *15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. 16 And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. 17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) 18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.*

The New Creation is just that: New humans! Saints are redeemed from the hand of Satan; made righteous by the Blood; Justified in His sight; adopted into the family of Elohim and having a secure inheritance in Him, among other blessings. Saints who are unable to receive the gift of Salvation by Grace will struggle with a religious spirit which negates the Joy and Liberty they should enjoy in Him. (KJV)

Romans 1:16-17 (KJV) *16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*

2. Though saints by His Grace, Elohim invites them to a lifelong process of being conformed into the image of Yeshua, Jesus and even orchestrates the process!

While on this side of eternity, Elohim does not abandon the saint to His own devices. He is actively at work through dealings of Holy Spirit, ministry of the Word, divinely orchestrated circumstances, discipline, corrections and what they suffer to perfect saints in character. His ultimate goal is enable each saint to conform into the image of Yeshua, the Ultimate Human!

Romans 8:28-30 (KJV) *28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

The reason why this is so critical is that each saint has an ultimate frame of reference: Yeshua, the Model Human. If saints cooperate with Him by abiding in Yeshua and His Word regardless of what they encounter on the outside, their perfection will be a done deal (John 15:1-8).

As we saw in an earlier chapter, all saints are expected to transition into Disciples or followers of Jesus; to become Intimate with Yeshua and thus have access to His heart which can only come by Friendship and grow to live like sons of Elohim in the earth realm, taking responsibility for estate of their Father. We also saw that in terms of ministry, all saints are called into the Royal Priesthood after the Order of Melchizedek Whose High Priest is Yeshua Himself, seated on the Throne of Majesty. In this way, each saint was equipped to run the Kingdom race in their appointed lanes in such a way to breast the tape into eternity with full honours!

The mandate was not just to preach and teach, but to do so within a certain context: as Witnesses of Yeshua, Jesus! A witness is one whose lifestyle reflected the Person Who sent him/her:

Acts 1:8 (KJV) *8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: **and ye shall be witnesses unto me** both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

The Alpha Church was so successful in this regard that Gentiles in Antioch saw the Messiah (Greek: Christos) evidently displayed in their lives and therefore gave them the nickname: Christian.

Acts 11:25-26 (KJV) *25 Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: 26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. **And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.***

The Gentiles who did not know Yeshua could see Him in the lives of the brethren in their midst! This nickname by unbelievers has stuck ever since. Unfortunately, multitudes who had no idea of its origin have made that nickname a crutch on which a Religious system is based.

We will recall that in Acts chapter 9, Paul had a dramatic, life changing encounter with the glorified Yeshua which was his entrance into the Kingdom. He did not rest on his oars but embraced the truth of process which enabled him to become an outstanding saint and leader. In quest of understanding His King and Kingdom, Paul detached himself from other pursuits to focus intensely on these two things. The intensity of this quest is best understood by reading this text which reveal his thirst for growth:

Philippians 3:7-17 (KJV) *7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. 16 Nevertheless, whereto*

we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. 17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

It is also revealed in his attitude to challenges and sufferings:

Acts 20:22-24 (KJV) *22 And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: 23 Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. 24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.*

2 Corinthians 10:7-10 (KJV) *7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. 8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. 9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.*

Case study: Some epistles of Paul were written to saints in various cities to empower them. Yet, the epistles did not just commend them where necessary, but also rebuked corrected and exhorted them to embrace ways to grow up in Yeshua!

3. Those who stop growing and pressing into Him end up rusty and potentially risk falling away!

Let us restate the truth that Grace is not a static thing! It is His life which we can and should grow in.

2 Peter 3:18 (KJV) *18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*

It is an inconvenient truth which saints need to understand and walk in! Peter was an again instrument who Holy Spirit used to put the necessity of growth in the right context and danger of eternal damnation when this does not happen.

2 Peter 1:5-11 (KJV) *5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; 6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; 7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. 8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. 10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: 11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

Saints, Grace, Sin, and Security

Satan has various crafty ways of deceiving saints. One of them is to them into wild goose chases of phantom enemies based on differences in dogma. It is important for the remnant to see through his devices and focus on the practical matters of how Elohim wants us to live and desist from willful sins which He considers as iniquity. In this regard, recourse to denominational debates of whether a saint has eternal security or not, regardless of what he or she does after being saved is not the best approach.

The gold standard is to simply stay on the word. Here is what the Word says about saints, Grace, Sin and Security.

3(i). The new nature of saints is righteousness which requires them to live holy before the Lord

1 Peter 1:15-16 (KJV) *15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; 16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.*

1 John 3:1-9 (KJV) *1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. 4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. 5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. 6 Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. 7 Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. 8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. 9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.*

Critical adversaries whose activities may derail saints from a life of holiness unto the Lord include:

Satan, the flesh/human nature, worldly influences and denominational affiliations which can tempt us away from the truth and Kingdom life or distort our theologies. In other words, though saved, if we give any adversaries access to our soul, they will eventually overpower and control saints away from the righteousness we received as a gift.

3(ii). Saints have a responsibility not to abuse Grace and use it as excuse to sin.

Grace is free but not Cheap! Grace of Elohim was procured for humanity through the costly price of the Blood of Yeshua! This Grace therefore enables saints not only to come into a state of right standing with the Father but to also remain in a relationship of like persons! To suggest that some body will receive Grace to be saved from Satan and Sin only to remain bound in habitual sins is to stretch the gospel!

Romans 6:1-16 (KJV) *1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? 3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: 6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. 7 For he that is dead is freed from sin. 8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: 9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. 10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. 11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. 12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. 15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law,*

but under grace? God forbid. 16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

3(iii). Though it is not the will of Elohim that any saint should sin, whenever there is a slip or stumbling, there should be recourse of penitence to Yeshua and His Blood for cleansing

The New Covenant recognizes the reality that either in Thought, Word, Attitudes, Actions; by what is done or left undone, a Christian can miss the mark, even unintentionally. Whenever this happens, there is a breach in realm of the Spirit regarding communion with Elohim.

1 John 1:5-10 (KJV) *5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*

Saints are warned throughout the Holy Writ not to assume that because of a historical encounter with Yeshua, they have a free pass to live anyhow and remain in a fallen state, since no one knows when the end of all things is due. A lively conscience is supposed to be convicted by Holy Spirit to the extent of genuine heartfelt repentance!

1 John 2:1-3 (KJV) *1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. 3 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.*

3(iv). Saints are secure in their Redeemer and cannot be destroyed by Satan or external forces as long as they abide in Him and rely on His strength, not theirs

The security that Yeshua guarantees those who are His is simple and potent: if we abide in Him and allow His words to abide in us, neither Satan, demons, human beings nor circumstances can pluck us out of His safe hands!

John 10:9-11,2 6-29 (KJV) *9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. 10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. 11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. 26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. 27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*

He Who began the good work of Redemption does not leave saints to their own devices. He is always at work using a variety of means including placing special vessels in our path to urge us onto the right path and pace; release of revelation of Truth which empowers and the right kind of spiritual atmosphere needed to nurture growth.

Philippians 1:6 (KJV) *6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:*

That is why with the security Elohim offers saints in Yeshua, comes two matching responses:

- **Surrender of the will to Him.**

Let us note that from the way Elohim created humans, He placed in them the capacity to choose whether to obey Him and be blessed or disobey Him and to suffer the consequences. This capacity to choose is in the human will. Elohim respects choices His saints make and will never violate their will. This explains the Fall of Adam and Eve and that of all those who once walked with Elohim but fell by the wayside, their theologies notwithstanding!

- **A conscious cooperation with Holy Spirit to put off what He reveals as untenable and put on what He considers necessary. It is still His Grace at work in both the act of revealing and the strength to obey!**

Philippians 2:12-16 (KJV) *12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. 14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings: 15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; 16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.*

Ephesians 4:17-32 (KJV) *17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: 19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. 20 But ye have not so learned Christ; 21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. 25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. 26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27 Neither give place to the devil. 28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. 29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. 30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*

Ephesians 5:1-11 (KJV) *1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; 2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. 3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; 4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. 6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. 7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them. 8 For ye were*

sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: 9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) 10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. 11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them

Colossians 3:1-10 (KJV) 1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. 5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: 6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: 7 In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. 8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. 9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; 10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

3(v). Those who claim to be saved and make sin a habit/lifestyle are on the highway to eternal damnation, their theologies and dogmas notwithstanding!

The New Covenant is inherently a Holy One. It reveals the relationship between a Holy Elohim and His Holy people who make a conscious decision to reject Satan the seducer and the motions of their fleshly natures which essentially war against true spirituality.

Galatians 5:13-21 (KJV) 13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. 14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. 16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. 18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. **19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (KJV) 9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

Hebrews 6:1-9 (KJV) 1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, 2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. 3 And this will we do, if God permit. **4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, 5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, 6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. 7 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: 8 But that**

which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. 9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak

Hebrews 10:26-31 (KJV) *26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

Conclusion

Saints have an obligation to intentionally desist from rebuilding again the things that were destroyed when they switched loyalty from Satan to Yeshua at the New Birth. That is why death of the Self-nature is so important!

Galatians 2:18-20 (KJV) *18 For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. 19 For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. 20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

Saints with a lively conscience who abide in Yeshua are invited by Elohim to trust Him to keep them from falling and as they wait on Him, they are shown ways to escape every snare of Satan.

1 Corinthians 10:12-13 (KJV) *12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. 13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

Jude: 24-25 (KJV) *24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, 25 To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.*

Review Questions

1. Mention 3 things that ministered specially to you.
2. What will you do with this chapter from this chapter?

Chapter 28

Whole Truth Produced Life and Growth!

Spiritual Growth is outcome of the whole Counsel of New Covenant Truths.

The Alpha Church placed 7 things at the center of their Lives:

1. Supreme Love of Elohim evidenced by submission to Yeshua, Jesus in all things. This produced a powerful testimony evidenced in hearty embrace of martyrdom, where necessary as the case of James and Stephen showed along with those of Paul and Peter.

Revelation 12:11 (KJV) *11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.*

2. Consistent Prayer and Study of the Word. This built up their spiritual lives and caused their transformation from one degree of glory to the other all through their earthly pilgrimage.

3. In this way, they bonded with Elohim and fellow saints in an organic type of unity. For that reason, they could walk in Love as sons of the same Father and mind the same things.

1 Corinthians 1:10 (KJV) *10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

From time to time, the human nature cropped up, leading to differences in perspectives and solutions. Because of tenderness of their hearts, such divergences were resolved. Those who got tired of the Faith either backslide, went into heresy or apostasy and were thus counted out of Fellowship through exercise of discipline.

4. They cared for the holistic wellbeing of each other and their neighbors. This includes provision of communal feeding opportunities through funds raised for that purpose.

5. Preaching the Gospel of Salvation by Grace through Faith in Yeshua and the Kingdom was their central and only message. Heaven endorsed their message with Miracles, Signs and Wonders following.

6. They regarded themselves as Ambassadors of the Kingdom of heaven who were on assignment in the earthly realm.

7. Their Ultimate Hope, for which they invested all, was the Kingdom to Come when Yeshua would return as King

Philippians 3:20-21 (KJV) *20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*

In their studies of the Word, broad spectrum of revelation was available in these forms:

A. The Gospels

It is significant that of all the things Yeshua told Peter that should occupy pride of place in the New Testament Church, the most significant was to Feed His Sheep and Lambs (John 21:15-17). The Alpha Church thrived because they had access to documented revelations of Yeshua and the Kingdom.

Of these, we believe that if Ministers heed the instructions of Yeshua to feed His flock, the quality of what they are fed is crucial. As those who know about computers say, input will determine output. In the same way, if certain specific revelations of Truth in the New Covenant are systematically used to feed saints under unction of Holy Spirit, their growth in Grace is more likely to happen than a haphazard presentation of preachments. Worse still, dwelling on unbiblical or extra-biblical revelations may actually open a crack in the spiritual wall through which immature saints can fall off:

Colossians 2:18-19 (KJV) *18 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, 19 And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.*

Let us take a brief overview of how various vessels were given the privilege to download and document vital aspects of the message of the Kingdom and the reality of the Kingdom within; Kingdom Nation and Kingdom to Come/Manifest Kingdom.

Matthew

Documenting His Life, Message and Ministry was so important that Yeshua personally recruited Matthew, a man skilled in recording miniature details as His Own personal biographer

Matthew 9:9 (KJV) *9 And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.*

Essentially, he captured the reality of Yeshua as the long-prophesied Messiah so that Hebrews/Jews – his primary audience - would receive and believe in Him.

John

It was also so important that those who would receive the Kingdom message understand the dual nature of the King: as fully Human and fully Elohim. For this purpose, John was elected by heaven to enjoy the most intimate relationship with Yeshua. John saw Him like no man did and had the privilege of encountering the glorified Yeshua Who will return to rule this earth on the Isle of Patmos. The gospel written by John and his epistles are critical for understanding of the dual nature of the King of the Kingdom and therefore validate His claim for the throne that is the hearts of those who are citizens of the Kingdom:

John 1:1-3 (KJV) *1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*

1 John 5:5-7 (KJV) *5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? 6 This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. 7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.*

Revelation 1:9-17 details encounter of John with the risen King.

To understand the Kingdom within; participate in the Kingdom nation and be ready 24/7 for the world to come, one critical source material would be the various writings Holy Spirit inspired John to write in the Gospel by his name; his epistles and the Book of Revelation, one of the greatest prophecies of all time in the Holy Bible

Mark

To ensure that the culture of serving the people (as opposed to the worldly ethos of being served) was fully documented, a young disciple, Mark was given the privilege of learning from his uncle Peter and mother Mary who was one of the women who waited on Yeshua. From them and by inspiration of Holy Spirit, he documented the way Yeshua served the people.

Luke

To ensure that no detail was left out, a Medical Doctor with eye for details, Luke, was given the privilege to take a strategic look at the entire ministry of Yeshua, using multiple sources to present Him as not just King of the Hebrews/ Jews but also of the whole human race. For this reason, Luke traced the genealogy of Yeshua all the way to Adam.

Luke was the instrument who recorded Acts of Apostles.

In addition to the 4 Gospels, Holy Spirit used various vessels to release exhortations for godly living to the Church. These include two of the four half-brothers of Yeshua, James and Jude who later became Apostles after His Death, Resurrection and Ascension. Greater doctrinal truths were released through two more vessels.

Peter

Because Peter walked with Yeshua for the three and half years of His public ministry, some of what He learnt about the Kingdom within, the Kingdom nation and the Kingdom to come were documented in the epistles he wrote. Peter who had flipped flopped while walking with Yeshua and at the onset of the Alpha Church became so sold out to his Master that he gladly embraced martyrdom. It was him who Holy Spirit used to pen these immortal lines concerning the Kingdom nation:

1 Peter 2:9-12 (KJV) *9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. 11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

Paul

Beyond the biographies that Matthew Mark, Luke and John wrote of Yeshua which captured His declaration of the Kingdom and holistic ministry in Israel, the revelation of what happened at the Cross and full benefits thereof were committed to the trust of Paul. One reason why Christian Religion has held sway for too long is that most preachers have not factored in the profound nature of the revelations Yeshua gave to His Church through this single vessel. Peter who had walked with Yeshua for 3 and half years and who became one of the core leaders of the Alpha Church had this to say about the writings of Paul:

2 Peter 3:15-16 (KJV) *15 And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; 16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*

When the 12 disciples seemed to be thick in their minds concerning manifestation of critical dimensions of the Kingdom nation which would be a universal reality of the One new man of Yahweh in the earth realm – both Hebrews and Gentiles – Yeshua had to Personally descend from heaven to recruit a vessel with capacity to quickly understand and run with the vision of the Church as His Very Body and Bride and instrument through which He would demonstrate the Kingdom in the earth realm. (See Ephesians 1,2,3, 4,5). To him was revealed the Governmental system of the Kingdom Church; its reality as a living, loving organism rather than an organization or organizations of humans (Ephesians chapter 4: 1-16).

To Him was also granted a sneak peak of how the glorified Church would be connected with the King and serve as co-heirs and co-rulers in the Kingdom to come (Romans 8: 14-26; 1 Thessalonians 4).

Till today, it is the Father's good pleasure to give us the three dimensions of the Kingdom, losing nothing but gaining all! The price has been paid in full and all that is left for us is to cash the cheque <USA: check> by faith and live same out by our sold-out lives which give Holy Spirit right of way.

Luke 12:32 (KJV) *32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*

It has pleased Him therefore to give us three irrefutable witnesses in the earth realm by which our place and privileges in the Kingdom are secured beyond ability of Satan or humans to touch or pluck out. Once we remain within parameters of those three witnesses, we are safe. The truth of the Kingdom is well documented for our study and understanding if we give Holy Spirit space to take the things of Yeshua and show us as He was assigned. He does not and will not contradict what is already written! He will rather clarify, amplify and simplify them for our understanding!

John 14:26 (KJV) *26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV) *15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (KJV) *16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

Matthew 7:24-27 (KJV) *24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: 25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.*

In these days when the word 'kingdom' has become a buzzword, let us close our ears to fables of humans and tantalizing secular humanistic preachments and get back into the word so that Holy Spirit will unfold the revelation of the true Kingdom to us upon whom the end of the age has come!

General Introduction to Doctrines of the New Covenant

In the core Kingdom business of study of the Word, the Alpha Church gave no room for private interpretation of scriptures to suit worldly culture or personal perspectives of saints.

2 Peter 1:20-21 (KJV) *20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

Certain truths were held as basic and essential to the embrace of the full gospel message. Those who departed from those central, essential truths were regarded as heretics and unworthy of fellowship

Titus 3:9-11 (KJV) *9 But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. 10 A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; 11 Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.*

Doctrinal Purity was as essential to the success of the Alpha Church as the quality of relationship the saints enjoyed with Elohim through Yeshua their Mediator!

Christian Apologetics & Research Ministry defines doctrines thus: "Doctrine is a set of accepted beliefs held by a group. In religion, it is the set of true beliefs that define the parameters of that belief system. Hence, there is true doctrine and false doctrine relative to each belief set. In Christianity, for example, a true Biblical doctrine is that there is only one God in all existence (Isaiah 43:10, 44:6, 8). A false doctrine is that there is more than one God in all existence."

Kingdom Perspective of Doctrines

From a Kingdom point of view, Doctrines of the Word are of great import.

I. They refer to the specific truths which when known and embraced empower saints with the right understanding of all things which pertain to life and godliness. This includes, for instance, issues such as Who Elohim Is and His manifestation as Father, Son and Holy Spirit throughout the New Covenant.

II. It also includes terms of His relationship with humans as sons in the earth realm. Truths concerning how He wants us to live and rewards for obedience – both in time and eternity are all doctrines which saints need to know and live out. Ignorance of any truth is no virtue but will lead to a sub-optimized spiritual life. Getting to know the full counsel of the Word therefore is needful for walking in fullness of liberty!

Hosea 4:6 (KJV) *6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.*

John 8:32 (KJV) *32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

III. In this regard, it is important to note that specific truths within the Constitution deal with various aspects of Kingdom Life. Instructions for Receiving of right doctrines lead to renewal of the mind, transformation of the mind and change in the walk of saints (their relationship with Yahweh as a loving Father rather than a distant, ‘unknown God’). The outcome is ‘Good works’ or lifestyles which decorate the gospel in such a way that sinners can see the clear difference between them and saints.

Ephesians 2:10 (KJV) *10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

1 Timothy 2:9-10 (KJV) *9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; 10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.*

Titus 3:8 (KJV) *8 This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.*

It is needful for the entire Body of Yeshua to come to a place of unity based on receiving the full counsel of the Holy Scriptures, rather than cherry picking of what various groups want. There may be some truths which a saint or minister may not understand yet at any point in time. But if our hearts are open, free of dogmatic positions of denominations, Holy Spirit will bring clarity and understanding. That is why childlike faith is of great price in the sight of Elohim.

Matthew 18:2-4 (KJV) *2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, 3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. 4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*

Understanding Basis of The New Covenant

Before we delve into specific doctrines of the New Covenant, it is needful to correct a general misconception fostered by Replacement Theology which sought to cast it as a Covenant for Gentiles. Elohim had an exclusive Covenant with Israel which was written on tablets of stone and given through Moses as the Torah. The people were required to be circumcised and observe all Laws in the Torah to walk in it. But because of the fallen human nature, the Law became an instrument of convicting them of their sins. They were required to sacrifice animals and birds to obtain temporary reprieve. After

consistently failing to keep the Old Covenant, Elohim in His mercy announced through Prophet Jeremiah that He would make a New Covenant with Israel

Jeremiah 31:31-33 (KJV) *31 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: 33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

That New Covenant required a better mediator of Divine origin and nature to fulfil and seal it. Yeshua, Jesus came as that mediator to first fulfil the Old Covenant and then inaugurate the New with His Own Blood that was shed.

Matthew 5:17 (KJV) *17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.*

Secondly, He came to inaugurate the New Covenant sealed in His Blood

Luke 22:20 (KJV) *20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you*

Hebrews 9:15 (KJV) *15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.*

Universal Access to Elohim Through the Shed Blood

Whereas the Old was limited to Israel and the Hebrews (and all proselytes who converted from Gentiles), the New Covenant is a universal one through which all humanity has opportunity for reconciliation with Elohim by the Blood of Yeshua

Hebrews 10:19-23 (KJV) *19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; 21 And having an high priest over the house of God; 22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)*

Galatians 3:26-29 (KJV) *26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

Colossians 3:9-11 (KJV) *9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; 10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: 11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.*

The New Covenant offers all humans the opportunity for a holistic relationship with Elohim. The basis of the relationship is three-fold:

i. The Blood shed by Yeshua

ii. The ministry of Holy Spirit who alone convicts all sinners of all cultures and races of Sin, righteousness and Judgement and seals all who respond in faith for the Day of glory

iii. All who are part of the Covenant are to live by the Word of Elohim articulated from Genesis to Revelation. Saints are born again by the Word as 1 Peter 1: 23 says.

The Word is to be received as a whole not in part. Saints are to abide in Yeshua and allow Him (the Word to abide in them) and receive His Grace to live by the Word. This is made possible through the inner ministry of Holy Spirit, not by humanistic struggles.

D. Broad Division of Doctrines in the New Covenant

In the New Covenant, there are broad divisions of source of doctrines. These are:

i. The Life, Message and Works of Yeshua and instructions for godly living derived therefrom

From the beginning of the Church, the universality of the Word for all saints to observe was stated as a reality because the Apostles preached and taught on Yeshua and the Kingdom He preached. This was documented in the four Gospels – Matthew Mark, Luke and John. The Alpha Church was substantially grounded in what the Apostles saw and heard concerning Him and His assignment:

Acts 2:41 (KJV) *41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. 42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

ii. Articulation of the Wider dimension of the Covenant based on fuller revelation of what happened at the Cross

The fuller message of why Yeshua went to the Cross and what He accomplished was specifically granted to Paul the Apostle. He received by Holy Spirit the deeper and wider implications of the Cross, reality of the One New Man of Elohim in the earth realm functioning as Kingdom Citizens and ambassadors on assignment as His sons. Paul stressed to those who heard him the reality of what was committed to his trust by Election.

Ephesians 2:10-22 (KJV) *10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. 11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; 12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. 14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: 17 And came and*

preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. 18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. 19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

Ephesians 3:1-12 (KJV) *1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, 2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: 3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, 4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) 5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; 6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: 7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. 8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; 9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: 10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, 11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: 12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.*

Paul also received revelation of how the Lord purposed to ensure ultimate redemption of saints – both the dead and living at end of the age 1 Corinthians 15; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; 2 Thessalonians 2. Without studying and understanding the Pauline epistles, a minister will have great deficiency in apprehending the New Covenant.

iii. End of the Age and World to Come

John the beloved was divinely elected to receive extensive revelation of how good would triumph over evil at end of the age; the subjugation of the world system; judgement of Satan and all the wicked dead of all ages; the Millennial reign of Yeshua when He would reign to fulfil the desire of the ages for the earth realm and thereafter; a sneak peek into endless eternity when the mystery of Elohim would be accomplished as triumphant saints live in close proximity with Him forever while the wicked suffer in the Lake of Fire for eternity. Paul and Peter were also used to bring forth revelation of some aspects of end of the age.

E. The Danger of Sectarian/Denominational Approach to the New Covenant

Denominationalism is rooted in the dangerous habit of cherry picking of scriptures and clinging to certain revelations and experiences while excluding others. In the end, denominationalism creates Sectarianism which foundationally divides the Body and wars against Unity of the Faith. In the process, it makes human leaders and their opinions/perspectives have more weight than Yeshua and causes saints to be inherently dysfunctional. By cherry picking scriptures and preferring some to others, denominations essentially create dogmas and traditions of men for their followers.

But let us note with charity that while the default position of Elohim seems to be to call all His remnant out of the divisive culture of denominationalism, there are those He will permit to remain in such circles with a specific assignment to influence many for good. Such people will be liberated by Truth and will

remain in denominational churches as instruments of empowerment. His Light in them will be instrument of opening the eyes of those in blindness.

F. Truth – The Whole Counsel in the New Covenant is Key to True Unity!

The Lord deems unity of His Body to be so important that He interceded earnestly to the Father in John 17. That unity is made possible when saints believe the whole counsel of Elohim in the Holy Scriptures and see it the way He sees it as Constitution of the Kingdom.

1 Corinthians 1:10 (KJV) *10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

It is through diligent study of the Word, under unction of Holy Spirit that those called to leadership can discern and understand all the Body of Truth therein.

2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV) *15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

When all ministries, congregations and saints are exposed to the same Body of Truth, true unity of Faith will ensure, regardless of where saints are located or the names of their local assemblies or networks.

Ephesians 4:1-6 (KJV) *1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

What this means is that a brand-new day will dawn in the earth realm when all saints begin to feed on the Word from their infant years till the day they complete their earthly pilgrimage

2 Timothy 3:15-17 (KJV) *15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

From the next chapter, we will proceed to see what doctrines are and why they are to be of universal acceptance and application in the Body of Yeshua as Constitution of the Kingdom.

Review Questions

1. Why is it important that our understanding of the Kingdom should be rooted in the Word as inspired or illuminated by Holy Spirit?
2. What is your personal take away from this chapter?
3. Can you be transparent and share what you will do differently because of what you learnt in this chapter?

Chapter 29

Glorious Truths & Fundamental C's

Ingredients which shaped life of saints in the Alpha Church and their Outcomes

The Alpha Church was a remarkable success in various facets of assessment. Whether in terms of quality of life the saints lived relative to their unbelieving families, friends and neighbors or in terms of rapid growth of their numbers, they were an extraordinary force for good which upended cultures of their day.

By revelation and comparing scriptures with scriptures, we believe that the thing which made that difference remarkable was their whole-hearted embrace of the ***Lordship of Yeshua; acceptance of the whole counsel of scriptures as their life compass and the abiding presence of Holy Spirit Who was Teacher, Guide and Comforter.*** In other words, with the same Holy Spirit Who conceived Yeshua in the womb of Mary and endued Him with power from heaven at the Baptism of John, Divinity was present in the life of all saints!

While the apostles who walked with Yeshua for 3 and half years grappled with their senses concerning the awesome reality that He was indeed Elohim made Flesh to dwell among them and while cultural blocks of their Hebraic identity restrained their ability to launch forth into the then known world, Yeshua did not wait perpetually. He came down to the earth realm and personally elected a special vessel to take the Great Commission to new heights (Acts 9: 1-21). That was Saul of Tarsus who became Paul. Here was a man who sat at the feet of Gamaliel, one of the leading Scholars of his day (Acts 4: 34-40); here was a man so full of zeal for Judaism that he was an accessory to the martyrdom of Stephen who saw himself as mandated by Elohim to destroy the saints of his day for disregarding the Torah. A few things about his biography may help us to apprehend where he came from:

Philippians 3:4-11 (KJV) *4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: 5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; 6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. 7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.*

With entry of Paul, the Gospel programme ascended to new heights and became rooted in deeper degrees of Truth. The Holy Word of the New Covenant was presented in specific building blocks which could produce clear outcomes of transformed hearts and renewed minds both among Hebrews/Jews and Gentiles. It is significant that out of the 27 Books in the New Covenant, Holy Spirit used Paul alone

to bring forth 14 or more than 50 percent! These are Epistles to the Romans; 1 and 2 Corinthians; Galatians; Ephesians; Philippians; Colossians; 1 & 2 Thessalonians; 1 & 2 Timothy; Titus; Philemon and Hebrews. (Some scholars dispute his authorship of Hebrews, but we are persuaded it was him).

In strategic terms, Holy Spirit used Paul to minister the Word to them in such a way that some Glorious Truths were released to nurture the Alpha Church to maturity. Individuals and Congregations which received, studied and understood the epistles did so through meditation and prayer, until it became an integral part of their lives. We will share here a synopsis of 16 of those Truths. If the Lord leads, we will study them in detail as the full Course.

#.1. Grace. It is by Grace that sinners are saved through Faith they exercise in the finished work of Yeshua. Grace is also the life of Yahweh in Yeshua and His strength that is the basis of the new life of the redeemed. Without Grace, saints will live a dry religious life free of the vitality that comes from their vibrant relationship with the Father. Grace is manifested in Mercy and Favor which sets saints apart from their contemporaries and on a higher pedestal of glory.

Ephesians 2:1, 4-5, 8-9 (KJV) *1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;*

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved);

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

#.2. Election. Salvation did not just happen. Well before foundation of the world, Elohim had chosen them in Yeshua out of His love and mercy to be part of His glorious family in the earth realm. Though this has been His plan for all, the paradox is only the remnant actually responds to this Divine lifeline! Election is based on the reality that Incarnation of Yeshua was not a plan B after Adam and Eve sinned. Well before humans were created, He had offered Himself as propitiation and therefore slain before time as Revelation 13:8 says. For this reason, all who were saved considered it a privilege from Elohim which was not to be toyed with in any way.

Ephesians 1:3-6 (KJV) *3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: 4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having pre-destinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*

Embracing Election as a Divine privilege opened them up to also embrace all that they encountered as permitted by an All Knowing and Ever-Present Father for their good. Remembering the Words of Yeshua concerning Suffering, they did not squirm, moan or groan when they encountered Rejection or Persecution.

Romans 8:29-30 (KJV) *29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

#.3. Redemption. They understood that saints are redeemed through the blood that was shed at the cross of Calvary. He gave His life so that saints may live! The Blood of Yeshua paid the price for sin of Adam and Eve.

Ephesians 1:7 (KJV) *7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;*

Romans 3:24 (KJV) *24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:*

#.4. Justification and Righteousness. This is the pronouncement that seals the deal of translation from sinner to saint for those who truly repent of their sins. It is the act of being counted blameless with no record of past sins in heaven as they were truly blotted out by the Blood. The outcome is peace with Yahweh and a good conscience free of guilt because there is no record of the past that was fully atoned for on the Cross.

Romans 3:24 (KJV) *24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:*

Romans 3:28 (KJV) *28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.*

Romans 5:1 (KJV) *1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:*

Romans 5:9 (KJV) *9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.*

Justification is the basis of Righteousness!

Romans 3:21-22 (KJV) *21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:*

Romans 3:25-26 (KJV) *25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*

#.5. New Creation. Though there are billions of people on planet earth, those who are the true members of the family of Elohim and citizens of His Kingdom are so because they are His New Creation in the earth realm. There is a change of nature that occurs within their innermost being – the spirit man where the Elohim type of life replaces the Old which was born in sin and ruled by Satan.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (KJV) *17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

Ephesians 2:1-4 (KJV) *1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,*

#.6. Adoption. Here, the former sinner and enemy of Yahweh is made a member of His family and translated or conveyed into the Kingdom. Our adoption begins as children and progresses ultimately to

sons. Son-ship speaks of maturity so that we take responsibility for maintaining the estate of our Father in the earth realm.

Romans 8:15 (KJV) *15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*

Ephesians 1:5 (KJV) *5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,*

#.7. Position. Based on what happened at the Cross, the saint has a shift in position. Whereas he/she was a full earthling, there is now a paradigm shift by which though still physically in the earth realm, the spirit-man of the redeemed is seated with Yeshua in heavenly places.

Ephesians 2:4-6, 9 (KJV) *4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

#.8. The Mobile Temple of Holy Spirit. The obverse side of the truth in #.7 is the reality that saints are mobile Temples indwelt by Ruach ha Chodesh, Holy Spirit. In this setting, they literally carry Him wherever they go, and He will show up if they accept this truth by faith. The analogy is the Ark of Testimony which Israel physically transported whenever they moved camp.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (KJV) *19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

#.9. Security. The redeemed of Yeshua have a double layer of security in Him and Yahweh that they need to know and walk in. As this truth sank in, fear was automatically erased out of their lives. This enabled them to be unmoved by whatever they encountered, including Martyrdom.

Colossians 3:1-3 (KJV) *1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*

#.10. Dual Citizenship. Saints are in effect, dual citizens. They are first citizens of the Kingdom of heaven while they are planted as its Ambassadors in specific nations in the earth realm. Their primary loyalty is to Yeshua their redeemer and there is absolutely no question that His word rules their lives. Yet His word requires saints to love, respect and honour temporal leaders of their earthly nations and obey laws, except where such will lead them to sin, in which case they become conscientious objectors, doing so with great grace (Philippians 3:20-21);

1 Peter 2:11-15 (KJV) *11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. 13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; 14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. 15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:*

#.11: Show piece of Elohim. The redeemed of Yeshua are the showpiece of Yahweh who He wants to showcase. Their manifestation as His sons in the earth realm both in the now and in the world to come is something He yearns to bring to pass because it demonstrates His goodness

Ephesians 2:10 (KJV) *10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

#.12. Guaranteed Outcomes. Saints are guaranteed that while on their earthly pilgrimage, if they remain in the center of the will of their heavenly Father and trust Him with their future, all things will work together for their good and are therefore part of the process for their maturation and perfection.

Romans 8:28-32 (KJV) *28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. 31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

Romans 8:35-39 (KJV) *35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

#.13. Walk by Faith, not by sight. Saints begin the eternal journey by Faith and continue therein. By Faith they can relate with the Supreme Spirit Being that Elohim Is.

2 Corinthians 5:7 (KJV) *7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)*

Hebrews 10:35-39 (KJV) *35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. 36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. 37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. 39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.*

In effect, Prayer is the vehicle through which saints release their Faith as they communicate with their heavenly Father on a spirit to Spirit basis!

Mark 11:22-24 (KJV) *22 And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. 23 For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. 24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.*

#.14. Inheritance. Sons have an inheritance from their Father. It is the full benefits of being in Yeshua, Jesus in time and in eternity. They are the Covenant Blessings of Calvary cross which Satan uses ignorance to offer them pseudo-blessings such as he did to Eve in Eden.

Ephesians 1:3 (KJV) *3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ*

Romans 8:31-32 (KJV) *31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*

2 Peter 1:3 (KJV) *3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*

These are gifts of grace to be received, appreciated and appropriated by Faith. All saints are to walk in them and by so doing, announce to people within their spheres of influence whose they are and where they are going. Paul spoke of this reality with confidence in a tough situation.

Acts 27:23 (KJV) *23 For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,*

#.15. Sealed unto Day of Redemption. In consideration of the awesome promises of eternal life and inheritance in the hereafter, it is needful to note that Elohim did not just state His intent. He went further to seal the deal of eternal life in saints by the Person of His Own Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 1:13 (KJV) *13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,*

Out of the estimated 7.5 (+ or -) Billion people on earth, only those who He Himself knows as truly redeemed by the Blood of Yeshua have this seal of Holy Spirit!

2 Timothy 2:19 (KJV) *19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*

Without any shadow of doubt, there is need for repentance by leaders so that the true Kingdom Church can arise as we humbly accept them by faith! They represent the clear and incontrovertible evidence that former sinners have become the new creation in Yeshua.

#.16. Delegated Authority of Yeshua, Ambassadors of the Kingdom

Saints are not just redeemed to fold their hands and wait for the Day of the Lord. That is one of the errors Christian Religion foisted upon 'church members' of various denominations. This theological error has crippled many saints to live 'normal' lives. Saints in the Alpha Church understood clearly that they were saved to be instruments of saving others (2 Corinthians 5:17-19) and making disciples of all nations (Matthew 28: 18-20) until the Gospel of the Kingdom accomplished its assignment in time when the King will return. Matthew 24:14. In that regard, they took it as given that all gifts, talents and resources placed inside of them and within their reach were assets with which to occupy, until He returns to judge and reward (Luke 19:11-27)

Acts 1:8 (KJV) *8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

The profound nature of these Truths has impacted those who have been open to the full gospel of the Kingdom ever since they were inspired and written.

Believers who have not been taught and who are therefore not walking in the reality of these gracious Truths are engaged in various degrees of Christian religion. When saints are not taught these truths, the centers of their lives move away from Yeshua and gravitate to the human leaders in their lives. This creates room for Nimrod-type diversion of their destinies to serve the pecuniary interests of ministers and ministries. At the root of why many 'Christians' are ever learning and never able to come to knowledge of truth is that they are fed with Milk contaminated with dogmas of humans and traditions of sects which cause them to be soul tied to Preachers or Religious organizations.

Catalysts of Growth in Grace: The 6 Fundamental C's

The effects of the Truth they embraced and imbibed transformed their hearts and renewed their minds. They responded in a specific manner which is captured fully in another Course of Global School of Ministry called the 6 Fundamental C's. If the Lord leads, we will study the full Course as part of the Program.

However, let us share a brief overview for illustrating the incredible life of saints in the Alpha Church period. For ease of reference and to foster simplicity of application, the six core responses of the truly redeemed to the unlimited love of the Father in Yeshua begin with the Letter C:

1. Conversion – This is the change of mind and heart arising from true repentance and salvation. This is the fruit of genuine holistic repentance. Without Conversion, an individual is still in sin. Mere repentance of any single thought, word or deed that one was convicted of will not do. As we will see, Conversion is that point at which the encounter with Yeshua, Jesus is so real that it manifests as new life in Him.

Anchor Scripture:

Acts 3:19 (KJV) *19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.*

Those who are truly converted bring forth the fruits of repentance. They manifest a deep and unconditional love of Elohim and gratitude for what Yeshua accomplished on the Cross. They also love the brethren and all humans.

2. Consecration – This is the act of complete surrender to Yahweh to live for Him wholly. Those who enjoy the experiential reality of all that Yahweh offers them in Yeshua are those who die to self-interests and are wholly consecrated to live for His supreme purpose. When they are yielded totally to Him like this, His Zoë life (nature and life of Elohim) flows through them. Psalms 50:5, Matthew 16:24-26; Galatians 2:20.

Anchor Scripture:

Romans 12:1 (KJV) *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

3. Commitment – This is the act of single minded pursuit of the Kingdom and its righteousness as the primary goal of the redeemed on planet earth. This single-minded pursuit of the Kingdom un-clutters their lives to release a sense of Divine Purpose and strategic direction. In this mode, the saint is delivered from the clutches of Satan, the deceptive attractions of the world system and the ambitions of the self-nature. With this deliverance, the glory of the aroma of Yeshua, Jesus in them is unleashed, making them the flames of fire they are supposed to be: passionate and burning with zeal for His glory in all situations.

Anchor Scriptures:

Matthew 6:19:33-34 (KJV) *33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*

Saints in this mode become tasteful as salt and penetrating as light which dispels darkness. By being committed to the King and His Kingdom, they cannot be comfortable inside the stifling boxes of religion called denominations!

4. Communion – Communion has two dimensions. On the one hand, it is the act of being in continual fellowship with Yahweh; conversing with and seeking directions from Him in all things.

Anchor Scripture:

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (KJV) *17 Pray without ceasing.*

It also describes a life of true fellowship based on love with other saints who are citizens of the Kingdom. This happens when saints are bonded together in Yeshua as Head and in each other, releasing and receiving Grace for building up of the whole Body. True communion is possible when the Fivefold – Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers – are fully engaged in ministering to the saints in an organic, rather than organizational paradigm

Anchor Scriptures:

Ephesians 4:15-16 (KJV) *15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

5. Call – This states the New Covenant reality that ALL (not a few or some) saints in the Kingdom are called by Yahweh to serve as priests and kings, ministering to Him, His people; fulfilling the transformational assignment of the church in our environment as the salt and light and fully invested in continuation of His Mission Statement to seek and save the Lost– Luke 19:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; 1 Peter 2:9-12; Matthew 5:13–16; John 15:16; John 15:16, 1 Peter 2:9 and Revelations 1:6

Anchor Scriptures:

Ephesians 4:1 (KJV) *1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,*

2 Timothy 1:9 (KJV) *9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,*

The Priesthood after the Order of Melchizedeck to which all saints are called is totally different in nature and form from the Nimrodic and Levitical Priesthoods that are popular in Christendom. The Melchizedeck order is universal while the other two are exclusive preserves of a priestly caste which act as mediators between a 'holy God' and an 'unholy people'

1 Peter 2:9 (KJV) *9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;*

6. Clinging – As John 15:1-8 articulates, as long as we cling to Yeshua as our life by abiding in Him and giving His Word space to be grafted, made flesh and abide in us, our will easily give way to His will. In the Pauline epistles, there is the revelation that as we die to self and depend on Holy Spirit, surrendering our will to Him by clinging to His Person and voice, He will use our beings to release the quantum of Grace that is needed at any given time. As long as He guides us in all things, our Salvation will not only bear abundant fruits but more importantly, we will grow in Yeshua to live like Him as sons of Elohim

Anchor Scripture:

Romans 8:9-16 (KJV) *9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. 10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. 12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:*

Knowing the full scope of truths embodied in the 6 C's has a radical effect on saints.

Review Questions

1. Please share which of the 16 Glorious Truths particularly touched you
2. Please share which of the 6 Fundamental C's particularly touched you
3. If you lead a group of saints (whether Cell fellowship, Congregation) or minister on Social Media, what would you do with this chapter?

Chapter 30

The Hebraic/Jewish Factor

As we saw in a previous chapter, the Alpha Church suffered the same kind of rejection that its Head, Yeshua faced at the hands of those who considered themselves Custodians of the Torah and the Old Covenant. Those religious zealots, even when they bowed to the superiority of Yeshua over Moses and embraced the New Covenant often struggled with ingrained prejudices against Gentiles who were considered 'Unclean'.

The First Jerusalem Council of Acts 15 resolved the reality that Gentiles do not need to be converted to Judaism (through the rite of Circumcision) before they can be saved and live as saints. As we saw in both the epistles to Galatians and Philippians, Paul had occasions to warn of the leaven of Judaizing.

The Alpha Church in Acts of the Apostles was a spiritual entity dominated by people of Hebraic/Jewish stock. With their foundational understanding of the Torah and its hundreds of rules and rituals for ceremonial holiness, they fully appreciated the revelations brought forth through Paul about how the Grace of Elohim released through embrace of the sacrifice of Yeshua on the Cross as the Ultimate Lamb by Faith settled the Sin question once and for all.

The reality that Hebrews/Jews were a scattered people group starting from the days of Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon became a hidden asset: it enabled the gospel message to be conveyed across the length and breadth of the then known world in record time. Let us remember this account of the racial/ethnic mix of people who were in Jerusalem for both the Feast of Passover and Pentecost (which was 50 days later)

Acts 2:5-11 (KJV) *5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. 6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. 7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? 8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? 9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, 10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.*

It is important to note that as Peter made the altar call on that eventful day, most of those Hebrews/Jews from across the world were among the 3000 who were saved:

Acts 2:39-41 (KJV) *39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. 40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. 41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*

At end of the Feasts, these new converts carried the gospel to their various locations. Furthermore, let us remember that apart from Simon the Canaanite in Mark 3:14, all the first 12 Apostles of Yeshua were

Hebrews/Jews. The vibrant, powerful Church in Acts of the Apostles was essentially dominated by ministers of Hebraic/Jewish stock. With their understanding of the Law and its limitations in the life of humans begotten in Sin, these brethren did a remarkable work of Evangelism and Missions. As we saw in an earlier chapter, the then known world was massively impacted by the gospel

In a twist of fortunes known by Elohim and permitted for the nobler cause of making room for the Gentiles, brethren of Hebraic/Jewish stock at some point in history of the early Church decreased in openness to and fervor for the gospel. One of the least appreciated portions of Scripture is this account where Paul warned those of his racial/ethnic stock that a shift of the center of gravity of the gospel was imminent:

Acts 28:23-29 (KJV) *23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. 24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. 25 And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, 26 Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: 27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. 28 Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it. 29 And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.*

With that declaration of Paul, the baton an arrow head of the gospel moved from the House of Shem to the House of Japheth! Locationally, the center of gravity moved from Jerusalem to Antioch (Acts 13) and had now landed in Rome, chief land of the Gentiles who ruled the world. It was in Rome that both Paul, leading Apostle to the Gentiles and Peter who led the mandate to the Hebraic/Jewish stock ended their lives and ministry.

One of the greatest Sins of Christian Religion is the spirit of Anti-Semitism it unleashed upon the world. When Rome got wedded to the larger wing of the Church, it needed to blot out remembrance of the Hebraic Identity of Yeshua and the Gospel. In a sense, this approach is understandable: human Conquerors are not gracious to write history in such a way that favors those they conquered. Theologians of Rome therefore needed to construct a theology which essentially suppressed the Hebraic/Jewish components.

Interestingly, the Protestant Reformation followed this same path as we will see later in the Course. It was said of Martin Luther that he had an abiding dislike of Jews and some of his writings reflected that sentiment. For Protestant Scholars, including him, Elohim rejected the Hebrews/Jews when they rejected Yeshua. Accordingly, all the promises of Elohim for Israel were inherited by the Christian Church (Gentile dominated, of course).

Paul and Refutation of Replacement Theology

Unfortunately, these postulations by both Rome and its Protestant children fly in the face of Truth! One of the outcomes of the election of Paul as lead Apostle to the Gentiles was to roundly refute the creeping strain of anti-Semitism in the Alpha Church as Gentiles became accepted into the fold.

Holy Spirit used Paul to produce one of the most detailed refutations of Replacement Theology and a ringing warning against the spirit of anti-Semitism in three powerful chapters of the epistle to the Romans (9, 10, 11). Let us see the central thesis he advanced therein:

1. The Hebrews were elected above all peoples to be partakers of the Covenant
2. With time, they veered into Religion and missed out on vibrant relationship with Elohim
3. That backsliding did not take Elohim by surprise. He allowed it to happen
4. The reason for allowing the fall of Hebrews/Jews from the Gospel was to make room for the peoples of Gentile stock to come into covenant relationship with Him and be members of His family in the earth realm
5. The Gentiles were warned not to be conceited and gloat over fall of Hebrews/Jews from Grace but rather be in awe that room was thereby made for them
6. Saints redeemed out of Gentile stock should invest in Salvation of the Hebrews/Jews
7. In the fullness of Time, the programme of Elohim for the Gentiles would end and the attention of Elohim would shift to the Hebrews/Jews.

Romans 11:7-16 (KJV) *7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. 8 (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. 9 And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: 10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway. 11 I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. 12 Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? 13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: 14 If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. 15 For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? 16 For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches....*

Romans 11:25-29 (KJV) *25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. 26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: 27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. 28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sakes. 29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.*

Romans 11:33-34 (KJV) *33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! 34 For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?*

Urgent Assignment: Return of Hebrews/Jews to the Fold

In that regard, a matter of urgent need in the programme of Elohim for the earth realm is for His children of Hebraic/Jewish stock to embrace Yeshua as Lord and Saviour. It is the good pleasure of Elohim that in Yeshua, Jesus are all that His countrymen after the Flesh need to recapture their pride of place in the programme of Elohim for humanity. The entire essence of recruiting Matthew to be biographer of Yeshua was to document in clear detail the reality that He fulfilled the various Messianic prophecies which were well known to Israel. That is why this phrase 'that it might be fulfilled' was a key feature of the writings of Matthew.

Pastor Jeremiah Shepherd of God's Promise Restoration Center in Kilgore, East Texas makes the connection between the fulfilled prophecies concerning Yeshua and the need for Israel to repent as a nation and people to receive their King Whose coming is now nearer than when we first believed. Let us see what Elohim showed him a few weeks ago:

"This teaching on the fulfilled prophecies of Yeshua and the things that Israel's leaders shouldn't have missed is profound both for them as a nation as well as us in the end times. Within their story is great revelation that often goes overlooked. David is so much more than a historical king of united Israel. Through various scriptures, the Word reveals that he is actually the perfect icon and representation of the sins of Israel and God's continued mercy and purpose towards them as an elect nation. There are many scriptures which deeply connect the life of David to the tumultuous history of Israel, but for the sake of this excerpt, we'll briefly cover a few.

The first connection exists in to the primary sins that David committed. As is known, he lusted after Uriah's wife, committed adultery with her, then acted in deceit to cover it up, eventually leading to murder. It is the spiritual meaning of these three sins that connects David to Israel - Adultery, Deceit, and Murder. Spiritually speaking, Israel committed these exact 3 sins in their dealings with Yeshua and His proposed covenant to them. They committed spiritual adultery (idolatry) by seeking premature rewards through worldly alliances and selfish agendas. Then, they acted in deceit through their attempts to mask their murderous jealousy of Yeshua. Then they committed murder by sneakily conspiring to kill Jesus through Roman rule.

In fact, in 2 Samuel 12:7-12, The Lord's curse upon David for these three sins is practically the same as the curse upon Israel for killing Jesus. It reads as follows:

2 Samuel 12:7-12 (KJV) *7 And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; 8 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things. 9 Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. 10 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife. 11 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. 12 For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun."*

He says the sword wouldn't depart from his house, that evil would rise from within his own house, and that his wives and people would be taken and given to his neighbor. These are the same punishments carried out by God upon the nation of Israel. To this day, they always find themselves amid war and they also have been scattered abroad throughout much of their history. Also, you will notice in 2 Samuel 12:14, that David's firstborn child even dies because of his sin. This reflects the truth that Christ, the firstborn and only begotten of the father, had to die for the sins of Israel and of the world. Then, the very next child born was Solomon, who built the greatest temple unto the Lord, symbolizing the resurrected life of Christ who has assembled the New Covenant temple in which we are all living stones, and He dwells within us.

In addition to this, 2 Samuel 12:13, David's response is HIGHLY important. Rather than deny his sin like his predecessor Saul, he admitted his guilt and owned his sin and shame. Therefore, Elohim mercifully proclaims through the prophet Nathan that David "shalt not die". In other words, he would be punished but not totally destroyed. In yet another connection, these exact same words are prophesied over Israel numerous times, including Jeremiah 30:11, where he promises to make an end to all other nations, but not make a full end of Israel.

It reads,

Jeremiah 30:11 (KJV) *11 For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished."*

At the end of it all, most of the book of Psalms is a transparent expression of David's humiliation and repentance followed by the great mercies of God. In fact, in another connection, Jesus gives the Pharisees a clue of this at the end of Matthew 23, in verse 39. He says,

Matthew 23:39 (KJV) *39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*

These are the EXACT WORDS spoken by David in gratitude of God's mercy in Psalms. Notice what David speaks in revelation of the loving mercies of Yahweh:

Psalms 118:1-6, 26 (KJV) *1 O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever. 2 Let Israel now say, that his mercy endureth for ever. 3 Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy endureth for ever. 4 Let them now that fear the LORD say, that his mercy endureth for ever. 5 I called upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place. 6 The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me? 26 Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD.*

In these verses, David testifies of the unending mercy of the Father and then admonishes Israel, the priests of Aaron and all who acknowledge the Lord forever to proclaim this truth. Then in the attitude of humble repentance, David says,

Psalms 118:26 (KJV) *26 blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord,*

the same words Jesus proclaims later in Matthew 23:39. Yeshua was basically telling them in Matthew 23, although I just proclaimed all of these terrible woes to you Pharisees and those who adulterously treat my covenant, I still love you, and I will return again and revisit those who eventually and finally repent in their heart, just like your King David did.

The Duty of Care Gentile Saints owe the Hebraic/Jewish People and the nation of Israel

In the Western world, there is a new theological movement which drives Christians to support Israel in its survival against the bitter enemies in the Middle East. That narrative essentially takes attention of saints away from what Elohim considers most urgent: Bringing them back into their appointed place in His Gospel programme. The time has come to get it right with our priorities: spiritual realignment! Elohim has guaranteed no nation or group of nations can ever pluck Israel out of the land of Israel again.

To be able to help Hebrews/Jews, saints need to restore witnessing to get them ready to receive He Who is coming in the Name of the Lord!

Romans 11:17-24 (KJV) *17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; 18 Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. 19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. 20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: 21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. 22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. 23 And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. 24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?*

Romans 11:30-32 (KJV) *30 For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: 31 Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. 32 For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all*

The time has come to make the main thing, the main thing: Preaching the gospel of Yeshua and the Kingdom in a targeted way to the Hebrews as a people and Israel as a nation backed by consistent, persistent intercession!

Romans 1:16-17 (KJV) *16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*

Review Questions

1. Please share your main take away from this chapter.
2. Of all the things that saints redeemed out of Gentiles owe the Hebrews/Jews, which is most important

Chapter 31

Section C: The Clash of the Kingdoms

Introduction to Section C

In this section, we will receive from the Lord, an accurate biblical and historically sound narrative of the gospel, necessary to understand what should be done to complete the Reformation started in 1517.

Situating Rome as a critical Factor: The Worldly Kingdom which sought to destroy the Spiritual Kingdom!

One of the reasons why the Omega Church is a favored one, is the reality it has all cards, so to say, on the table. Whereas, the highly successful Alpha Church was an emergent one, spontaneously manifesting what Holy Spirit was doing. Those of us upon whom end of the age has come, have the added benefit of written history, both 'spiritual' and 'secular' from which we can see the 'whole picture.' When history and fresh 'Now' revelation of Holy Spirit gets into an embrace, the results are explosive.

About 600 years before Yeshua, Jesus was born, Elohim gave to His remnant of all ages to come, a panoramic view of history of the world. The idea was to enable His Own people of each generation to understand the times, so they could know how to respond. We need to revisit that revelation to appreciate the role the Kingdom would play in shaping world history when the long-promised Seed of the woman was eventually incarnated.

An Extract from MC-010 - Understanding the End Times: The Times of Gentiles

In the course of history, Israel had suffered captivity to both Egypt and Assyria. The repeated failure, of the people and nation, to live on the narrow road of being a peculiar treasure to Yahweh occasioned a harsh judgement. That judgement was a scattering of the people to various parts of the world under Gentile rulers who would treat them badly until the fullness of time when those dispersed would be gathered again for Israel to live, not just as a Sovereign nation, but to be the delight of the nations. It pleased Elohim to use a Gentile ruler, Nebuchadnezzar to reveal to Israel and humanity, how their phases of captivity to Gentiles will pan out.

The Book of Daniel is truly the most outstanding fulcrum from where various prophecies and revelations concerning times of the Gentiles are located. In it are a description of nations and kingdoms, past and present, that would impact Israel and subsequently Yeshua and His Kingdom Church. Revelations in the book of Daniel were fulfilled with pin point precision, so much that we can with great safety know the remaining prophecies will also be fulfilled in due course. For Israel as a nation and Hebrews as a people, rejection of Yeshua Ha Mashiach by their religious leaders meant the situation of Gentiles over lordship in one form or the other would remain in various forms until He returns in glory to deliver them from the final Gentile ruler; the Anti-Messiah or anti-Christ and restores the Kingdom with Jerusalem as capital.

The things of Elohim are mysterious! It is interesting He chose to reveal a panorama of Empires and Kingdoms which will rule the world to Nebuchadnezzar, a heathen King. It is also significant the natural mind of the monarch could not comprehend the dream and there was need for those who had access to the spiritual realm to step in. The failure of all the astrologers and magicians of Babylon to help Nebuchadnezzar is instructive:

Daniel 2:1-3 (KJV) *1 And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him. 2 Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. 3 And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream.*

Daniel 2:27-30 (KJV) *27 Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king; 28 But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these; 29 As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass. 30 But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart.*

1 Corinthians 2:14 (KJV) *14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

It had to take a spiritual man indeed who had access to the mind of Elohim to comprehend what heaven had shown Nebuchadnezzar. It can be safely said therefore, in Daniel and through him, Yahweh found a pure vessel through who He released a panoramic view of world history from his days till end of the age that is soon to be upon our generation by correct interpretation of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel 2:31-45 (KJV) *31 Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. 32 This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, 33 His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. 34 Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. 35 Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. 36 This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. 37 Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. 38 And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. 39 And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. 40 And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. 41 And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. 42 And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. 43 And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. 44*

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. 45 Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

Let us now outline what has been fulfilled concerning the various Gentile nations which ruled Israel in history, after Egypt and Assyria. Understanding the accuracy of prophecies and how they were accurately fulfilled enable the remnant to understand the times and be confident of what will be unfolding at end of the age. True to the interpretation Daniel gave to the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 2:36-45, and collateral visions Yahweh also gave him in Chapters 7 and 8, here is how history unfolded since then:

1. From 606 BC, **Babylon**, represented by the **Head of Gold** ruled the world and Israel till **539 BC**, a total of **67** years. Babylon was largely homogeneous, made up predominantly of Chaldeans of modern day Iraq area. King **Nebuchadnezzar** was the leading light.
2. From **539 BC**, **Medo-Persia**, represented by the **Chest and Arms of Silver** ruled the world and Israel till **331 BC**, a total of **208** years. It comprised of two main people groups, the Medes and Persians of the area around modern-day Iran. Its leading lights were, among others, Darius and Cyrus.
3. From **331 BC**, **Greco-Macedonian** empire, represented by the **Belly and Thighs of Bronze** ruled the world and Israel till **146 BC**, a total of **185** years. It was made up of the people of Greece and Macedonia in Southern Europe. Its leading light was Alexander the Great; son of Phillip of Macedon who conquered the world up to India, before he died at youthful age of 33.

The pin point accuracy of what was to come in the time of the Medo-Persia and Greco-Macedonian empires, still marvel students of history. If you read Daniel Chapter 7, 8, 10 and 11, you cannot but marvel at how history bore out the words uttered through Daniel by the Most High and His holy angelic messengers. The fact the life of Alexander the Great would be cut short and he would be succeeded by four of his generals were almost graphic. The rivalry of two of those Kingdoms which his generals established, Egypt ruled by Ptolemy I Soter (323-285 BC) and his heirs, and the Seleucid Kingdom ruled by Seleucus Nicator (311-280 BC) and his heirs was a major fact of life of their time.

How one of the rulers of the Seleucid Kingdom; Antiochus Epiphanes IV would become an enemy of the Most High and hater of Jews to the degree of defiling the Temple at Jerusalem with a sow (pig which is an unclean animal) and an Idol of the Greek god, Zeus was prophesied in Daniel Chapter 8;23-25 and Chapter 11:21-45.

4. From **146 BC**, **Rome**, represented by the **Legs of Iron** which crushed all other kingdoms before it, ruled the world and Israel till **476 AD**, a total of **622** years. The first Emperor of Rome was Augustus after whom the Roman Senate named the 8th month of the year, August. It was during his tenure as Caesar that the Kingdom of heaven invaded the earth realm with the Incarnation of Yeshua, Jesus.

Luke 2:1-7 (KJV) *1 And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. 2 (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) 3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. 4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into*

Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) 5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. 6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Why is this piece of information critical? It is because it provided a clear signal from where the process of recovery of the Kingdom; lost by Adam in the earth realm, would take a bearing; starting with manifestation of Yeshua as the Seed of the woman. If He was Seed of the Woman, it implied the actual process of restoration of the Kingdom would be in two phases:

- The Seed of the Woman speaks of the Humanity of He who would be the Lamb of Elohim to atone for Sins of the whole World. In this capacity, He would manifest as a human and activate the Kingdom as a Spiritual reality in the hearts of those who embrace Him and His message. This spiritual dimension of the Kingdom would subsist until the next phase. In this regard, Yeshua would serve as the Lamb of Elohim during the phase of life on earth in which the Legs of Iron – Roman Empire would reign on earth.
- In the fullness of time, He will return as King of Kings and Lord of Lords to vanquish the armies of the world system and establish the manifest Kingdom as a world-wide reality.

Revelation 11:15 (KJV) *15 and the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*

His return would be when the strange kingdom described in Daniel 2:41-45 as ‘Feet of Clay and Iron’ would dominate the earth realm. In the in-cohesive world system, people are torn apart based on race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic conditions, and political ideology to the degree the center of civilization as we know it, is defined by hatred and acrimony. Therefore, it cannot hold its unfolding in high definition in this generation.

Note that Rome was described by Daniel as the ‘Legs of Iron’. This speaks of the two parts of Roman strength which stamped out Kingdoms before it and totally re-defined the world.

4.1 The Political, Administrative and Military Juggernaut. Roman soldiers were so courageous and powerful they swarmed and overran all targets defined by their Generals with singleness of eye. They proceeded to set up administrative systems of government to rule those they conquered. In this way, Pax Romana or the Peace of Rome was spread across the then known world.

This ‘secular’ dimension of Rome was to play an extraordinarily significant role regarding the birth, life, and ministry of Yeshua. It was to stand as a colossus against the Kingdom which Yeshua proclaimed and is the Head. It was also responsible for trying to destroy the Church through assimilation and contamination.

4.2 The Roman Church. It was in Rome one of the greatest deeds on earth was done; union of Political Rome and the larger wing of Church of Yeshua, which was by then about 300 years on earth and had suffered untold persecution from Political Rome. By that union, the Alpha Church was effectively stopped and the true remnant was driven underground. What was presented to the world was: The Roman Church, which began to re-define the gospel to create Christendom or Christian Religion. To

validate the Empire, this new religion promoted 'Replacement theology' by which the Hebraic Roots of the gospel were systematically taken away and replaced with Roman themes.

The Hebraic calendar contained a fairly accurate reading of times and seasons. It was first replaced with the Julian Calendar and later the Gregorian Calendar; promoting allegiance to Roman pantheons including Emperor adulation. For instance: July was named in honor of Julius Caesar and August was named in honor of Augustus Caesar (formerly Octavian). The month of September simply honors the concept of Seven; whereas in the Old Hebraic calendar, this season is part of Elul, up to 13th; the month which calls for repentance and preparing the heart for encounter with the Lord.

True to the prophecies of Daniel in Chapter 7; Rome re-defined the world so permanently the last empire before Jesus, will be basically its offspring, having a great measure of its DNA.

Understanding the Clash of Kingdoms

With the introduction, let us now see in greater detail how the Clash of the Kingdom of Heaven represented by Yeshua and His followers, clashed with the earthly kingdom of Rome. It is vital we do not misinterpret these historical truths to resent the Roman Empire or have an attitude of superiority to people from the region. Whatever was done by their leaders and officers were permitted by Elohim as instruments of fulfilling His already declared determinate counsel!

1 Corinthians 2:7-8 (KJV) *7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: 8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.*

1. The Roman Empire ruled the land of Israel when Yeshua was born as Luke 2:1-7 stated.
2. The Romans appointed King Herod to rule Judea when Yeshua was born. He epitomized the clash of kingdoms in graphic detail when he heard of the birth of Yeshua.

Matthew 2:1-13 (KJV) *1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, 2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. 3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. 5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, 6 And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. 7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. 9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. 11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh. 12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. 13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.*

3. Yeshua lived all His life under Roman Rule. Recognizing the reality that all temporal rulers exist by the permission of Elohim for the maintenance of law and order until the Kingdom is restored, Yeshua taught the people to submit to Roman authority

Matthew 22:15-21 (KJV) *15 Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. 16 And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men. 17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? 18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? 19 Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. 20 And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? 21 They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.*

Temple tax collectors who obviously had approval of the Imperial government once harassed him about payment. Though the Son of Elohim, he complied by asking Peter to get money from the mouth of a fish to pay for both them!

Matthew 17:24-27 (KJV) *24 And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? 25 He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? 26 Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. 27 Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.*

4. The Roman Governor Pontius Pilate who tried and found Him innocent of all accusations; nevertheless, signed the 'Death warrant' without which Yeshua would not be crucified.

5. It was Roman Soldiers who carried out both the extreme torture and Crucifixion!

Matthew 27:27-66

6. It was Roman Soldiers who collected bribes from Religious leaders and tried to discredit the Resurrection (Matthew 28). This was clearly an attempt to destroy a cornerstone of the Gospel of the Kingdom as 1 Corinthians 15 explains.

7. The full might of Imperial Rome was deployed against spread of the Gospel.

The basis on which Rome became systematically hostile to the King and His Kingdom was first established in the formal indictment against Yeshua as follows;

John 19:12-15 (KJV) *12 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar. 13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha 14 And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! 15 But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.*

Matthew 27:37 (KJV) *37 And set up over his head his accusation written, This Is Jesus The King Of The Jews.*

This includes but is not limited to these hostile acts against the Alpha Church:

7.1 Martyrdom of an uncountable number of leaders of the CHURCH, from James who was killed in Jerusalem, to Peter and Paul who were killed in Rome; leaders of the true Kingdom Church were hunted down and killed in gruesome circumstances including crucifixion, beheading and mauling by wild animals.

7.2 The Roman Empire was one vast killing field in which the blood of millions of saints were shed. Their only crime as that they believed in Yeshua and submitted to His Sovereign rule as King over their lives.

Acts 17:6 (KJV) *6 And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;*

Get ready to comprehend that which is one of the Golden Keys: To understand the End of the Age!
When we understand all these things, we will know what Elohim wants to see in the end time Church!
He wants His Church to be unspotted from the spirit and practices of the world system!

Review Questions

1. Kindly summarize this chapter
2. What new thing (s) has the Father revealed to you through His Word in the chapter?

Chapter 32

Culture Clash with Rome: The Dominant Kingdom of Men

In Chapter 31, we examined the reality that the Alpha Church operated in the context of a clash of Kingdoms. The saints represented the Kingdom of Elohim which was firmly in their hearts by their wholehearted submission to the Sovereign rule of Yeshua. Yet, He did not take them out of the world which was rule by the Roman empire.

Everything about the harsh environment they would operate in was known by Yeshua, Jesus. Even in sending them on a dry run/test mission to Israel, Yeshua had hinted at the opposite forces at play:

Matthew 10:18-33 (KJV) *18 And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. 19 But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. 20 For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. 21 And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. 22 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. 23 But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come. 24 The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. 25 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household? 26 Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. 27 What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops. 28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. 29 Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. 30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. 32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. 33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.*

That is why Yeshua prayed earnestly to the Father to preserve them for the special assignment of completing what He came to initiate: Restoration of the Kingdom lost by Adam.

John 17:9-20 (KJV) *9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. 10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. 11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. 12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. 19*

And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. 20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

Let us posture before Elohim to receive deeper insight into why the Roman Empire was bitterly opposed to the Person and Church of Yeshua, Jesus. In this and some other chapters, we will not re-invent the wheel. Because there is a great deal of well researched and established historical facts about the era of the Alpha Church, we will trust Holy Spirit to lead us to source materials – both ‘spiritual’ and ‘secular’ from which we will extract useful information to get the whole picture. Let us note, History is simply Prophecy ‘It is written’ already fulfilled while Current Affairs/Breaking News is Prophecy that is unfolding. With that fundamental understanding, we shall proceed in this chapter to see two broad aspects of the Roman Empire which were bulwarks against spread of the gospel message and Kingdom life of saints who submitted to the sovereign rule of Yeshua, making room for no other god.

Rome brooked neither opposition nor competition

In its 622 years of world dominance (not counting extra 1000 years of the Eastern Section operating from Constantinople), Rome operated on a simple principle: **Crush or Assimilate**. In this regard, Rome:

1.1 Rome crushed and stamped out world consciousness of the previous empires before it: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Assyria and Egypt. For the Empire, all hearts, minds and wills of humans everywhere in the world, should focus on the ‘eternal city’ of Rome. In this regard, Rome was to be the center and circumference of all human civilization, interests and activities.

1.2 It assimilated the Culture of Greece which was the last empire it succeeded (as well as aspects of previous empires all the way to Egypt which could serve any useful purpose for the Empire)

Culture in this regard includes the Language, Literature, World-view, Philosophy and Religion of the people This was indeed a strange development. Instead of Latin: The language of Rome; Greek was retained and used as official language of the Empire. The work of Greek Philosophers like Aristotle, Socrates and Plato, amongst others was standard fare in the literary and intellectual circles of Rome. Greek Architectural patterns for building both temples and private homes were absorbed by the artistically stylish people of Rome.

In the same way, some of those in the Pantheon of Greek gods were simply renamed and worshipped in the Roman Empire. Jupiter: the supreme god of Rome, for instance, is etymologically the same as Zeus of Greece.

Let us receive this very insightful piece of research published by Donald L. Wasson in Ancient.eu:

“In many societies, ancient and modern, religion has performed a major role in their development, and the Roman Empire was no different. From the beginning, Roman religion was polytheistic. From an initial array of gods and spirits, [Rome](#) added to this collection to include both Greek gods as well as a number of foreign cults. As the empire expanded, the Romans refrained from imposing their own religious beliefs upon those they conquered; however, this inclusion must not be misinterpreted as tolerance - this can be seen with their early reaction to the Jewish and Christian population.

EARLY BELIEFS & INFLUENCES

Early forms of the Roman religion were animistic in nature, believing that spirits inhabited everything around them, people included. The first citizens of Rome also believed they were watched over by the spirits of their ancestors. Initially, a Capitoline Triad (possibly derived from a Sabine influence) were added to these "spirits" - the new gods included Mars, the god of war and supposed father of Romulus and Remus (founders of Rome); Quirinus, the deified Romulus who watched over the people of Rome; and lastly, Jupiter, the supreme god. They, along with the spirits, were worshipped at a temple on Capitoline Hill. Later, due to the Etruscans, the triad would change to include Jupiter who remained the supreme god; Juno, his wife and sister; and Minerva, Jupiter's daughter.

Due to the presence of Greek colonies on the Lower Peninsula, the Romans adopted many of the Greek gods as their own. Religion and myth became one. Under this Greek influence, the Roman gods became more anthropomorphic – with the human characteristics of jealousy, love, hate, etc. However, this transformation was not to the degree that existed in Greek mythology. In Rome, individual expression of belief was unimportant, strict adherence to a rigid set of rituals was far more significant, thereby avoiding the hazards of religious zeal. Cities adopted their own patron deities and performed their own rituals. Temples honoring the gods would be built throughout the empire; however, these temples were considered the "home" of the god; worship occurred outside the temple. While this fusion of Roman and Greek deities influenced Rome in many ways, their religion remained practical.

Even though there were four colleges for priests, there was no priestly class; it would always remain a public office. This practice would even extend to the imperial palace. From the time of Emperor Augustus, the emperor would assume the title of *pontifex maximus* or chief priest. Other than the *pontifexes* there were *augures*, individuals who read the entrails of animals and the flight of birds to interpret omens, or in other words, the will of the gods. Elaborate rituals were performed to bring Roman victory in battle, and no declaration of war or major event was undertaken without the clear approval of the gods. Dating from the time of the Etruscans, a diviner or *haruspices*, was always consulted, and it was considered dangerous to ignore the omens. Spurinna, a Roman soothsayer, read animal entrails and foresaw Julius Caesar's death on the Ides of March. When Roman Commander Publius Claudius Pulcher ignored the omens - refusal of the sacred chickens to eat - before a battle during the First Punic War, he was defeated, as was his military career.

As the empire expanded across the Balkans, Asia Minor and into Egypt, Roman religion absorbed many of the gods and cults of conquered nations, but the primary influence would always remain Greece. With only a few exceptions, most of the Roman gods had their Greek counterparts. This Roman mythology would have a significant influence on the empire - politically and socially - as well as on the future of western civilization. One needs only to look at the names of the days and months (Tuesday, Saturday, January and June), the languages of European nations, and the names of the planets (Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, and Pluto) to realize this influence.

THE ROMAN PANTHEON

While the study of Roman mythology tends to emphasize the major gods - Jupiter, Neptune (god of the sea), Pluto (god of the underworld) and Juno - there existed, of course, a number of "minor" gods and

goddesses such as Nemesis, the god of revenge; Cupid, the god of love; Pax, the god of peace; and the Furies, goddesses of vengeance.

However, when looking at the religion of Rome, one must examine the impact of the most important gods. Foremost among the gods were, of course, Jupiter, the Roman equivalent of Zeus (although not as playful), and his wife/sister Juno. He was the king of the gods; the sky god (the great protector) - controlling the weather and forces of nature, using thunderbolts to give warning to the people of Rome. Originally linked with farming as *Jupiter Elicius*, his role changed as the city grew, eventually obtaining his own temple on Capitoline Hill. Later, he became *Jupiter Imperator Invictus Triumphator* - Supreme General, Unconquered, and ultimately, *Jupiter Optimus Maximus* - Best and Greatest. His supremacy would be temporarily set aside during the reign of Emperor Elagabalus who attempted to replace the religion of Rome with that of the Syrian god Elagabal. After the emperor's assassination, his successor, Alexander Severus, returned Jupiter to his former glory. Next, Jupiter's wife/sister was Juno, for whom the month of June is named - she was the equivalent of the Greek Hera. Besides being the supreme goddess with a temple on Esquiline Hill, she was the goddess of light and moon, embodying all of the virtues of Roman matron hood - as Juno Lucina she became the goddess of childbirth and fertility."

- Source: Donald L. Wasson, Ancient.eu/Roman Religion /2013

This was the culture existing in the earth realm and dominating the space in which Yeshua, Jesus was born, lived and grew to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom. The Gospel He proclaimed had the power to deliver them from bondage to these gods and connect them to the One, True Supreme Being: Elohim, who desired to relate with them as His Own Children and citizens of His Eternal Kingdom. The Culture Clash is not difficult to imagine.

2. Emperor Worship and attachment to Cults

Another basis of the Clash of Kingdoms was the way the Roman Empire deified its human rulers and the strong attachment of the people to various cults which dominated lives of adherents. To grasp the full extent of the direct opposing culture of the Roman Empire within which the Gospel of Yeshua and the Kingdom was going to operate, let us again glean from the seminal work of Donald L Wasson:

"CULT WORSHIP

Besides the worship of these gods there were several cults - Bacchus, Cybele, Isis, Sarapis, Sibyl, and most of all the Imperial Cult. Some were readily accepted by Roman society while others were feared by those in power. Bacchus was a Roman deity associated with both the Greek god Dionysus and the early Roman god Liber Patri, also a wine god. Bacchus is best remembered for his intoxicating festivals held on March 17, a day when a Roman male youth would supposedly become a man. As his cult spread, the Roman Senate realized its dangerous potential and ordered its suppression in 186 BCE and afterwards, the cult went underground.

Another cult centered on Cybele, the "great mother" - a fertility goddess with a temple on Palatine Hill who was responsible for every aspect of a person's well-being. The goddess arrived in Athens in the fifth century BCE and first appeared in Rome during the Punic Wars. All of her priests were eunuchs, and many of her male followers would have themselves castrated. Next is Isis, the ancient goddess of Egypt

who is best remembered in Egyptian mythology as the wife of Osiris and the mother of Horus. After becoming Hellenized, she became the protector of sailors and fishermen. Arriving in Rome from Alexandria, Sarpis was a healing god and the sick would travel to her temple to be cured. Sibyl was a priestess of the Greek and Roman god Apollo who came to Rome from the Greek colony of Cumae.

She offered the Etruscan King Tarquin the nine Sibylline Books which were books of prophecy, but the price was considered too high, so he refused. After she had burned six of the books, he reconsidered and bought the remaining three; these three books were consulted by the Roman Senate in times of emergencies but they were lost during the barbarian invasions of the fifth century CE.

Lastly, there was the Imperial Cult. The idea of deification of the emperor came during the time of Emperor Augustus. He resisted the Senate's attempts to name him a god during his reign as he thought himself the son of a god, not a god. Upon his death, the Roman Senate rewarded him with deification which was an honor that would be bestowed upon many of his successors. Often, an emperor would request his predecessor to be deified. Of course, there were a few exceptions, notably, Tiberius, Caligula, Nero and Domitian, who were considered too abhorrent to receive the honor. Caligula and Nero believed themselves living gods while Domitian thought himself the reincarnation of Hercules."

- Donald L. Wasson in [Ancient.eu/Roman Religion](http://Ancient.eu/Roman_Religion).2013
- Donald has taught Ancient, Medieval and U.S. History at Lincoln College (Normal, Illinois) and has always been and will always be a student of history, ever since learning about Alexander the Great. He is eager to pass knowledge on to his students.

The Culture Clash was real!

To this end, it neither countenanced opposition nor tolerated any idea or way of life which offered competition to its world-view. The new movement across the empire which started in the Roman Province of Judea – by proclaiming allegiance to one called the Messiah or Saviour whose adherents lived differently from other citizens of the empire definitely crossed their path.

The point being made here is that the gospel of Yeshua and the Kingdom had a direct mandate by Head of the Church to 'Go Ye' and transform worldly culture. These specific words of Yeshua, Jesus captured the essence of the Great Commission relative to the dominant Roman Culture in the earth realm:

Matthew 28:18-20 (KJV) *18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

Knowing the harsh operating environment of Roman Empire; Yeshua charged His disciples not to go forth in the arm of the flesh or with head knowledge. He promises to endue them with the same Holy Spirit with which He so effectively complete 3 ½ years of Public Ministry:

Acts 1:4-8 (KJV) *4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. 5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. 6 When they therefore were come*

together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? 7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. 8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Saints in the Alpha Church period knew that they would accomplish this awesome task not with force of arms or persuasive logic which appealed to human reason. They were not to quarrel, abuse or engage in subversion against governments or turn their pulpits into bully platforms against politicians in whom they disagreed. They were to go with a different set of instruments!

- By **Prayer**
- By **Spiritual warfare**, they would subdue Principalities, Powers and Rulers of the dark world (Ephesians 6:10-18)
- By **Compassion** and **love** for lost souls
- Their assignment was to be vessels through which Yeshua would use to affect and impact the hostile world from within – transforming the hearts and minds of every human they were given contact with and assigned to! One at a time; a family at a time; the Kingdom of heaven was to invade the mighty Roman Empire to subdue it from within.

Matthew 13:33 (KJV) *33 Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.*

Matthew 5:13-16 (KJV) *13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

Review Questions

1. Please share 3 things you personally receive from this chapter.

Chapter 33

Surviving the Odds: The Alpha Church Versus Rome

In chapter 32, we traced the Clash of Cultures between the Alpha Church and Imperial Rome. As we saw, this arose because as saints enthroned Yeshua in their hearts and demonstrated His Kingdom in their everyday life. Their lives contradicted the demands of the empire including Emperor worship.

The Omega Church is fortunate that it has the benefit of written history and excellent scholarly works by academics and researchers to understand the full scope of what the Alpha Church experienced. Unfortunately, the weakness of the flesh gets in the way. The result is that generality of saints in the end time, have little or no knowledge of how those who were used by the Lord to begin the Church age of the Kingdom, lived out their Faith in Yeshua and relationship with the Father under unction of Holy Spirit, as citizens of the most powerful empire in world history.

The full import of the two exhortations by both Paul and Peter concerning how to practice the separation that Yeshua prayed to the Father in John 17, are better appreciated when we sit back to consider how they were lived out:

Philippians 2:12-16 (KJV) *12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. 14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings: 15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; 16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.*

1 Peter 2:9-12 (KJV) *9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. 11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

As a follow up, it is necessary to have a fairly accurate and comprehensive understanding of how the Alpha Church survived the imperial might of Rome without compromise. We found two excellent articles on the web written by Ken Curtis, Ph.D. in Christianity Today. They present a graphic picture of how the early church fared within the very hostile environment that was the Roman Empire.

The Church under Rome (before 300 AD)

What Were Early Christians Like?

The early Christian church in the first three centuries after Jesus's resurrection brought about the most amazing transformation of diverse social and religious cultures ever achieved by peaceful means in the

history of the world. How did it happen? What kind of people were these? What was special about their way of living and believing?

It would be a mistake to romanticize the early church as an age of purity to which we should seek to return. The churches always had their problems and internal struggles. Nevertheless, the early churches as a whole did represent something different in their world. It attracted both devoted followers and brutal persecutors. To see what these early believers were like, let's go to the sources and hear what they were bold to proclaim about themselves.

From the First Apology of Justin (c. AD 150)

First, an early philosopher, Justin Martyr, wrote to the Roman emperor, Antonius Pius around AD 150, to defend the Christians. In the excerpt below we see how the believers were eager to invite the most intense scrutiny of their lives. At the same time note how he reminds the most powerful man in that world that he may not really be as much in charge as he thinks.

Since you are called pious and philosophers, guardians of justice and lovers of learning, pay attention and listen to my address. If you are indeed followers of learning, it will be clear. We have not come to flatter you by this writing nor please you by our address, but to beg that you pass judgment after an accurate and searching investigation. . . . As for us, no evil can be done to us unless we are convicted as evildoers or proved to be wicked men. You can kill us. But you cannot hurt us.

To avoid anyone thinking that this is an unreasonable and reckless declaration, we demand that the charges against the Christians be investigated. If these are substantiated, we should be justly punished. But if no one can convict us of anything, true reason forbids you to wrong blameless men because of evil rumors. If you did so, you would be harming yourselves in governing affairs by emotions rather than by intelligence. . . . It is our task, therefore, to provide to all an opportunity of inspecting our life and teachings. . . . It is your business, when you hear us, to be good judges, as reason demands. If, when you have learned the truth, you do not do what is just, you will be without excuse before God.

How Did the Early Christians Describe Themselves?

The Epistle to Diognetes, c. AD 130

Here is a gem we are most fortunate to have as only one copy survived the centuries. We do not know who wrote it. It came from the second century. It was, like the New Testament, originally written in Greek. In this brief excerpt, we have preserved a magnificent description of Christian living in what was expected in the early church community.

“For the Christians are distinguished from other men neither by country, nor language, nor the customs which they observe. For they neither inhabit cities of their own, nor employ a peculiar form of speech, nor lead a life which is marked out by any singularity. The course of conduct which they follow has not been devised by any speculation or deliberation of inquisitive men; nor do they, like some, proclaim themselves the advocates of any merely human doctrines. But, inhabiting Greek as well as barbarian cities, according as the lot of each of them has determined and following the customs of the natives in

respect to clothing, food, and the rest of their ordinary conduct, they display to us their wonderful and confessedly striking method of life.

They dwell in their own countries, but simply as sojourners. As citizens, they share in all things with others and yet endure all things as if foreigners. Every foreign land is to them as their native country, and every land of their birth as a land of strangers. They marry, as do all others; they beget children; but they do not destroy their offspring. They have a common table, but not a common bed. They are in the flesh, but they do not live after the flesh. They pass their days on earth, but they are citizens of heaven. They obey the prescribed laws, and at the same time surpass the laws by their lives. They love all men and are persecuted by all. They are unknown and condemned; they are put to death and restored to life. They are poor yet make many rich; they are in lack of all things and yet abound in all; they are dishonored and yet in their very dishonor are glorified. They are evil spoken of and yet are justified; they are reviled and bless; they are insulted and repay the insult with honor; they do good yet are punished as evildoers. When punished, they rejoice as if quickened into life; they are assailed by the Jews as foreigners and are persecuted by the Greeks; yet those who hate them are unable to assign any reason for their hatred. To sum it all up in one word -- what the soul is to the body, that are Christians in the world."

From the Apology of Tertullian, AD 197

The "apology" was not saying "sorry" but was a defense of a viewpoint. One of the most colorful early church scholars was the North African Tertullian, who lived from around AD 160-225. He commended the Christian faith to the pagan world. In this excerpt, we get priceless insight into the practices of early Christian worship, discipline, leadership selection and financial giving. But most significantly, Tertullian preserves the amazing pagan observation of the Christians: "See how they love one another."

"We are a body knit together as such by a common religious profession, by unity of discipline, and by the bond of a common hope. We meet together as an assembly and congregation, that, offering up prayer to God as with united force, we may wrestle with Him in our supplications. This strong exertion God delights in. We pray, too, for the emperors, for their ministers and for all in authority, for the welfare of the world, for the prevalence of peace, for the delay of the final consummation. We assemble to read our sacred writings . . . and with the sacred words we nourish our faith, we animate our hope, we make our confidence more steadfast; and no less by inculcations of God's precepts we confirm good habits. In the same place also exhortations are made, rebukes and sacred censures are administered. For with a great gravity is the work of judging carried on among us, as befits those who feel assured that they are in the sight of God; and you have the most notable example of judgment to come when anyone has sinned so grievously as to require his severance from us in prayer, in the congregation and in all sacred intercourse.

The tried men of our elders preside over us, obtaining that honour not by purchase but by established character. There is no buying and selling of any sort in the things of God. Though we have our treasure-chest, it is not made up of purchase-money, as of a religion that has its price. On the monthly day, if he likes, each puts in a small donation; but only if it be his pleasure, and only if he be able: for there is no

compulsion; all is voluntary. These gifts are not spent on feasts, and drinking-bouts, and eating-houses, but to support and bury poor people, to supply the wants of boys and girls destitute of means and parents, and of old persons confined now to the house; such, too, as have suffered shipwreck; and if there happen to be any in the mines or banished to the islands or shut up in the prisons, for nothing but their fidelity to the cause of God's Church, they become the nurslings of their confession. But it is mainly the deeds of a love so noble that lead many to put a brand upon us. See, they say, how they love one another, for they themselves are animated by mutual hatred. See, they say about us, how they are ready even to die for one another, for they themselves would sooner kill."

Governor Pliny writes Emperor Trajan for advice in dealing with "The Christian Problem," AD 112

Pliny, the Roman governor in Bithynia, in present day Turkey, had a problem. What was he to do with the Christians who were spreading rapidly? He wrote to his emperor Trajan in Rome, seeking advice. He describes the Christian problem and shows how some under pressure were willing to renounce their faith and others were not. He then gives valuable description of Christian life, practice and worship at that time.

An anonymous document was published containing the names of many persons. Those who denied that they were or had been Christians, when they invoked the words dictated by me, offered prayer with incense and wine to your image, which I had ordered to be brought for this purpose together with statues of the gods, and moreover cursed Christ -- none of which those who are really Christians, it is said, can be forced to do -- these I thought should be discharged. Others named by the informer declared that they were Christians, but then denied it, asserting that they had been but had ceased to be, some three years before, others many years, some as much as twenty-five years, they all worshipped your image and the statues of the Gods, and cursed Christ. They asserted, however, that the sum and substance of their fault or error had been that they were accustomed to meet on a fixed day before dawn and sing responsively a hymn to Christ as a god, and to bind themselves by oath, not to some crime, but not to commit, fraud, theft, or adultery, not falsify their trust, nor to refuse to return a trust when called upon to do so. When this was over, it was their custom to depart and to assemble again to partake of food -- but ordinary and innocent food. Even this, they affirmed, they had ceased to do after my edict by which, in accordance with your instructions, I had forbidden political associations. Accordingly, I judged it all the more necessary to find out what the truth was by torturing two female slaves who were called deaconesses. But I discovered nothing else but depraved, excessive superstition.

And, finally, the observations of a prominent present day researcher.

Sociologist Rodney Stark analyzed the survival and growth of the early church in the first few centuries. Here is his fascinating summary of the Early Church.

". . . Christianity served as a revitalization movement that arose in response to the misery, chaos, fear, and brutality of life in the urban Greco-Roman world. . . . Christianity revitalized life in Greco-Roman cities by providing new norms and new kinds of social relationships able to cope with many urgent problems. To cities filled with the homeless and impoverished, Christianity offered charity as well as hope. To cities filled with newcomers and strangers, Christianity offered an immediate basis for

attachment. To cities filled with orphans and widows, Christianity provided a new and expanded sense of family. To cities torn by violent ethnic strife, Christianity offered a new basis for social solidarity. And to cities faced with epidemics, fire, and earthquakes, Christianity offered effective nursing services. . . . For what they brought was not simply an urban movement, but a new culture capable of making life in Greco-Roman cities more tolerable." (Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity*, Princeton University Press, 1996, page 161.)

How did the early Christian church survive? Humanly speaking, the odds were all stacked against it.

It was unthinkable that a small, despised movement from a corner of Palestine could move out to become the dominant faith of the mighty Roman Empire, an empire steeped in fiercely defended traditional pagan religions. The spread of the Christian church in its earliest centuries is one of the most amazing phenomena in all of human history. The church was considered a *religio prava*, an illegal and depraved religion. Wave after wave of persecution was unleashed to squash it. At least two of the persecutions were empire-wide and intended to destroy the church. So how did this young fledgling movement make it?

More than a building

The earliest Christians did not have church buildings. They typically met in homes. (The first actual church building to be found is at Dura Europos on the Euphrates, dating about 231.) They did not have public ceremonies that would introduce them to the public. They had no access to the mass media of their day. So how can we account for their steady and diverse expansion over the first three centuries?

After the Apostle Paul, we do not run across many "big names" as missionaries in the first few hundred years of Christian history. Instead the faith spread through a multitude of humble, ordinary believers whose names have been long forgotten.

To the cities!

Early Christianity was primarily an urban faith, establishing itself in the city centers of the Roman Empire. Most of the people lived close together in crowded tenements. There were few secrets in such a setting. The faith spread as neighbors saw the lives of the believers close-up, on a daily basis.

And what kind of lives did they lead? Justin Martyr, a noted early Christian theologian, wrote to Emperor Antoninus Pius and described the believers: "We formerly rejoiced in uncleanness of life, but now love only chastity; before we used the magic arts, but now dedicate ourselves to the true and unbegotten God; before we loved money and possessions more than anything, but now we share what we have and to everyone who is in need; before we hated one another and killed one another and would not eat with those of another race, but now since the manifestation of Christ, we have come to a common life and pray for our enemies and try to win over those who hate us without just cause."

In another place Justin points out how those opposed to Christianity were sometimes won over as they saw the consistency in the lives of believers, noting their extraordinary forbearance when cheated and their honesty in business dealings.

Christians became known as those who cared for the sick. Many were known for the healing that resulted from their prayers. Christians also started the first "Meals on Wheels." By the year 250, they were feeding more than 1500 of the hungry and destitute in Rome every day.

When Emperor Julian ("the Apostate") wanted to revive pagan religion in the mid-300s, he gave a most helpful insight into how the church spread. This opponent of the faith said that Christianity "has been specially advanced through the loving service rendered to strangers and through their care of the burial of the dead. It is a scandal that there is not a single Jew who is a beggar and that the [Christians] care not only for their own poor but for ours as well; while those who belong to us look in vain for the help we should render them."

On the surface, the early Christians appeared powerless and weak, they were an easy target for scorn and ridicule. They had no great financial resources, no buildings, no social status, no government approval, no respect from the educators. And after they became separated from their first-century association with the Jewish synagogues, they lacked institutional backing and an ancient tradition to appeal to.

But what finally mattered is what they did have. They had a faith. They had a fellowship. They had a new way of life. They had a confidence that their Lord was alive in heaven and guiding their daily lives. These were the important things. And it made all the difference in laying a Christian foundation for all of Western civilization."

- By Ken Curtis, Ph.D. in Christianity. com/church/church_history/timeline/1-300/the-spread-of-the-early-church

A Look at the Early Church by Ken Curtis, Ph.D.

Have you ever noticed that the Bible gives us no clue as to what Jesus looked like? All our paintings of Jesus are merely the artist's idea of how he might have looked. The first representation of Christ on record is actually a derisive graffiti on the wall of a house on the Palatine Hill in Rome. It pictured the body of a man being crucified but with the head of an ass. The inscription reads: "Alexamenos worships his god."

From the time of Nero (64 A.D.) until the conversion of Emperor Constantine and the Edict of Milan (313 A.D.), whereby Christianity was made legal, the Christian faith was officially regarded as a *religio prava*, an evil or depraved religion.

Christianity's Jewish Roots

Christianity began as a movement within Judaism. Much of the earliest proclamation of the Gospel took place in the synagogues. The Christians did not side with the Jews in their revolt against Rome beginning in 66 A.D., and by the end of the first century the church had largely separated from the synagogue.

When a "church" wasn't a building

These early believers did not have church buildings to meet in. They met mostly in homes. The first church buildings did not start to appear until the early 200s.

Debate but not denominations

The early church did not have denominations as we think of them today. But that does not mean they had no serious disagreements within the ranks. They did. And they did not find this surprising. They felt they were dealing with matters of ultimate truth and error - matters to be taken with the utmost seriousness even when it meant dissension.

Torn by dogs, nailed to crosses...

The early Christians were the targets of repeated persecutions - some of unspeakable cruelty. For example, the emperor Nero blamed the Christians for the great fire that destroyed 10 of the 14 city wards at Rome in 64 A.D., a fire that Nero apparently had ordered himself. The historian Tacitus, not a Christian, said that Nero had the believers "torn by dogs, nailed to crosses . . . even used as human torches to illumine his gardens at night."

But Christians were not under persecution everywhere and all the time. The persecutions were sporadic, with peaceful intervals in between. They varied in their intensity and were mostly localized.

Just Get your Certificate!

There were two all-out empire-wide persecutions intended to utterly destroy the church. The first, under the emperor Decius, began in December, 249. Everyone in the empire had to get a certificate from a government officer verifying that he or she had offered a sacrifice to the gods - an act that most Christians in good conscience could not do.

The second, called "The Great Persecution," began on February 23, 303, under Emperor Diocletian. Galerius, the empire's second-in-command, was behind this persecution policy and continued it after Diocletian's death. For eight long years, official decrees ordered Christians out of public office, scriptures confiscated, church buildings destroyed, leaders arrested, and pagan sacrifices required. All the reliable methods of torture were mercilessly employed - wild beasts, burning, stabbing, crucifixion, the rack. But they were all to no avail. The penetration of the faith across the empire was so pervasive that the church could not be intimidated nor destroyed. In 311, the same Galerius, shortly before his death, weak and diseased, issued an "edict of toleration." This included the statement that it was the duty of Christians "to pray to their god for our good estate."

Baptism

The Christian writer Hippolytus, writing about 200 A.D., describes baptism at Rome. Candidates took off their clothing, were baptized three times after renouncing Satan and affirming the basic teachings of the faith, and put on new clothes. Then they joined the rest of the church in the Lord's Supper.

Baptism was not entered into lightly. First one went through an extensive period of preparation as a "catechumen." This lasted as long as three years, involving close scrutiny of the catechumen's behavior.

The church would only admit those who proved to be sincere in seeking a totally new life within the Christian community.

Slave makes good!

Christians drew members into their fellowship from every rank and race, an affront to proper, class-conscious Romans. A former slave who had worked the mines actually became the bishop of Rome -- Callistus in 217."

- Ken Curtis, Ph.D. in Christianity. com/church/church_history/timeline/1-300/

The power of Faith in Yeshua and abiding in His Word to overcome the World as stated in the Holy Scriptures was no doubt demonstrated by the Alpha Church. As we consider these things, may Holy Spirit inspire and energize us to shun compromise with the world in order to become His show piece in these end times.

1 John 4:4-5 (KJV) *4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. 5 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.*

1 John 5:4-5 (KJV) *4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. 5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?*

Review Questions

1. Kindly share 3 things you learnt from this chapter.
2. What is your personal commitment to the Lord arising from the message of this chapter?

Chapter 34

Christians on The Broad and Narrow Ways

Looking back at the Alpha Church: the scope of persecution the saints suffered for their Faith was mind boggling.

Scope of the Pain:

1. Profiling and Classification as 'trouble makers'
2. Rejection by their contemporaries
3. There was Persecution for their Faith
4. There was Torture in various forms
5. Cruel deaths of various forms

Christians were Crucified; such as Peter (who reportedly requested to be crucified upside down to honor his Master); Beheaded such as Paul; Burning at stakes and mauling by wild animals

Those who survived:

1. Increased in Wisdom, experiencing what Yeshua told them to be 'be wise as serpents'
2. Increased their resolve to fulfill the Great Commission at all costs
3. Laid down their own lives for the work to be completed

Attitude of true saints in the fire:

1. They counted it a Privilege to be counted worthy to suffer for His sake.
2. They had Joy as their strength.
3. They forgave their tormentors, seeking that their blood would water the ground for revival.

Their report before the Lord can be summed up with this passage:

Revelations 12:11 (KJV) *11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.*

The Pliny Testimony

In Chapter 33, there is a remarkable document quoted by Dr. Ken Curtis in his piece on the Church under Rome (Before AD 300) which revealed that some Christians were steadfast about their Faith, even in the face of fire while others crumbled under the weight of intense persecution. Let us quote it again for context:

"Governor Pliny writes Emperor Trajan for advice in dealing with "The Christian Problem," AD 112

Pliny, the Roman governor in Bithynia, in present day Turkey, had a problem. What was he to do with the Christians who were spreading rapidly? He wrote to his emperor Trajan in Rome, seeking advice. He describes the Christian problem and shows how some under pressure were willing to renounce their faith and others were not. He then gives valuable description of Christian life, practice and worship at that time.

An anonymous document was published containing the names of many persons. Those who denied that they were or had been Christians, when they invoked the words dictated by me, offered prayer with incense and wine to your image, which I had ordered to be brought for this purpose together with statues of the gods, and moreover cursed Christ -- none of which those who are really Christians, it is said, can be forced to do -- these I thought should be discharged. Others named by the informer declared that they were Christians, but then denied it, asserting that they had been but had ceased to be, some three years before, others many years, some as much as twenty-five years, They all worshipped your image and the statues of the Gods, and cursed Christ. They asserted, however, that the sum and substance of their fault or error had been that they were accustomed to meet on a fixed day before dawn and sing responsively a hymn to Christ as a god, and to bind themselves by oath, not to some crime, but not to commit, fraud, theft, or adultery, not falsify their trust, nor to refuse to return a trust when called upon to do so. When this was over, it was their custom to depart and to assemble again to partake of food -- but ordinary and innocent food. Even this, they affirmed, they had ceased to do after my edict by which, in accordance with your instructions, I had forbidden political associations. Accordingly, I judged it all the more necessary to find out what the truth was by torturing two female slaves who were called deaconesses. But I discovered nothing else but depraved, excessive superstition."

Why was it so that some Christians in the Alpha Church were joyfully willing to lay down their lives while others loved their lives so much that they would do anything, including apostasy (deliberate falling away) to keep theirs?

The answer is rooted in the Holy Scriptures. Knowing the Truth will enable saints in the Omega or End Time Church to do a reality check to discern where they are in their relationship with Yeshua and count the costs concerning what may come upon them from the world system.

The Constitution of the Kingdom – The New Covenant - says there will be two types of Christians in the earth realm at any given time until Yeshua returns to set up the manifest Kingdom!

The Holy Scriptures provide sufficient reasons for the disparity of focus, lifestyle and attitude to death and life in the Alpha Church! Yeshua, Jesus spoke of two ways: The Narrow and Broad; two types of Christians; two types of Ministers and the reality that such divergences will be based on attitude to the Word!

Two Gateways

Matthew 7:13-14 (KJV) *13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*

Two types of Ministers

15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. 16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? 17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. 19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Basis: Two types of attitudes to the Word!

24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: 25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

In Matthew 13, Yeshua expands the concept of different types of Christians

Verse 1: *He revealed that the state of hearts of hearers of the Word and their attitude to it will have definite outcomes:*

Verses 4 & 19: *Wayside hearts will produce forgetful memories and short-lived experiences.*

Verses 5-6, 20-21: *Rocky/Stony heart will produce 'flaky/flash' fruit which cannot endure.*

Verse 7 & 22: *A heart filled with cares of this life (preponderance of focus on material things as true motive of embracing the Gospel) will stymie the effect of the word leading to un-transformed hearts. Though such people may be 'in Church', Yeshua does not occupy the throne of their hearts. They are mere professors of Faith in Him whose works deny Him eloquently.*

Verse 8 & 23: *Hearts which are ploughed by Holy Spirit mix what they hear with Faith.*

Yeshua said this represents those who will bear abundant fruit of His nature and character which can be seen by sinners!

He also revealed that while He came to earth to activate restoration of the Kingdom through bringing many sons to glory, Satan was also at work to plant his own sons in the same earth realm. Both types of people will be in the physical Church and even resemble each other outwardly! The parable of the Wheat and Tares in Matthew 13: 24-30; 36-43 is worth closer study!

Attitude to the Kingdom

In Matthew 13, Yeshua also gave us an insight that those who are possessors of Kingdom life and last the distance would be those who are intentional and passionate about the great value they place on it!

Matthew 13:44-46 speaks of how highly those who press in esteem the Kingdom and pay whatever price needful to possess it. (Great Treasure and Costly Pearl)

Verses 47-5 reveals that the Church age would feature both the true and the fake until the day of sorting!

Yeshua went on to give an accurate description of the correlation between surrendering of the heart and death of Self-man <filled with ambitions, self-love and Adamic dispositions> to emergence of the new man that is true purchase of His Redemptive Mission in the earth realm:

Matthew 16:24-26 (KJV) *24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. 25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. 26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*

Using Himself as an example, Yeshua pronounced this rule of productivity:

John 12:24 (KJV) *24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.*

In the Olivet Prophecy, Yeshua declared how there would be a falling away at the Latter times. That prophecy is of multiple application, covering both the period when Rome would besiege Jerusalem before destroying the Temple; the period of the Alpha Church; in these end times when we live as well as life under reign of the anti-Christ:

Matthew 24:9-13 (KJV) *9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. 10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. 11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. 12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. 13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*

Paul the Apostle picked up the theme of two types of ministers and the nature of what they focus on.

Attitude to His Return/the End Times

In the Matthew 24: 42-51 and Chapter 25:1-13 (Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins), Yeshua also revealed that two types of saints would be known by how intentional they are concerning His return. Those whose hearts are gripped with the reality that His absence is temporary and that He will return to take account are not going to be easily diverted by external pressures and challenges.

Peter also warned with strong language that false prophets would invade the Church, overthrowing the faith of many. The point he made is that those in leadership can misuse the enormous trust invested in them by generality of people 'in Church' to lead them away from allegiance to Yeshua, Jesus for their own pecuniary gains! How prescient his prophecies have turned out to be even at this time in history!

2 Peter 2:1-3,9-14, 17-22 (KJV) *1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. 2 And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. 3 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.*

9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: 10 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. 11 Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord. 12 But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; 13 And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; 14 Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:

17 These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. 18 For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. 19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. 20 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. 21 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. 22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

In 2 Peter chapter 3, Peter is used by Holy Spirit to show that there is a direct correlation of preachments/teachings devoid of the End Times to the falling away to come. History has borne him out. Saints who live in consciousness of eternity and return of their King do not succumb under pressure or threat to their mortal lives. Those who are caught up with the partisan politics, what to eat and drink and who to party with tend to live like people in the days of Noah who mocked his building of the Ark and entreaty for them, to get in and be saved.

In his days, Paul prophetically described how there would be a falling away from the truth:

1 Timothy 4:1-2 (KJV) *1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;*

2 Timothy 3:1-7 (KJV) *1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. 2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, 4 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; 5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. 6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, 7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

While multitudes may seem to be in Church, Paul warned pointedly that Elohim was not fooled by how things looked on the outside!

2 Timothy 2:19 (KJV) *19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*

Paul the Apostle was also used by Holy Spirit to reveal the reality that many would be attracted to the physical Church without necessarily been part of the Church which is the spiritual Body of Yeshua in the earth realm!

Philippians 3:17- 21 (KJV) *17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. 18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.) 20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*

As Holy Spirit revealed through the writings of Paul, lifestyles of Possessors and Professors of the Kingdom in reality reveals whether Holy Spirit or another spirit is at work within the human heart:

Galatians 5:15-22 (KJV) *15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. 16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. 18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

Paul was used by Holy Spirit to give an understanding of how Faith plays a critical role in making the Word effective in hearts of the redeemed:

Hebrews 4:2 (KJV) *2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.*

Holy Spirit also used Peter to describe two types of 'Christians': those who grow in Grace and those who are static in their profession of faith or even regress from heights they attained:

2 Peter 1:3-12 (KJV) *3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge 6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; 7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. 8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. 10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye*

shall never fall: 11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 12 Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.

John the beloved warned the saints of his day and us that the spirit of anti-Christ was already at work, preparing the way for his manifestation in due time. Those series of warnings became vital tools to enable some to escape while the vast majority missed it and were caught up. As early as those days, some false teachers had begun to question the Divinity of Yeshua, Jesus

1 John 2:18-28 (KJV) *18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. 19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. 20 But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. 21 I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. 22 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. 23 Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also. 24 Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. 25 And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life. 26 These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. 27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. 28 And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.*

There is no doubt that those in the alpha Church who embraced theologies which denied the divinity of Yeshua, Jesus; were the most vulnerable to crumble under the weight of persecutions.

1 John 4:1-3 (KJV) *1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.*

The book of Revelation chapters 2 and 3 vividly illustrate the reality of the different types of saints who were on the scene, in the physical church, before the year 100:

The Church at **Ephesus** had backslidden from the place of Love and was carried away by programs and activities (Revelation 2:1-7).

The Church at **Smyrna**, though 'small' was commended for being steadfast (1 of only 2 to be commended) (Revelation 2: 8-10).

The Church at **Pergamos** tolerated those with the doctrine of Balaam and by so doing, opened the doors to syncretism and idolatry (Revelation 2: 11-17).

The Church at **Thyatira** gave room for the spirit of control and illegitimate authority to lord it over His flock (Revelation 2:18-29).

The Church at **Sardis** lived on spent fuel (Old glory) having a name that it was alive while it was in a coma (Revelation 3: 1-6).

The Church at **Philadelphia** was one of only two found faithful (Revelation 3:7-13).

The Church at **Laodicea** gloried in material possessions while Yeshua was pushed out of their hearts (Revelation 3:14-22).

From these passages, it is clear the majority on the Broad way were in denial of their state. When push came to shove, their response to persecution was to crumble like cookies, deny their 'Master' and Faith, nauseating both the oppressors and genuine saints in the process.

The faithful few endured all afflictions for His sake, aware that there would be eternal rewards when He returned!

Hebrews 10:32-39 (KJV) *32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; 33 Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. 34 For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. 35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. 36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. 37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. 39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.*

Review Questions

1. Please summarize the central thesis of this chapter.
2. Kindly share with us, your personal resolution going forward.

Chapter 35

Canon and Apologetics

The Canon: Gospels, Epistles and Apologetic in the early Church

The divergences of lifestyles between the true saints and church goers as we saw in Chapter 34 was not an accidental thing. It flowed directly from the nature of the Word which people heard and believed. Those who heard the full counsel of the New Covenant and were genuinely converted, consecrated and committed to the kingdom with single minded focus, obviously had greater capacity to make it till the end.

Those who heard the incomplete gospel or the version mixed with traditions of men built their faith on the quick sands of time which could not withstand adversity. Their crumbling under the weight of persecution or rejection was a foregone matter. The way Yeshua, Jesus described these two realities at conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount was simply prophetically accurate:

Matthew 7:24-27 (KJV) *24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: 25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.*

Speaking of His Words, let us not forget that they were conveyed through a number tranches:

- 1. Orally** – specific people who walked with Yeshua till His ascension to heaven (approximately 500 saw him ascend according to 1 Corinthians 15: 6 preached the much they heard and knew.
- 2. Orally** – the 120 who were in the Upper Room on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 1: 4-8, 13-15; Acts 2:1-4) had received the Ambassadorial credentials to declare the full counsel of Who Yeshua Is, what He preached, taught and what He did. These people were better equipped for the gospel of the Kingdom than the first set. Here is what was said of them:

Acts 2:41-42 (KJV) *41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. 42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

3. The Gospels and Epistles

As the early Church grew, the Apostles doctrine which all saints received and internalized included the full range of the 39 books which made up the New Testament Canon. They were generally divided into 3 broad classes: The Four Gospels; the 22 Epistles to Churches and individuals; and the Prophetic book of Revelations.

- Matthew was recruited by Yeshua as His personal biographer. The Gospel He wrote offered proof to all Torah-observant Hebrews/Jews that He was indeed the Messiah and hope of all Israel.
- John wrote the highly acclaimed Gospel which focused on the Divinity of Yeshua, 3 epistles and the ultimate prophetic book, the Book of Revelation. Revelation offered all saints hope that at end of the age, they have a secure inheritance in eternity while both Satan and all evil doers would suffer eternal damnation.
- Luke, a Medical Doctor wrote a comprehensive account of the life, works and ministry of Yeshua, Jesus for the benefit of Gentiles so that they would see in Him their hope for redemption.
- Mark who was a youth when Yeshua was alive. He was eye witness to His life and is generally believed to received authoritative insight from Peter who was his uncle.
- Other Apostles wrote Epistles whose inspirations were unquestionable. They include Peter who was a close disciple of Yeshua who wrote two powerful epistles.
- James and Jude wrote authoritative epistles (both were 2 of the 4 half-brothers of Yeshua born by Mary to Joseph (Matthew 13:55).

4. The Pauline Epistles/Letters

Though many in the second set of people had walked with Yeshua, Jesus for 3 and half years, their cultural mindsets as Hebrews/Jews created a screen which blocked their full understanding of the gospel of Yeshua and the Kingdom. The missing link in their understanding was largely apprehending the full implications of what happened at the Cross and how it created a new paradigm in the earth realm. The presence of sons of Elohim who had direct access to their heavenly Father; who enthroned Yeshua as King in their heart and who, filled with the same Holy Spirit that Incarnated Yeshua in the womb of Mary and filled Him at the Baptism of John (Luke 1:35; Matthew 3: 16), had the heavenly ordained capacity to be used as instruments of completing the Mission of reconciling the Lost from both Hebrews/Jews and Gentiles to their heavenly Father.

This vital revelation was committed to the trust of Paul who as Saul was a hater of Yeshua, the saints and the Gospel until he was specifically arrested and commissioned in Acts 9. To Paul was granted revelations that are so deep, so wide and trans-formative which were originally inspired letters/Epistles he sent to city Churches in Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colossae, Thessalonica and to Hebrews everywhere. Others anointed letters he sent to protégés and friends like Timothy, Titus and Philemon. The weight of revelation in the two sets of letters was so much that the early Church recognized them as inspired applicable truths. Here is how Peter described the writings of Paul:

2 Peter 3:15-16 (KJV) *15 And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; 16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*

That he wrote 14 of the 27 books of the New Testament speaks volumes of the quality and quantum of revelations committed to His trust. To know the Four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) is to know Who Yeshua Is, What He Taught and What He did. To know the Pauline Epistles is to understand Who He Is in us and who we are in Him.

5. Emergence of Canonical Books. So many books and ‘epistles’ floated in the early Church. Some were straightforward revelations given by inspiration of Holy Spirit. Those were known by their ability to convict, transform hearts, renew minds, inspire to righteousness and remind saints of their eternal destinations and need to hold on till the end despite what they experienced. Some others had either mixture of philosophy, traditions of men or mystical elements which did not edify but raised questions in the hearts and minds of readers.

Michael J. Kruger, the Samuel Patterson Professor President at Reformed Theological Seminary in Charlotte, North Carolina gave a profound insight into how the books of the New Testament became Canon or accepted as sound doctrine for building up the faith of saints. In his blog, Canon Fodder he said “For whatever set of reasons, there is a widespread belief out there (internet, popular books) that the New Testament canon was decided at the Council of Nicea in 325 AD—under the conspiratorial influence of Constantine. The fact that this claim was made in Dan Brown’s best-seller *The Da Vinci Code* shows how widespread it really is. Brown did not make up this belief; he simply used it in his book.

The problem with this belief, however, is that it is patently false. The Council of Nicea had nothing to do with the formation of the New Testament canon (nor did Constantine). Nicea was concerned with how Christians should articulate their beliefs about the divinity of Jesus. Thus, it was the birthplace of the Nicene creed.

When people discover that Nicea did not decide the canon, the follow up question is usually, “Which council did decide the canon?” Surely, we could not have a canon without some sort of authoritative, official act of the church by which it was decided. Surely, we have a canon because some group of men somewhere voted on it. Right?

This whole line of reasoning reveals a fundamental assumption about the New Testament canon that needs to be corrected, namely that it was (or had to be) decided by a church council. The fact of the matter is that when we consider early church history there is no such council. Sure, there are regional church councils that made declarations about the canon (Laodicea, Hippo, Carthage). But these regional councils did not just “pick” books they happened to like, but affirmed the books they believed *had functioned as foundational documents for the Christian faith*. In other words, these councils were declaring the way things had been, not the way they wanted them to be. Thus, these councils did not create, authorize, or determine the canon. They simply were part of the process of *recognizing* a canon that was already there.

This raises an important fact about the New Testament canon that every Christian should know. The shape of our New Testament canon was not determined by a vote or by a council, but by a broad and ancient consensus. Here we can agree with Bart Ehrman, “The canon of the New Testament was ratified by widespread consensus rather than by official proclamation.”

This historical reality is a good reminder that the canon is not just a man-made construct. It was not the result of a power play brokered by rich cultural elites in some smoke-filled room. It was the result of many years of God’s people reading, using, and responding to these books.”

In this way, the 27 Books of the New Testament became widely accepted for public and private study. The 39 books of the Old Testament were studied to give context to the awesome Grace of Elohim who wiped out all the handwriting of ordinances that were against saints (commands of the Torah which sinful humans could not keep by the Blood shed at the Cross

Galatians 3:13-14 (KJV) *13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: 14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*

Colossians 2:13-15 (KJV) *13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

Significance of the Old Covenant lies in the reality that it shows us the just demands of the Law and the utter depravity of man leading to inability to obtain redemption by obedience. Because of this, the Law enables mankind to see its need for a Saviour or Messiah. In this way, knowledge of the Old Testament essentially enables saints to appreciate the matchless love of Elohim manifested in the Grace He freely grants to humanity in Yeshua, Jesus.

Saints were built up in their spirit-man as they congregated essentially to hear anointed exposition of the words of scripture, not ‘feel-good’ messages.

2 Timothy 3:15-17 (KJV) *15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

Romans 15:4 (KJV) *4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.*

Phases of the Gospel before Advent of Roman Catholicism

Contrary to claims of the Roman Catholic Church that it is the ‘Mother Church’ and that its Popes have ‘Apostolic Succession’ meaning unbroken authority inherited like a baton from Peter, it is a creation of the union of Imperial Rome and the larger wing of the Church which buckled under the intense fire of persecution in the 4th century. A Chronological presentation of the early Church before advent of Roman Catholicism would reveal these phases:

1. The ‘Apostolic Age’.

This is the period when the first set of Apostles lived and ministered. The last of them to die was John the beloved who wrote the Book of Revelation about AD 95-95. Without reviewing or endorsing all the postings on Theopedia.com, we found an excellent article which defined that era:

“Apostolic Age (30–100 AD)

The apostolic period extends from the Day of Pentecost to the death of the Apostle John, and covers about seventy years, from A.D. 30 to about 100. The field of action is Palestine, and gradually extends over Syria, Asia Minor, Greece, and Italy. The most prominent centers are Jerusalem, Antioch, and Rome, which represent respectively the mother churches of Jewish, Gentile, and United Catholic Christianity.

Next to them are Ephesus and Corinth. Ephesus acquired a special importance by the residence and labors of John, which made themselves felt during the second century through Polycarp and Irenaeus. Samaria, Damascus, Joppa, Caesarea, Tyre, Cyprus, the provinces of Asia Minor, Troas, Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Crete, Patmos, Malta, Puteoli, come also into view as points where the Christian faith was planted. Through the eunuch converted by Philip, it reached Candace, the queen of the Ethiopians. As early as A.D. 58 Paul could say: "From Jerusalem and round about even unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ." He afterwards carried it to Rome, where it had already been known before, and possibly as far as Spain, the western boundary of the empire."

Theopedia.com went on to offer the next phase of time which covers approximately 225 years:

From the Apostles to the Council of Nicaea (100–325)

"The second period, from the death of the apostle John to the end of the persecutions, or to the accession of Constantine, the first Christian emperor, is the classic age of the *ecclesia pressa*, of heathen persecution, and of Christian martyrdom and heroism, of cheerful sacrifice of possessions and life itself for the inheritance of heaven. It furnishes a continuous commentary on the Savior's words: "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; I came not to send peace on earth, but a sword..."

The church of this period appears poor in earthly possessions and honors, ***but rich in heavenly grace, in world-conquering faith, love, and hope; unpopular, even outlawed, hated, and persecuted, yet far more vigorous and expansive than the philosophies of Greece or the empire of Rome; composed chiefly of persons of the lower social ranks, yet attracting the noblest and deepest minds of the age, and bearing, in her bosom the hope of the world;*** "as unknown, yet well-known, as dying, and behold it lives;" conquering by apparent defeat, and growing on the blood of her martyrs; great in deeds, greater in sufferings, greatest in death for the honor of Christ and the benefit of generations to come.

The Apostolic Fathers

- Clement of Rome (? – ca. 98)
- Ignatius of Antioch (? – ca. 98/110)
- Polycarp (ca. 70 – ca.155/167)
- Didache
- Epistle of Barnabas

- Shepherd of Hermas

See main pages: Apostolic Fathers and Early church fathers

The Apologists of the first 300 years

The presence of the canonical scriptures did not mean that Holy Spirit stopped speaking. The Lord still communicated to the early church through various vessels. The reality however was that He never gave any of them any revelation which contradicted the canonical texts. In essence, those who were used to write letters or issue public statements in that period spoke and wrote to achieve these main objectives:

1. Expound the Truth that the saints already knew intuitively but lacked depth in
2. Defend the Faith. In doing so, they brought forth what is called 'Apologetics'.
3. Resisting errors, heresies, apostasies

In essence, they fulfilled this scripture in their time:

Jude 3:3 (KJV) *3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*

The Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics has this to say about the subject matter:

"Apologetics is a word that is often misunderstood, as if it means 'apologising' for one's faith. The word, however, derives its meaning from the Greek *apologia*, meaning a 'reasoned defence'.

In the Bible, apologetics is synonymous with evangelism:

1 Peter 3:15-16 (KJV) *15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: 16 Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ."*

Theopedia.com offers this short presentation of the subject matter and well-known apologists of that era:

"The Apologists

In the second century conventionally educated converts began to produce two kinds of writings that help us understand the developing shapes of Christianity — works aimed at a broad audience of educated non-Christians and works aimed at those who considered themselves inside the Church. The writing for non-Christians is usually called *apologetic* in the same sense that the speech given by Socrates in his defense before the Athenian assembly is called his *Apology* — the word in Greek meant "speech for the defense" rather than the modern more limited denotation of "statement expressing regret". The Apologists, as these authors are sometimes known, made a presentation for the educated classes of the beliefs of Christians, often coupled with an attack on the beliefs and practices of the pagans. Other writings had the purpose of instructing and admonishing fellow Christians.

- Justin Martyr (ca. 114 – ca. 165)

- Tertullian (ca. 155–230)
- Tatian (110–180)

Other Ante-Nicene writers

- Irenaeus (ca. 130–202)
- Marcion (ca. 110–160)
- Clement of Alexandria (? – ca. 211/216)
- Origen (ca. 182 – ca. 251)
- Cyprian (ca. 200–258)

Elohim has so ordained it that in each generation until Yeshua returns, there will be vessels specially elected and set aside to call attention of the Church to the foundational role of the Holy Scriptures in lives of saints. Such vessels will be used to expound the scriptures, bring forth fresh insight into import of specific scriptures which many have forgotten or hazy about. That was the case of Martin Luther in 1517 and many other reformers throughout the ages.

Review Questions

1. Please share with us your 3 main things that you take away from this chapter.
2. What is your personal commitment as we see end of the age unfolding in our time?

Chapter 36

The Rightly Divided Word Empowered the Alpha Church

Before we end this section, it is necessary to revisit the issue of the canonical scriptures which undergirded the lives of saints in the Alpha Church. The saints were encouraged to have an open mind which enabled them to receive the Word with sincerity, mixed with faith which transformed their hearts, renewed their mind and empowered their walk with the attitude of victory.

1 Peter 2:1-3 (KJV) *1 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: 3 If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*

The reality that saints congregated essentially to study the Word, break bread and prayers (Acts 2:42) created a 'School Paradigm' which ensured that learning was thorough and not flaky. There was no way any one could last the distance with cherry picked scriptures.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (KJV) *16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

To this extent, the word which abided in them became a vital instrument in enabling the early church to face and overcome intense persecution including martyrdom. The saints at Berea epitomized this approach to holistic study of the Word, comparing Scripture with Scripture as Isaiah recommended:

Isaiah 28:10 (KJV) *10 For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:*

Acts 17:10-11 (KJV) *10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*

2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV) *15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.*

By avoiding the Broadway of cherry picking Scriptures to suit itching ears and appeal to their emotions, the Alpha Church was essentially saved from errors, heresies and apostasies. False doctrines are fatal in that they destroy spirit and soul.

Today, let us examine a few issues which required a balanced understanding. When they were practiced, saints were built up into strong Kingdom communities which overcame all pressure from the outside as we saw in previous chapters. Examining the following:

#1. The issue of unequal yoke in Marriage

In writing to the Corinthian saints, Paul emphatically made a case for why they could not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. Here is the passage:

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 (KJV) *14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*

A passage like this clearly forbid single Christians from considering unbelievers for marriage. On the other hand, it could be used by immature, ignorant or insincere Christians to separate from or divorce their unbelieving spouses. It was only by rightly dividing the whole counsel of Truth concerning marriage that such rash decisions could be avoided.

In that regard, any who wanted to separate from or divorce their spouses on the grounds of spiritual incompatibility needed to consider other Scriptures which brought greater clarity on limits of 2 Corinthians 6:14-18.

Two of such passages are these:

1 Corinthians 7:12-19 (KJV) *12 But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. 13 And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. 14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. 15 But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace. 16 For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife? 17 But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so, ordain I in all churches. 18 Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised. 19 Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.*

This powerful word from Peter made the case that women who converted after marriage were not permitted to break the marriage vow but to allow their witness for Yeshua as disciples impact their husbands for good:

1 Peter 3:1-6 (KJV) *1 Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; 2 While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. 3 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; 4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. 5 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: 6 Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.*

By understanding and walking in the whole counsel of Elohim concerning this matter, they avoided unnecessary reproach.

#2. Concerning the Law of Marriage

The early disciples understood that through redemption, all became sons of Elohim – neither male nor female.

John 1:11-13 (KJV) *11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

Galatians 3:26-29 (KJV) *26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

Yet, by rightful division of the Word, the saints knew that Marriage is an institution to be willfully entered on the understanding that sisters would be subject to their husbands (not as Gentile rulers) for purpose of order in Christian homes.

Ephesians 5:22-24 (KJV) *22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.*

This clear charge notwithstanding, saints were taught, and the husbands were not to lord it over their wives but to love, nourish, cherish and regard them as co-heirs of the grace of life! They were not to be threatened by the spiritual gifts or talents of their wives but to nurture them for excellence!

Ephesians 5:25-33 (KJV) *25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.*

If a man lorded it over his wife, mistreating her because he is the head, he risked incurring the wrath of Elohim and the family could suffer under a closed heaven where nothing prospered!

1 Peter 3:7-8 (KJV) *7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered. 8 Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:*

#3. Concerning serving unbelieving Masters

It was also possible for saints in the Alpha Church to also use 2 Corinthians 6: 14-18 as basis of considering themselves barred from serving unbelieving Masters. Rightful division of scriptures would reveal that this was not the intent of the Lord.

1 Corinthians 7:20-24 (KJV) *20 Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. 21 Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. 22 For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant. 23 Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men. 24 Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.*

Proper study of the Word to understand the whole counsel of Elohim reveals that saints are clearly called upon to consider service to unbelieving masters a witnessing opportunity.

1 Peter 2:18-23 (KJV) *18 Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. 19 For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. 20 For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. 21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:*

#4. Concerning care of Widows

Rightly dividing the word of scripture also applied to the issue of care of widows. Right from the early days, the Church had taken this duty seriously

Acts 6:1 (KJV) *1 And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.*

When James wrote his epic epistle, he made it clear that care of widows was a sacred responsibility of saints.

James 1:27 (KJV) *27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.*

With time, this gracious disposition of the Alpha Church must have been abused by some of the beneficiaries. Holy Spirit used Paul to put in place a fair balance which ensured that compassion was not squandered on those who used widow-hood as an occasion to idleness or mischief. He also addressed the need for families to step up the plate and care for widows as much as they could so that all the responsibility was not dumped on local assemblies, draining up their resources:

1 Timothy 5:3-16 (KJV) *3 Honour widows that are widows indeed. 4 But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God. 5 Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. 6 But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth. 7 And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless. 8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. 9 Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man. 10 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged*

strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work. 11 But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry; 12 Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith. 13 And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. 14 I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. 15 For some are already turned aside after Satan. 16 If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.

#5. Ministers/Leaders and the Royal Priesthood

If you read only one part of scripture, you could walk away with the impression that the Royal Priesthood had no need for order and authority of ministers.

1 Peter 2:9 (KJV) *9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;*

Rightly dividing the word of truth reveals however that the Lord truly made the Royal Priesthood of Melchizedeck a universal one for all saints. But He also set in place ministers that were set apart to serve the saints and be instruments of their empowerment.

The brethren were charged to submit to His authority in such ministers, obey them so that there would be order, rather than chaos in the Household of Faith.

Romans 13:1 (KJV) *1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.*

Hebrews 13:7, 17 (KJV) *7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.*

17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

1 Peter 5:5 (KJV) *5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.*

#6. Care of sincere ministers who give up all in other to serve

The Alpha Church knew from experience of the 12 Apostles that those called to full time ministry were required to serve sincerely, pouring out all that the Father had vested in them freely for feeding the flock.

Matthew 10:8 (KJV) *8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.*

They did not turn the sacrifices of such ministers into a one-sided matter where they carried the entire burden. Various scriptures made it clear while all saints are called, those who the Father set aside by Himself for full time ministry would be effectively backed up and supported by He Who sent them.

Matthew 10:9-10 (KJV) *9 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, 10 Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.*

But He would not drop resources they need from heaven but rather inspire saints they served to be instruments of providing for their material wellbeing. This leads to spiritual; balance that took away reproach from ministers in the form of destitution or avoidable poverty:

Matthew 10:11-13 (KJV) *11 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. 12 And when ye come into an house, salute it. 13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.*

1 Corinthians 9:7-11 (KJV) *7 Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? 8 Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? 9 For it is written in the law of Moses, thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? 10 Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. 11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?*

Galatians 6:6-7 (KJV) *6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. 7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*

No true saint would love to see those the Lord used to feed them, end up in destitution.

1 Timothy 5:17-19 (KJV) *17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. 18 For the scripture saith, thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward. 19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.*

With this approach saints in the Alpha Church were completely transformed and their lives were so other worldly compared with non-Christians that the difference was clear to all! What we examined in this chapter is just a sample. The whole of the New Covenant needs to be studied, understood in the right context and allowed to power lives of saints. This is the way to go and be safe!

Colossians 3:16 (KJV) *16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

Review Questions

1. Please share three of the new things you learned (or were reminded of) in this chapter.
2. Please share what adjustments the chapter requires you to make (if any)?

Chapter 37

Christian Religion: History of Roman Catholicism

Introduction and Caveat

We will start this section in an unusual way. Lesson 37 will be a presentation of the history of Roman Catholicism from a secular point of view. Let us warn that most secular writers start with a wrong assumption: That Roman Catholicism is equivalent to Christianity. But as anyone familiar with the wide divergences between Biblical truths and Catholic doctrines knows, the most charitable description of the Roman Catholic Church is that; it is a Religion with some Christian features but which in its real essence is a departure from New Testament presentation of the Gospel of Yeshua, Jesus and the Kingdom of Elohim.

Let us be equipped with understanding of how Roman Catholicism has sought to be known and regarded so we will be able to appreciate the simplicity of the true gospel of Yeshua, Jesus and the Kingdom!

The Source for this lesson is Britannica.com/topic/Roman-Catholicism

The Emergence of Catholic Christianity

At least in an inchoate form, all the elements of catholicity: Doctrine, authority, universality are evident in the New Testament. The Acts of the Apostles begins with a depiction of the demoralized band of the disciples of Jesus in Jerusalem, but by the end of its account of the first decades, the Christian community has developed some nascent criteria for determining the difference between authentic (“apostolic”) and inauthentic teaching and behaviour. It has also moved beyond the geographic borders of Judaism, as the dramatic sentence of the closing chapter announces: “And thus we came to Rome” (Acts 28:14).

The later epistles of the New Testament admonish their readers to “guard what has been entrusted to you” (1 Timothy 6:20) and to “contend for the faith that was once for all handed down to the holy ones” (Jude 3), and they speak about the Christian community itself in exalted and even cosmic terms as the church, “which is [Christ’s] body, the fullness of the one who fills all things in every way” (Ephesians 1:23). It is clear even from the New Testament these catholic features were proclaimed in response to internal challenges as well as external ones; indeed, scholars have concluded the early church was far more pluralistic from the very beginning than the somewhat idealized portrayal in the New Testament might suggest. As such challenges continued in the 2nd and 3rd centuries, further development of catholic teaching became necessary.

The schema of apostolic authority formulated by the bishop of Lyon, Irenaeus (c. 130–c. 200), sets forth systematically the three main sources of authority for catholic Christianity: the Scriptures of the New Testament (alongside the Hebrew Scriptures, or “Old Testament,” which Christians interpret as

prophesying the coming of Jesus); the episcopal centers established by the Apostles as the seats of their identifiable successors in the governance of the church (traditionally at Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Rome); and the apostolic tradition of normative doctrine as the “rule of faith” and the standard of Christian conduct.

Each of the three sources depended on the other two for validation; thus, one could determine which purportedly scriptural writings were genuinely apostolic by appealing to their conformity with acknowledged apostolic tradition and to the usage of the apostolic churches, and so on. This was not a circular argument but an appeal to a single catholic authority of apostolicity, in which the three elements were inseparable. Inevitably, however, there arose conflicts—of doctrine and jurisdiction, of worship and pastoral practice, and of social and political strategy—among the three sources, as well as between equally “apostolic” bishops. When bilateral means of resolving such conflicts proved insufficient, there could be recourse to either the precedent of convoking an apostolic council (Acts 15) or to what Irenaeus had already called “the preeminent authority of this church [of Rome], with which, as a matter of necessity, every church should agree.” Catholicism was on the way to becoming Roman Catholic.

The Emergence of Roman Catholicism

Internal factors

Several historical factors, which vary in importance depending on the time, help to account for the emergence of Roman Catholicism. The two factors that are often regarded as most decisive—at any rate by the champions of the primacy of Rome in the church—are the primacy of Peter among the Twelve Apostles of Christ and the identification of Peter with the church of Rome. Although there are considerable variations in the enumerations of the Apostles in the New Testament (Matthew 10:2–5; Mark 3:16–19; Luke 6:14–16; Acts 1:13) and further variations in the manuscripts, what they all have in common is that they list (in Matthew’s words) “first, Simon called Peter.” “But I have prayed,” Jesus said to Peter, “that your own faith may not fail; and once you have turned back, you must strengthen your brothers” (Luke 22:32) and “Feed my lambs....Tend my sheep....Feed my sheep” (John 21:15–17).

In perhaps the most important passage, at least as it was later understood, Jesus said to Peter; “And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock [Greek *petra*] I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” (Matthew 16:18–19)

According to Roman Catholic teaching, this is the charter of the church—i.e., of the Roman Catholic Church. The identification of this obvious primacy of Peter in the New Testament with the primacy of the church of Rome is not self-evident. For one thing, the New Testament is almost silent about a connection between Peter and Rome. The reference at the close of the Acts of the Apostles to the arrival of the apostle Paul in Rome gives no indication that Peter was there as the leader of the Christian community or even as a resident, and the epistle that Paul had addressed somewhat earlier to the church at Rome devotes its entire closing chapter to greetings addressed to many believers in the city

but fails to mention Peter's name. On the other hand, in what is presumably a reference to a Christian congregation, the first of the two epistles ascribed to Peter uses the phrase "the chosen one at Babylon" (1 Peter 5:13), Babylon being a code name for Rome.

It is, moreover, the unanimous testimony of early Christian tradition that Peter, having been at Jerusalem and then at Antioch, finally came to Rome, where he was crucified (with his head down, according to Christian tradition, in deference to the Crucifixion of Christ); there was and still is, however, disagreement about the exact location of his grave. Writing at about the end of the 2nd century, the North African theologian Tertullian (c. 160–c. 225) spoke of "Rome, from which there comes even into our own hands the very authority of the apostles themselves. How happy is its church, on which apostles poured forth all their doctrine along with their blood! where Peter endures a passion like his Lord's! where Paul wins his crown in a death like that of John [the Baptist]!"

Indeed, Rome could claim affiliation with two apostles, Peter and Paul, as well as numerous other martyrs for the faith. In addition to this apostolic argument for Roman primacy—and often interwoven with it—was the argument that Rome should be honored because of its position as the capital of the Roman Empire: the church in the prime city ought to be prime among the churches. Rome drew tourists, pilgrims, and other visitors from throughout the empire and beyond and eventually became, for church no less than for state, what Jerusalem had originally been called, "the church from which every church took its start, the mother city [metropolis] of the citizens of the new covenant."

Curiously, after the newly converted emperor Constantine (died 337) transferred the capital of the Roman Empire from Rome to Constantinople in 330, Rome's civil authority was weakened, but its spiritual authority was strengthened: the title "supreme priest" (pontifex maximus), which had been the prerogative of the emperor, now devolved upon the pope. The transfer of the capital also occasioned a dispute between Rome ("Old Rome") and Constantinople ("New Rome") over whether the new capital should be entitled to a commensurate ecclesiastical preeminence alongside the see (seat of a bishop's office) of Peter.

The second and fourth ecumenical councils of the church (at Constantinople in 381 and at Chalcedon in 451) both legislated such a position for the see of Constantinople, but Rome refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of that prerogative. It was also at the Council of Chalcedon—which was convoked to resolve the doctrinal controversy between Antioch and Alexandria over the person of Jesus Christ—that the council fathers accepted the formula proposed by Pope Leo I (reigned 440–461), which offered the orthodox teaching of Christ's Incarnation and of the union of both his natures. Recognizing the authority with which Leo spoke, the council fathers declared, "Peter has spoken through the mouth of Leo!"

The council was only one in a long series of occasions when the authority of Rome, sometimes by invitation and sometimes by its own intervention, served as a court of appeal in jurisdictional and dogmatic disputes that had erupted in various parts of Christendom. During the first six centuries of the church, the bishop of every major Christian center was, at one time or another, charged with and convicted of heresy—except the bishop of Rome (though his turn would come). The titles that the see of Rome gradually assumed and the claims of primacy that it made within the life and governance of the

church were, in many ways, little more than the formalization of what had become widely accepted practice.

External factors

In addition to various internal developments, at least two external factors contributed decisively at the beginning of the Middle Ages to the development of Roman Catholicism as a distinct form of Christianity. One was the rise of Islam in the 7th century. During the decade following the death of the Prophet Muhammad in 632, his followers captured three of the five “patriarchates” of the early church—Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem—leaving only Rome and Constantinople, located at opposite ends of the Mediterranean and, eventually, also at opposite ends of the Schism of 1054. The other external force that encouraged the emergence of Roman Catholicism as a distinct entity was the collapse of governmental and administrative structures in the Western Roman Empire in 476 and the migration into Europe of Germanic and other tribes that eventually established themselves as ruling elites. (The Eastern Roman Empire, with its capital at Constantinople, survived as the Byzantine Empire until 1453.)

Some of these peoples, particularly the Goths, had already become Christian before their arrival in western Europe. The form of Christianity they had adopted in the 4th century, generally known as Arianism, was, according to the ecumenical Council of Nicaea, heretical in its doctrine of the Trinity. Therefore, the future of medieval Europe belonged not to the tribes that had converted to an unorthodox Christianity but to the tribes, particularly the Franks, that had adhered to traditional Germanic religion and later became Christian. The Franks, after their arrival in Gaul, accepted Catholic teaching on the doctrine of the Trinity as well as the authority of the Catholic bishops of Gaul. The coronation by the pope of the Frankish king Charlemagne (c. 742–814) as emperor of the Romans on Christmas Day 800 was the culmination of the long-standing alliance of the Franks and the church.

Notwithstanding the contributions of these popes, medieval Roman Catholicism would not have taken the form it did without the conversion of the emperor Constantine in 312. Constantine legalized Christianity, promoted its interests, and took an active role in its institutional and doctrinal development. Even though some supported a heretical version of Christianity, all subsequent emperors except Julian the Apostate favored the faith. Theodosius, I (347–395), however, made Catholic Christianity the official religion of the empire in 381 and prohibited the worship of pagan gods in 392. It As the church approached the conclusion of the first millennium of its history, it had become the legatee of the spiritual, administrative, and intellectual resources of the early centuries.

The Early Medieval Papacy

During the centuries that marked the transition from the early to the medieval church, Roman Catholicism benefited from the leadership of several outstanding popes. Two of these popes—who are called “Saint” by the Roman Catholic Church and who are the only two popes called “the Great” by historians—merit special consideration, even in a brief article. Pope Leo I was, even for his pagan contemporaries, the embodiment of the ideal of “Romanness” in his resistance to the barbarian

conquerors. In 452, with the help of the apostles Peter and Paul and a host of angels (according to papal tradition), he convinced Attila and the Huns to withdraw to the banks of the Danube, thus saving Rome from destruction. He repeated this triumph in 455, when his intercession with the Vandals mitigated their depredations in the city.

His aforementioned intervention in the doctrinal controversy among Eastern theologians over the person of Christ and the role played by his Tome of 449 in the formula of the Council of Chalcedon in 451 were part of a concerted campaign by Leo to consolidate and extend the jurisdiction of the see of Rome to remote areas such as Gaul, Spain, and North Africa; this extended jurisdiction was officially acknowledged by the Roman emperor. Pope Gregory I (reigned 590–604), more than any pope before or after him, laid the foundations for the Roman Catholicism of the Middle Ages.

He sent Augustine of Canterbury (died 604/605) to bring about the conversion of England to the Christian faith, and he corresponded with the rulers of the Merovingian Franks and with the bishops of Gothic Spain. He built up papal administration in central Italy and negotiated with the Lombard rulers who occupied the peninsula. Rejecting the universalist claims of the patriarch of Constantinople, Gregory asserted papal primacy over moral issues and emphasized the humility of his office by styling himself the “servant of the servants of God.”

His commitment to a life of service is demonstrated in his Pastoral Rule, a guidebook for bishops that outlines their obligations to teach and to serve as moral exemplars to their flocks. Gregory the Great was also one of the most important patrons of the Benedictine monastic movement, to which he owed a considerable part of his spiritual upbringing; he wrote a life of St. Benedict of Nursia (c. 480–c. 547).

Papacy/Popes

Pope, (Latin *papa*, from Greek *pappas*, “father”), the title, since about the 9th century, of the bishop of Rome, the head of the Roman Catholic church. It was formerly given, especially from the 3rd to the 5th century, to any bishop and sometimes to simple priests as an ecclesiastical title expressing affectionate respect. It is still used in the East for the Orthodox patriarch of Alexandria and for Orthodox priests. (See also *papacy*.) The *Annuario Pontificio*, the official directory of the Holy See, describes the office of the pope by the following titles: Bishop of Rome, Vicar of Jesus Christ, Successor of the Prince of the Apostles, Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Church, Patriarch of the West, Primate of Italy, Metropolitan Archbishop of the Province of Rome, Sovereign of the State of Vatican City, Servant of the Servants of God. The title *pope* or *papa* (abbreviated *PP.*) is officially used only as a less solemn style. Doctrinally, in Catholic churches, the pope is regarded as the successor of St. Peter, who was head of the Apostles. The pope, as bishop of Rome, is thus seen to have full and supreme power of jurisdiction over the universal church in matters of faith and morals, as well as in church discipline and government.

The twofold basis of this doctrine of papal primacy is the place of Peter in the New Testament (in which there are various metaphors expressing his prerogatives) and the place of the Roman church in history. The understanding of papal primacy developed as the church developed, two notable factors being the role of Rome as the imperial city until the 5th century and the religious and political role of the bishop of Rome afterward. The teaching of the Second Vatican Council (1962–65) on the role of bishops

counterbalanced the emphasis on papal prerogatives while maintaining the view that the authority of the bishops as a body cannot be separated from that of the pope as its head. Although the Eastern Orthodox have long been willing to give the bishop of Rome the primacy of honour accorded to patriarchs, and although many Protestants have appreciated the moral leadership shown by some recent popes, the Catholic doctrine of papal primacy was still a major obstacle to ecumenical efforts that began in the 20th century.

A list of popes and antipopes is provided in the table.

(Master Class Students: please study this list carefully and note that such personalities and grandeur ascribed to their offices do not line up with the biblical narratives in the Acts of the Apostles, Pauline Epistles, Epistles of Peter; James, Jude; the Epistles of John and the Book of Revelation. From a date point of view, John is believed to have written the book of Revelations in AD 95-97 and clearly decried the Roman empire as a mortal enemy of the true Church. A study of the writings and lifestyle of Peter clearly do not in any way present him in a papal cast!)

Popes and anti-popes

Peter ?-c. 64 Linus c. 67-76/79 Anacletus 76-88 or 79-91; Clement I 88-97 or 92-101 Evaristus c. 97-c. 107; Alexander I 105-115 or 109-119 Sixtus I c. 115-c. 125 Telesphorus c. 125-c. 136; Hyginus c. 136-c. 140; Pius I c. 140-155; Anicetus c. 155-c. 166; Soter c. 166-c. 175; Eleutherius c. 175-189; Victor I c. 189-199 Zephyrinus; c. 199-217; Calixtus I (Callistus) 217?-222; Hippolytus 217/218-235 Urban I 222-230; Pontian 230-235; Anterus 235-236; Fabian; 236-250 Cornelius 251-253; Novatian 251; Lucius I 253-254; Stephen I 254-257 Sixtus II 257-258; Dionysius 259-268 ; Felix I 269-274; Eutychian 275-283 Gaius 283-296; Marcellinus 291/296-304; Marcellus I 308-309 Eusebius 309/310; Miltiades (Melchiades) 311-314; Sylvester I 314-335

Let us proceed to see what the Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica say of the Pope under whom Constantine 1, Emperor of Rome embraced the Roman Church and played a major role in shaping its direction as the greatest Religion the world has ever seen.

Saint Sylvester I

Saint Sylvester I, also spelled Silvester (born, Rome [Italy]—died 335, Rome; Western feast day December 31, Eastern feast day January 2), pope from 314 to 335, whose long pontificate saw the beginnings of the Christian Roman Empire. A presbyter when elected to succeed Pope St. Miltiades (Melchiades), Sylvester was consecrated on Jan. 31, 314. The most important event of his reign was the Council of Nicaea (May 325), which condemned the Alexandrian Christian priest Arius, founder of Arianism, a heretical doctrine teaching that the Son was neither equal with God the Father nor eternal. While the Roman emperor Constantine I the Great favored Christianity and was a major controller of its ecclesiastical affairs, neither he nor his immediate successors gave any official recognition to papal primacy over the church. Thus, it was a rare and significant exception when Sylvester was accorded a preeminent role in the Arian crisis. Although invited, he did not attend the Council of Nicaea personally

but was represented by two legates, who were treated with great honour and respect yet did not preside at the debates.

According to subsequent legend, Sylvester converted and baptized Constantine, who was the first Roman emperor to become a Christian, and miraculously cured him of leprosy, for which the emperor allegedly gave him the Donatio Constantini (Donation of Constantine), a grant of spiritual supremacy over the Eastern patriarchates and over all matters of faith and worship as well as temporal dominion over Rome and the entire Western world.

The Donation is now universally admitted being an 8th-century forgery, but it was important in the development of the medieval theory of church and state. Sylvester is believed to have built at the Cemetery of St. Priscilla on the Via Salaria a church, where he was buried. His relics were transferred in 762 by Pope St. Paul I to the Church of San Silvestro in Capite, now the national church of English Catholics in Rome.

Review Questions

1. Please study this lesson carefully and mention at least 3 things about this secular account of the beginning of Roman Catholicism which do not align with the New Testament Teachings.

We trust Holy Spirit to reveal to us through the Holy Scriptures, the things which occasioned the rise of this great Religion which has literally played a major role in world affairs for over 1700 years. We will see how it led people away from relationship with Elohim; took away the sovereign rule of Yeshua, Jesus; replaced the Word with traditions and rituals of man; and re-defined Salvation and the new birth experience to mean something other than what the Bible defined. To understand the Roman Themed Church is to understand one of the greatest mysteries of the ages!

Chapter 38

The Journey Down the Broad way of Religion

Four Foundation Pillars which supported emergence of Christian Religion as an alternative to the true gospel.

In lesson 37, we saw a secular perspective of the Roman Catholic Church influenced heavily by what it says of itself as having apostolic succession based on its interpretation of Matthew 16:18. Students of the Bible know that to pick verse 18 and leave off the entire passage (Matthew 16: 13-19) is dangerous cherry picking of the Word to suit pre-determined objectives.

However, from a biblical narrative approach, the Roman Catholic Church emerged progressively over a period, moving away from the nature of the spiritual organism which Yeshua, Jesus the Head purposed towards an organization with tangible structures which Rome could embrace. That embrace served the interests of both parties:

- Rome used the Roman Catholic Church to serve its imperial purposes until the Western section fell in AD 476. The story is similar in the Eastern Section (Byzantine Empire) which survived at least 1000 years more before it fell to the Ottoman Turks in AD 1453.
- On the other hand, the Roman Catholic Church used the structures and power of Rome to expand throughout the empire and consolidate its hold over Parishes, Dioceses and even for some periods of time, the City of Rome itself. Ambitious Priests, Bishops and Popes either ruled indirectly as lords spiritual or even combined same with temporal rule at certain points in history.

It is essential that end time reformers be fully aware of the circumstances cited in various New Testament texts which laid the foundation for emergence of Roman Catholicism as a Religion which accepted some texts of the gospel, preached some of the truths in the Word, formulated some into doctrines, sought to present itself as the custodian of Christianity but essentially rejected the full essence of the message and mission/assignment of Yeshua, Jesus.

7 Things to Bear in Mind Concerning Roman Catholics

As saints of the Most High, we are called upon to be charitable in assessing other people. To walk back through nearly 2000 years of history of which the last 1800 are particularly relevant to emergence of Roman Catholicism as a dominant world power, it is essential we understand:

1. The average Roman Catholic is a human being who desires to know and serve Elohim and is interested to be identified with Yeshua, Jesus.
2. Many Roman Catholics are nice, moral people who are even zealous of their faith and assume that they are saved through affiliation and faithful participation in its sacraments and liturgies.

3. Majority of Roman Catholics are so by birth and have little or no understanding of their Religion and its true history.
4. This study is not to arm saints with information to profile, abuse, insult or fight Roman Catholics. To use the revelation herein for such purposes is to work against its essence.
5. The revelations in this lesson and subsequent ones are truths grounded in the Holy Scriptures and confirmed by History. They will therefore empower us to walk in true liberty as Yeshua said in John 8:32.
6. From that stand point, the lessons in this section should place a burden on all true saints to intercede for salvation of their natural brethren, friends and colleagues who obviously are ignorant in holding onto belief systems that are clearly unbiblical.
7. The reality is Roman Catholicism and Islam are the largest Religions in the earth realm, each accounting for over 1.2 billion persons. Because some degree of Bible truths is already known and accepted in Roman Catholicism, it offers to saints the greatest mission opportunity. Approaching this opportunity requires much prayers, spiritual warfare and wisdom which comes from the Lord and based on knowledge of what it really is as a Religion which imitates the Gospel!

The Four Factors Which Led to Emergence of Roman Catholicism as a Dominant Religion:

Let us wait on the Lord and patiently receive various insights which combine to give us the whole picture of the dark period of spiritual history when Truth was hidden.

#1. Intense Persecution opened many Christians to seek instant gratification. Backsliding in the heart and mind thus prepared many to be open to the relief which would be offered by Imperial Rome.

The rejection and persecutions which Christians suffered created a weariness among generality of saints. Some were weary while waiting for fulfilment of two main promises of scripture given by the three leading Apostles of the Apostolic Age whose writings circulated freely throughout the early church: Writings of Paul, John the beloved, and Peter. Their writings warned of the dangers of complacency and necessity to be ever alive in the spirit since the Lord had said His coming would be without prior notice. Peter had warned about intensity of the fires they would face.

1 Peter 4:1-2, 12-19 (KJV) *1 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; 2 That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.*

12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: 13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. 14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. 15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. 16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. 17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? 18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner

appear? 19 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

As we saw in a previous lesson, many saints gladly paid the supreme price when required. But, as history also captured, many Christians ended up betraying their Master rather than die the cruel deaths. They chose the broad way of cavorting with Rome to gain their lives. When spared, such people were ashamed to walk with the faithful and they were open to 'new expressions of the faith' which was liberal and acceptable to Rome. Accordingly, they participated in Gentile Feasts, Emperor deification when required and an 'easy' approach to their 'Faith.' We shall examine this matter of how intense persecution prepared the ground not just for the falling away from the true gospel but also prepared many to embrace the 'lifeline' offered by union of Rome and Church in greater detail in a future lesson.

#2. 'Delay' of the Rapture, Resurrection of the dead and the Lord's return

Matthew, John, Paul, Peter were used by the Lord to bring revelation to the Church concerning His return to reward the faithful and punish the wicked. This classic by John concerning the words of Yeshua reassured many faithful over the years to embrace their fires, knowing that one day with the King would compensate for all tears suffered while in the body:

John 14:1-4 (KJV) *1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. 4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.*

Let us remember, the Epistles were not just written. They were messages which were aimed at encouraging saints to hold firm to their faith, running their portions of the earthly race till the end. In this regard, while the word of the Lord concerning the end of the age and His return seemed cryptic to many, in reality, the divine intent was to keep each generation of saints on their toes, unspotted from the world, watching, praying, waiting and occupying or doing Kingdom business until Yeshua returned on a day and time no one knew. In other words, each generation of saints was supposed to live as if He would return in their own time! In the face of intense persecution suffered under Roman authorities, some epistles were specifically designed to sustain them to look beyond the present afflictions and look up to when Yeshua would return.

As early as the days of Paul (who himself died in his mid-60's), some believers were beginning to despair when fellow saints who were friends, family or members of their congregations completed their earthly pilgrimage and died. The Lord used him to explain the correlation between death, the Kingdom and the eternal crown urging them not to give up.

1 Corinthians 15:50-58 (KJV) *50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in*

victory. 55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (KJV) 13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11(KJV) 1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. 2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. 3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. 4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. 5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. 7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. 8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. 9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. 11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

From the tone of these epistles, it is fairly obvious some people were already impatient that the Lord had not yet returned. To worsen matters, some backslidden preachers or false prophet had seized on the seeming delay to preach errors designed to overthrow the faith of saints. Peter was used by the Lord to address this matter:

2 Peter 2:1-3 (KJV) 1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. 2 And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. 3 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

2 Peter 3:1-4, 8-10 (KJV) 1 This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: 2 That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: 3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, 4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

These potent scriptures which encouraged the faithful was also the basis of despair by those who had started to crumble or backslide in their heart.

#3. Backsliding and Falling Away from the Truth were also prophesied in the writings of Paul and John as things which would precede end of the age.

Concerning return of the Lord, one often ignored or glossed over passages in the epistle of Paul to the saints at Thessalonica. While this passage is generally used to describe the time immediately preceding public unveiling of the anti-Christ to come, the reality is it was also describing, by the Law of double application, the reality that the early church would be buffeted by 'defections' from the faith.

2 Thessalonians 2:3, 10-12 (KJV) *3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;*

10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Before writing the Book of Revelation, John had tracked the danger posed by love of the world and its fancies that seemed to have crept into brethren of his day. His warning about the toxicity of the world and its operating system of carnality (the standard fare of religion) can now be better appreciated:

1 John 2:12-17 (KJV) *12 I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. 13 I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. 14 I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one. 15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

John also warned of a falling away of which he was eye witness. Those who fell away from the truth of the Gospel (the new birth experience, holiness, separation from the world, simplicity of life, occupying or doing Kingdom business with expectation of soon return of Yeshua) were not content with separating themselves from the holy assembly of true saints. They invested in trying to seduce those who remained true to the gospel. John had to ask them to trust Holy Spirit for discernment of motives of those who came to offer them something different:

1 John 2:18-28 (KJV) *18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. 19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. 20 But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. 21 I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. 22 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. 23 Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also. 24 Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the*

beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. 25 And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life. 26 These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. 27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. 28 And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

The Revelations granted to John the beloved shared the message of great hope that a remnant of Israel would be saved (Chapter 7); that there would be great troubles at end of the age; that Good would triumph over Evil (Chapter 19); and that the Kingdom of Elohim would be established on earth where saints would reign as co-heirs with Yeshua, Jesus for 1000 years (Chapter 20) and endless eternity with Elohim (Chapters 21 and 22). Let us note however Yeshua also showed John the pathetic state in which some of the churches had fallen, not up to 70 years after Pentecost. Let us repeat the warnings Yeshua issued to five of the unfaithful Churches which represented what was going on, not just in Asia Minor but possibly all over the Roman Empire:

3.1. State of the Church at Ephesus which Paul and John laboured amongst and whose first Bishop was Timothy:

Revelation 2:2, 4 (KJV) *2 Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write;*

4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

The Charge and Promise:

5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. 7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

3.2: State of the Church at Pergamos

Revelation 2:12 (KJV) *12 And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;*

Their Sin/Indictment:

14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. 15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate.

The Charge and Promises:

16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. 17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will

I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

3.3: State of the Church at Thyatira

Their Sin/Indictment:

20 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. 21 And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.

The Charge and Promises:

22 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. 23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. 24 But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. 25 But that which ye have already hold fast till I come. 26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: 27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. 28 And I will give him the morning star. 29 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

3.4. State of the Church at Sardis

Their Sin/Indictment: Spiritual Dead:

Revelation 3:1 (KJV) *1 And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.*

The Charge and Promises:

2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. 3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. 4 Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. 5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. 6 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

#4: State of the Church at Laodicea

Their Sin/Indictment: worldliness and material pursuits

15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. 16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. 17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

The Charge and Promises

18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. 19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. 20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. 21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. 22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Out of 7 Churches, 5 flunked the test within the first 70 years of the Church! There is no record they repented and changed their ways. Today, that whole region where they were located is now one vast swathe of Islamic Turkey. Christians are a net minority in the nation! Let us remember that region was an integral part of the Eastern Roman Empire whose capital, Constantinople is the same as Istanbul in modern day Turkey

5. Creation of Christian Religion amenable to the world as an alternative to the true gospel which requires separate identity from it.

It must be noted people who backslide do so because they cannot meet up with the standards of holiness required by the New birth experience. While some go out rightly into visible perdition, a more practical pattern which generality of people tend to follow is the creation of religious systems which suit their taste and fancies. That was the charge against Israel when it turned the Torah on its head and used it as basis to reject the Ultimate Revelation of the Torah: Yeshua, Jesus Himself.

Romans 10:1-4 (KJV) *1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. 2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.*

It is needful to be reminded that when Elohim gave the Torah to Moses, His stated expectation was that they would be a kingdom of priests unto Him and Israel as a nation would be the visible representation of His Kingdom:

Exodus 19:5-6 (KJV) *5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: 6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.*

Before long, Israel had turned the desired relationship with Elohim into Religion. It was a shift of heart that prepared them, even at that earliest time to desire and accept a Golden Calf as their god. Evidently though they had come out of Egypt in a physical sense, Egypt still dominated their consciousness. The way Egyptians venerated the Cattle must have pulled at their imagination that day at the foot of Mount Sinai. By the time the Ultimate Torah appeared on the scene, they not only rejected Him but turned the Holy Word of Elohim into a dry religious tome mixed with traditions and rituals that had a form of godliness but clearly lacking in the power of a vibrant relationship between humanity and Divinity which was originally desired. Look at what Yeshua told religious leaders of his day:

Matthew 15:7-9 (KJV) *7 Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, 8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me . 9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*

If this tendency is juxtaposed with realities of the era between the first and fourth centuries it is fairly obvious the larger wing of the Church which was weary of the extensive rejection and persecution suffered at the hands of the Roman Empire may have been steadily prepared for union of Church and state which came in the 4th century.

Review Questions

1. In a few words summarize the central issue in each of the 4 things in this lesson which tracked the descent of a larger wing of the Church in the first four centuries towards
2. What new thing did you learn today.

Chapter 39

Role of the Nicolaitanes in emergence of Roman Catholic Priesthood

In lesson 38, we saw four ways in which the gospel fell on hard ways and created the enabling environment for Christian Religion to emerge as an alternative reality. To refresh our memories, they are:

#1. Intense Persecution opened many Christians to seek instant gratification. Backsliding in the heart and mind thus prepared many to be open to the relief which would be offered by Imperial Rome.

#2. 'Delay' of the Rapture, Resurrection of the dead and the Lord's return' created weariness and impatience.

#3. Backsliding and Falling Away from the Truth were also prophesied in the writings of Paul and John as things which would precede end of the age.

#4. Creation of Christian Religion amenable to the world as alternative to the true gospel which requires separate identity from it.

We will press on to see how two things decried by John the beloved and Yeshua Himself were indicative that a massive re-definition of the gospel was underway within the first 70 years of Pentecost. In bringing these two factors to the fore, let us remember Yeshua had clearly warned His true saints not to be taken in by sweet words or nice gestures by those who claim to represent Him. He asked them to discern all things by one simple principle: check out the fruits!

Matthew 7:16-20 (KJV) *16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? 17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. 19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.*

The Test of Priesthood

Every system of worship is sustained by a Priesthood pattern. This is true of both personal relationship (as in the Gospel of Yeshua and the Kingdom) as well as in Christian Religion (with its rituals and regulations).

Yeshua gave to His Church a Universal Priesthood: The Royal order of Melchizedek.

In a subsequent Course, we will study this topic in depth. Suffice it, for this lesson to present a summary of what the Melchizedek or Royal Priesthood is all about. Concerning Yeshua, here was what the Father spoke through the mouth of David:

Psalms 110:4 (KJV) *4 The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*

When scripture is compared with scripture, we will note that Yeshua appeared to Abraham as Melchizedek, Priestly King of Salem well before the Law was given to Moses (and therefore before the Levitical/Aaronic priesthood was inaugurated to supervise it).

Genesis 14:18-20 (KJV) *18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. 19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: 20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.*

In the gospel according to John, Yeshua reminded the incredulous Hebrews of His day about that spectacular meeting with Abraham to prove that He was a pre-existent Personality and therefore divine.

John 8:56-58 (KJV) *56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. 57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? 58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.*

In the Book of Hebrews, there is an in-depth presentation of the Melchizedek Priesthood as the only acceptable one which Yeshua inaugurated in the earth realm. Its superiority relative to the Levitical/Aaronic priesthood which undergirded the Old Covenant was well articulated.

Hebrews 5:5-10 (KJV) *5 So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. 6 As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. 7 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; 8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; 9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; 10 Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.*

Hebrews 6:17-20 (KJV) *17 Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: 18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: 19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; 20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*

Hebrews 7:1-3 (KJV) *1 For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; 2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; 3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.*

Hebrews 7:9-21 (KJV) *9 And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. 10 For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him. 11 If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? 12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. 13 For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. 14 For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe*

Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. 15 And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, 16 Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. 17 For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. 18 For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. 19 For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God. 20 And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest: 21 (For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:)

The whole point is this:

1. Yeshua is the High Priest of the New Covenant and after completing His earthly assignment is now enthroned in heaven as the High Priest of that order of Priesthood.

Hebrews 7:22-28 (KJV) *22 By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. 23 And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: 24 But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. 25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. 26 For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; 27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. 28 For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.*

2. All saints redeemed by His Blood are to function as the Royal Priesthood (having authority of kings and capacity to stand in the gap between Elohim and humanity). In other words, under this Order, saints are qualified entirely by Grace to serve Him, other saints and fellow humans. In other words, the Lord does not call the qualified (religious leaders with long years of seminary training who are born into priestly lineages like the Levitical order) but He rather qualifies those He calls:

In the economy of the Kingdom, all the redeemed are inducted to this priestly order as evidence that they are vibrant parts of His One Body in the earth realm.

1 Peter 2:9-12 (KJV) *9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. 11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

Romans 12:4-5 (KJV) *4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.*

1 Corinthians 12:4-7 (KJV) *4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.*

1 Corinthians 12:11-14 (KJV) *11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. 12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body,*

being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. 14 For the body is not one member, but many.

1 Corinthians 12:25-27 (KJV) *25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. 26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. 27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.*

Ephesians 4:7-10 (KJV) *7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. 8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)*

John 15:16 (KJV) *16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.*

Reasons for Raising the Fivefold

To ensure that His vision of an organic spiritual Body which functions as a living, loving organism in the earth realm, Yeshua also gave to His Church, the Fivefold themed leadership to serve and be empower them:

Ephesians 4:11-16 (KJV) *11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

Supplanting the Melchizedeck Priesthood was to be a game changer by Satan.

If Satan wanted to turn the spiritual organism which Yeshua made His Body in the earth realm to be, the starting place would be to change the priesthood system. And that is exactly what happened.

‘Protestants’, ‘Pentecostals’, ‘Charismatics’, ‘Evangelicals’, ‘Independents’ and ‘Kingdom’ Ministers who do not understand and practice the reality and essence of the Melchizedeck Priesthood are in organized religion masked by self-deception. Neglecting to understand and practice this Royal Priesthood is evidence of the DNA of Rome as we shall see from further study. Within 70 years of Pentecost, the clear directives of King Yeshua as Head of The Church had been jettisoned by a group called the Nicolaitanes. Interestingly the Nicolaitanes combined the Nimrodic principle of owning and lording it over Christians and elements of the Levitical Priesthood which had exclusive access to Elohim, standing between Him and the sinful people into its operating system. Just one error by one person can begin a Moral Descent!

Many believe the Nicolaitanes sect was championed by Nicholas, the proselyte of Antioch who was chosen to be one of the first 7 deacons in Acts 6. The spiritual profile of this personality is indeed

interesting: Nicholas was a Gentile who converted to Judaism. When Yeshua emerged, and birthed the Church as Kingdom agency in the earth realm, he converted and became a Christian. This 'church hopping' may be indicative of a true seeker or a restless, ambitious spirit seeking to be counted in whatever was current. Let us remember that in those days, Yeshua was the biggest news in town. Let us acknowledge that it is possible that this view that Nicholas the proselyte of Antioch was spearhead of this movement may be off the mark. In any case, let us proceed to understand the substantive issue concerning the Nicolaitanes which emerged as a power-hungry sect which deemed saints as unworthy to approach Elohim directly and so needed an exclusive male dominated priestly caste to function as intermediary.

Dangerous Theology of the Nicolaitanes

In essence, the Nicolaitanes repudiated the priesthood of all saints as instituted by Yeshua. It opted to:

1. Create a priestly Class based on principles and practices opposed to the Royal Priesthood after Order of Melchizedek. In this regard, it embraced the Levitical priesthood system with its colorful robes and rituals that inspired awe.
2. Position leaders as 'owners' of the saints who were to behave as a subservient 'conquered' people. In this regard, it embraced elements of the Nimrodic priesthood named after the man who in Genesis 10:8-10 was described as a mighty hunter (evidently hunting after souls to 'own', not animals).
3. To sustain this system, the Nicolaitanes created an ecclesiastical system with hierarchies of authority which were strictly demarcated. These were regarded as the 'Clergy' or special class of people called to lead or rather Lord it over the sheep who were to be dormant 'consumers' of their anointing.
4. Special robes in different colors were instituted to mark them out from the laity.
5. In effect, the Nicolaitanes created a priestly Class based on combination of Nimrodic and Levitical paradigms of leadership.
6. This carnal and unspiritual priesthood system attracted ambitious people who saw in the Church an opportunity to carve out personal religious empires. It is entirely possible that one of such people in the days of John the beloved was a discourteous, ambitious fellow called Diotrephes.

3 John 9:9-11 (KJV) *9 I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.*

3 John 1:9-11 (KJV) *10 Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church. 11 Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God.*

For this Nicolaitane priesthood to work, it jettisoned the Fivefold Kingdom governmental structure Yeshua gave to the Church and opted for a pyramidal structure. It is interesting that the emergent Roman Catholic Church seemed to have whole heartedly embraced the powerful administrative strength the Nicolaitane priesthood offered. Its application made it easier for:

7.1. A Priest to be lord in the Parish at head of the pyramid.

7.2. In the Diocese, the ruling Bishop was lord, sitting right on top of the pyramid.

7.3. Whoever is Pope had a global pyramidal structure to sustain dominion.

Assessment of the Nicolaitanes by Yeshua, Jesus as Head of the Church

The Nicolaitanes may have brought some seeming Order and 'security' to congregations and city churches where they developed roots. They may have earned the acceptance and recognition of the order prone Roman authorities. They may also have quenched the fire and zeal of saints within their loop of influence in order to attract recognition of Roman authorities. But the Ultimate authority over the Church had a scathing rebuke for this system of manmade priesthood which took away personal liberties guaranteed and rather exercised Lordship over saints. Here are His own words to the Churches in Ephesus and Pergamos:

Revelation 2:6 (KJV) *6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate.*

Revelation 2:15 (KJV) *15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate.*

Yeshua, High Priest after the Order of Melchizedeck considered the priestly pretensions of the Nicolaitanes a dangerous aberration which had no place in the Church that is His Own Body! If scripture is compared with scripture, it is possible Peter had the activities of such people in mind when he wrote about the nature of true Kingdom leadership in his epistle:

1 Peter 5:1-4 (KJV) *1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: 2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*

Paul had been used by Holy Spirit to define the core responsibility of Fivefold leaders in the New Testament Church as Empowerment rather than Enslavement (Ephesians 4:11-16). Paul had also defined what the New Testament office of Bishop is (an administrative title for leaders who coordinate several ministries rather than a 'lordship' of the flock. For that reason, he was used by Holy Spirit to detailed qualifications of those who desired the office:

1 Timothy 3:1-7 (KJV) *1 This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; 3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; 4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; 5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) 6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. 7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*

Writing to Titus who was placed in charge of Crete, Paul was used by Holy Spirit to also reveal these spiritual qualifications of Elders and Bishops:

Titus 1:5-9 (KJV) *5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: 6 If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. 7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; 8 But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; 9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.*

While the Fivefold took care of spiritual formation of saints with Bishops and Elders, Deacons were ordained to take charge of the normal business of the ministry as well as welfare of saints. The qualifications outlined for them had heavy spiritual content:

Acts 6:1-7 (KJV) *1 And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. 2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. 3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. 4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. 5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: 6 Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. 7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.*

1 Timothy 3:8-13 (KJV) *8 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; 9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. 10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. 11 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. 12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. 13 For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

Summary of Lessons 38 and 39: The Great Switch!

Let us note that at one point in history:

- There was a change of the nature of the greater part of the Alpha Church from a living, loving Organism of active body parts, to a stiff, pyramidal, religious Organization with extreme wealth and other assets.
- For this to be sustained, there was also a change of the priesthood pattern from the Royal Order of Melchizedek of saints who served Elohim, each other and humanity; to one which 'owned' and 'lorded' it over saints called whose precursors are the Nicolaitanes.

In a sense, the deeds of the Nicolaitanes played a key role in shaping emergence of the Roman Catholic Priesthood and Bishopric! As we know, spirits do not die. They simply find new humans to influence! It is equally sad that majority of 'Protestant' Denominations arising from the Reformation of 1517 have embraced, rather than repudiate the Nicolaitane-themed priesthood.

Review Questions

1. Please provide a short but robust summary of this Lesson.
2. What new things did you learn today?

Chapter 40

Prophecies of the Empire which would re-configure the world

Within the pages of the Holy Scriptures are several prophecies which defined the past, present, and future. In the kingdom economy, those whose hearts are open to understand the mysteries of times and seasons relative to what is already written are often given a heads-up by Holy Spirit who inspired the prophetic Scriptures in the first place. Those who are careless remain in blissful ignorance, unable to comprehend the past, present, and future just like unbelievers. From the days of Israel, the Lord commends those who have open hearts and minds. No wonder it was said of the sons of Issachar:

1 Chronicles 12:32 (KJV) *32 And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their commandment.*

In the New Covenant, saints are charged with understanding of the times to escape the trap of ignorance!

Romans 13:11-12 (KJV) *11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.*

Ephesians 5:14-16 (KJV) *14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. 15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, 16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*

In this regard, when Daniel was waiting on the Lord, he persisted in seeking understanding and was rewarded with revelation of the times in which the Babylonian captivity was to be accomplished.

Daniel 9:1-3 (KJV) *1 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; 2 In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. 3 And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:*

He even received much more: An insight into when the Messiah would come and make the Sacrifice of the ages over 600 years into the future!

Daniel 9:24-26 (KJV) *24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. 25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. 26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.*

This introduction is needful because emergence of the Religious Juggernaut or Behemoth out of Rome was not a happenstance or unconnected piece of history. It was a marker of epic proportions in the long march of prophetic history which will culminate in restoration of the Kingdom in the earth realm! If you understand how the Roman Religious Empire came into being as fulfillment of prophetic scriptures, you will understand its role in desensitizing those who claim to be in Christ to the degree they will neither experience the New birth of Salvation by Grace through faith, nor would allow His sovereign rule. Ultimately, they would be unable to be ready for His return. These truths apply not just to the Roman Church but to all of its seed: The 'Protestants' who manifest various strains of its religious DNA. That is what Babylon is all about: Offering an alternative gospel.

Key Prophecies concerning Rome as a Power that would re-define human power on earth

About 600 years before Yeshua was Incarnated, Elohim revealed through Daniel there would arise a world power like none before it and none afterwards. This empire would crush things before it and re-define the world so much so a residue/remnant of it would take center stage when Yeshua would return to set up the manifest Kingdom. Establishment of the Kingdom in the earth realm was the essence of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. It is very important to remind ourselves the dream of Nebuchadnezzar had as ultimate purpose, a revelation of the time in world history when Yeshua would return to restore in the earth realm, the Kingdom Adam and Eve lost! It is possible to get caught up in the accuracy of the rise and fall of various empires to the degree of forgetting this central message!

Daniel 2:31-36 (KJV) *31 Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. 32 This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, 33 His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. 34 Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. 35 Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. 36 This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.*

Daniel 2:40-45 (KJV) *40 And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. 41 And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. 42 And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. 43 And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. 44 And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. 45 Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.*

Careful consideration of all Biblical texts indicates these prophecies pin pointed the strategic role Rome (Legs of Iron) would play in events leading to end of the age. Rome was to start a process leading to end of the age which would be finished in the days of its successor, a pseudo-empire that is inchoate!

Daniel 2:40 (KJV) *40 And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.*

This prophecy spoke of the military and administrative acumen of Rome which would stamp out empires before it and assimilate other cultures to suit its imperial purposes. As we saw in an earlier lesson, the other part of the 'Legs of Iron' referred to the religious behemoth which would emerge from Rome. Significantly, after giving the dream to Nebuchadnezzar, Elohim subsequently decided to reveal the spiritual characteristics of the same Rome to His faithful servant, Daniel. Here is how the empire was described:

Daniel 7:7 (KJV) *7 After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.*

Daniel 7:15-16, 19, 23 (KJV) *15 I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. 16 I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things.*

19 Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet;

23 Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.

Just like in Daniel 2 where it was revealed that after Rome would emerge an inchoate 'empire' during which Yeshua would return to establish the Kingdom in a manifest, global sense, there is clarity that the successor empire would feature various rulers who would pave the way for the grand master of perdition, the anti-Christ to come!

Daniel 7:24-27 (KJV) *24 And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. 25 And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. 26 But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. 27 And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.*

Rome: The tipping point of world History!

In prophetic scriptures, Rome is clearly established as the tipping and turning point of world history leading to the First and Second coming of Yeshua Ha Mashiach, Jesus the Messiah. In this regard, the Book of Daniel Chapters 2 and 7 are documentations of significant things Elohim was saying about Rome

ahead of time! During the days of Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel, Rome was merely a tiny city state founded in BC753. It became a Republic in 503 BC which defeated the mighty Greco-Macedonian Empire in 146 BC at the Battle of Corinth. Rome morphed into an Empire in 27 BC under Octavian who assumed the title Augustus Caesar. It is significant that Yeshua was incarnated in the days of Augustus Caesar (Luke 2), lived under imperial Roman colonial rule, was condemned to death by a Roman Governor, and crucified by Roman soldiers to fulfil the role of Lamb of Elohim Who took away sins of the people.

It was this same Roman Empire which did everything humanly possible to stamp out the true Church of Yeshua, Jesus which He left in the earth realm as His Spiritual Body to complete the work of reconciling the Lost to their heavenly Father and thus be citizens of the Kingdom. With each oppression and persecution, the Church multiplied, watered by the blood of Martyrs. Rome was to later in the fourth century come up with another strategy of assimilating what it could not crush! That ground game will be explored in full in another lesson. Let us continue to see the prophetic scriptures about this great empire.

How Rome and its Alternative Christian Religion was viewed in the Book of Revelations

If Daniel is the beginning of revelations concerning end of the age, the Revelation granted to John the beloved was the culmination. After resurrection and before His ascension, the following dialogue with His disciples revealed there would be a span of time between birth of the Church at Pentecost and when He would return to the earth realm.

Acts 1:6-8 (KJV) *6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? 7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. 8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

Among the disciples He commissioned to proclaim the gospel was John who was specially preserved from death to receive a panoramic revelation of life from the Alpha Church years till when the Kingdom is restored followed by endless eternity. Among the things revealed to John was the reality of emergence of an Alternative church which would be marked by these features, amongst many others:

1. Disconnected from Him, it would go about to establish a litany of works of religion which would turn humans into worshippers of a 'distant, unknown God'
2. Infidelity to Yeshua. It would get into Marriage with the world in direct contradiction of 1 John 2:15-17
3. It would manifest the Laodecian spirit and boast in abundance of its wealth
4. It would drink the blood of uncountable number of saints
5. It would at end of the age produce the False Prophet who would validate and endorse the anti-Christ figure (Revelation 13)
6. It would be judged in the fullness of time

Let us see some of those specific prophecies in the Book of Revelations:

Revelation 17:1-18 (KJV) 1 And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: 2 With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. 3 So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. 4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: 5 And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon The Great, The Mother Of Harlots And Abominations Of The Earth. 6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. 7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. 8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. 9 And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. 10 And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. 11 And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. 12 And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. 13 These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. 14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. 15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. 16 And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. 17 For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. 18 And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

Revelation 18:1-24 (KJV) 1 And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. 2 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. 3 For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. 4 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. 5 For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. 6 Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. 7 How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. 8 Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. 9 And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning 10 Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. 11 And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: 12 The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner

vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, 13 And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. 14 And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. 15 The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, 16 And saying, Alas, alas that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! 17 For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, 18 And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! 19 And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate. 20 Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. 21 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. 22 And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; 23 And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. 24 And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

Saints, as we delve into the deeper waters of revelation, let us be reminded it is very necessary to know that understanding the Religion of Christendom constructed by the union of Empire and State should in no way cause saints to have a negative view of Roman Catholic adherents! If we are truly in the Spirit, gaining understanding should release a burden for their salvation just as Paul was burdened for the religious Jews of his day:

Romans 10:1-4 (KJV) 1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. 2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.

To hate on multitudes trapped in a religious system of rituals, seeking to please Elohim is to be possessed with spirit of Religion, even if momentarily! By all means hate the lies and religiosity, but please, love the people as Yeshua would. And if it so, the time has come to invest our all, to help them receive the Truth about Salvation by Grace through Faith in Yeshua and the completeness of His Sacrifice on the Cross! Let us ask the Father for wisdom for sharing His love with those who are caught up with this religious system!

Review Questions

1. What did you understand from this lesson in as concise language as you can?
2. What new insight did you gain today?

Chapter 41

Spiritually, the Gentiles missed it with the Divine Purpose

Spiritually, the Gentiles also missed their time; just like the Hebrews/Jews! As noted in an earlier chapter, the Hebraic people of Israel had a head start in the relationship of humans with Elohim. His desire was to make them a peculiar people and ambassadors of His Kingdom, sign posting the Gentiles to seek Him.

Exodus 19:5-6 (KJV) *5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: 6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.*

But, the Sinful nature of man led Israel to exercise individual and national will away from the Divine purpose. The result was rather than a vibrant relationship with Him, Israel drifted steadily into a religious paradigm. The rituals people engaged in the Tabernacle and later Temple on certain 'holy days' such as the Sabbath and Feast days sucked the life out of the people to the degree their hearts were far from Him. With their Adamic hearts, they just could not be justified in His sight. Elohim, who is rich in mercy, did not destroy them. He allowed the Torah to serve as a School Master, whose provisions and punishments would hold Israel in check before the Messiah came to the earth realm:

Galatians 3:19-25 (KJV) *19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. 21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. 22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.*

Galatians 4:1-5 (KJV) *1 Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; 2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. 3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: 4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.*

By the time the Messiah, who Moses and the Prophets spoke of, manifested to take away their sins, the veil of Religion was too thick to allow them to see Him and His assignment.

2 Corinthians 3:12-16 (KJV) *12 Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: 13 And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: 14 But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. 15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. 16 Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.*

When ultimate Torah appeared in the form of Yeshua, they roundly rejected Him and His redemptive mission (except the remnant who embraced and walked with Him).

Ultimately, the lot fell on Paul to make the most unpleasant announcement to the Hebrews/Jews of his day, the baton of the gospel of Salvation by grace through faith and the Kingdom of Elohim in the earth realm was moving to the hands of the despised Gentiles!

Acts 28:17-29 (KJV) *17 And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. 18 Who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no cause of death in me. 19 But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Caesar; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of. 20 For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain. 21 And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judaea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came shewed or spake any harm of thee. 22 But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against. 23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. 24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. 25 And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, 26 Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: 27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. 28 Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it. 29 And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.*

Warning to Gentiles: You would be rejected if you mess up!

In His Omniscience, Elohim had allowed a mystery of extraordinary proportions to unfold: Rejection of His gospel by Hebrews/Jews was the very basis on which room was made for the Gentiles to come into His Commonwealth/Kingdom in the earth realm. The divine plan was after the Gentiles found their place, the next chapter of dealings of Elohim with the world would revert to Israel and its Hebraic people.

Romans 11:7-36 (KJV) *7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. 8 (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. 9 And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: 10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway. 11 I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. 12 Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? 13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: 14 If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. 15 For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? 16 For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. 17 And if some of*

the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; 18 Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. 19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. 20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: 21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. 22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. 23 And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again. 24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? 25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. 26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: 27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. 28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sakes. 29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. 30 For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: 31 Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. 32 For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. 33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! 34 For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? 35 Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? 36 For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen.

The Church has a Master Plan

The Church has been described as the Body of Yeshua, His Bride, House of Elohim in the earth realm. It is also the Kingdom agency through which the Gentiles would find common ground with Hebrews and take their place as fellow citizens of the Kingdom in the earth realm.

Galatians 3:26-29 (KJV) *26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

Ephesians 3:5-7 (KJV) *5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; 6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: 7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.*

But the Church was not to be a happy go lucky, DIY (Do it yourself) entity. It had a clear Master Plan with specific details revealed in the Pauline epistles. The things He found commendable and which were forbidden were also articulated by Yeshua in Revelation chapters 2 and 3. Regarding that Master plan, here is the bold claim of Paul, who by election was chosen as Master builder.

1 Corinthians 3:10-15 (KJV) *10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; 13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the*

day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

1 Timothy 3:14-15 (KJV) *14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: 15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*

2 Timothy 2:19-21 (KJV) *19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. 20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. 21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.*

In other words, the way Paul went about building what Yeshua showed him selflessly was a model for all saints of all generations to follow.

1 Corinthians 11:1 (KJV) *1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.*

Kingdom Culture

Of this Kingdom model, we take note especially of 11 prominent realities, among many others which Paul demonstrated in his very productive ministry. They combine with other qualities to be evidence of Kingdom Culture by which all congregations, ministries, movements, and networks can be assessed:

1. Though sinners by birth and deeds, all humans; both Hebrews/Jews and Gentile; have the privilege through the Blood shed by Yeshua, to receive the Grace of Elohim to be saved by Faith and be members of the Body of Yeshua in the earth realm and citizens of His Kingdom (Romans 10:5-12; Ephesians 2:1-10).
2. All those saved in this way are members of the Church as a Kingdom agency in the earth realm. The Church is a spiritual Organism of living body parts, not a religious organization (Romans 12:1-8; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:7-10).
3. In this regard, ALL saints are called into ministry to serve the Lord, each other, and humanity simply by 'expression of what they are impressed' with by Holy Spirit. He Who convicted them unto repentance and salvation also sealed them into Yeshua unto the day of redemption; transforms their lives; unites them in Yeshua and empowers them with specific gifts with which to function. In this way, the Priesthood after the Order of Melchizedeck which Yeshua inaugurated and is High Priest of is sustained in the earth realm (Hebrews 5, 6, 7). Peter was to corroborate this reality in 1 Peter 2:9-12 and 1 Peter 4:10-11 while John did likewise in John 15:16.
4. The Fivefold is the instrument which Yeshua uses to bring these realities in 1-3 to pass. He Himself chooses who to impart any aspect of the Five-fold functions of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:28-29).

5. Bishops and Elders are administrative offices requiring high spiritual qualifications for coordinating administratively, the Kingdom Church, in specific locations (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9).
6. Deacons are to be put in place to serve local congregations and City Churches with skills for managing issues like welfare and normal business functions of ministry (1 Timothy 3:8-13). This corroborated a reality in the Church at Jerusalem after Pentecost in Acts 6:1-7.
7. People are not to exercise their spiritual gifts anyhow. The Liberty they have is balanced by Order. This was well articulated in 1 Corinthians chapter 14.
8. Kingdom Culture required all saints to love Elohim above all else to the degree of laying down their lives for His sake and living, not for themselves, but entirely for Him and for the benefit of other people. In this regard, there is need for all things to be done in Charity/Love as 1 Corinthians 13 articulates.
9. Saints are to be primarily invested in the Kingdom and its righteousness, seeking it above all else, just as Yeshua demanded in Matthew 6:19-34 and Luke 19:11-27. This is accomplished through two focal activities all saints can and should engage in regularly: Reconciling the Lost to their Father (2 Corinthians 5:17-21) and turning the saved into disciples of Yeshua (2 Timothy 2:2; Matthew 28:18-20).
10. Saints are to live by Faith, not sight. In this regard, they are to tap into the power of Elohim by prayer and subdue all contrary spirits, resist Satan and be victorious in spiritual warfare (2 Corinthians 5:7; Ephesians 6:10-18).
11. Leaders who are to be used by the Lord to bring these things into reality are to do so as vessels of honour, grateful He chose them. With the perspective of being servants of Yeshua, they fulfil the Master's desire and empower all saints to know and grow in Him. In this way, they posture as vessels He uses to build His One Indivisible Church. In this way, they have no appetite or propensity to build personal brands or religious empires. When all the elect is of this mind, the unity of the Faith in the bond of peace becomes a reality (Ephesians 4:1-6).
12. Kingdom perspectives required all the remnant to reject the replacement theology rooted in anti-Semitism, knowing the state of the Hebrews/Jews relative to the Gospel of Yeshua and the Kingdom is temporary and was designed to make room for the remnant of Gentile stock.

With these 12 realities and others not stated here, the Church would have a universal outlook – Catholic (Not Roman Catholic)! In other words, as all saints embraced these realities wherever they were, regardless of their races, ages, socio-political, economic outlook, and gender, we all would speak the same Kingdom language, building in accordance to His Divine pattern.

1 Corinthian 1:10 (KJV) *10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

Unfortunately, Gentiles to whom this awesome responsibility came, chose not to build according to plan. What happened is upon receiving the baton of the Kingdom basically cast it to the ground! In its stead, Gentiles have given the world Christian Religion and all its variations each of which represents a

step or more away from the Kingdom pattern. This is true not only of Roman Catholicism but also of the Protestant movement. That DNA of diversion from the Kingdom pattern is accepted as the norm by Evangelicals, Pentecostals, Episcopal, Full Gospel, 'Kingdom' and a thousand and one denominations that litter the earth realm since the Protestant Reformation of 1517.

Conclusion of the Matter: All have sinned

Romans 3:9-12 (KJV) *9 What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; 10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*

Romans 3:19-23 (KJV) *19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. 21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*

The point is this: Just as the Hebrews/Jews missed it with the program of Elohim, so also did Gentiles miss it. But, none of these things took Elohim by surprise! He foreknew and allowed these diversions so room will be made in the Last days before Yeshua returns to raise up a new breed in the earth realm: His remnant with whom He will close out the human age and usher in the return of Yeshua and the manifest phase of the Kingdom!

Hebrews 11:39-40 (KJV) *39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: 40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.*

If we are indeed His peculiar remnant, it follows we need to examine our lives and ministry patterns with a sharp microscope of His Word to locate and root out all the leaven of Babylonian Christendom; which the enemy injected into the gospel in the past 1700-1800 years.

1 Corinthians 5:6-8 (KJV) *6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? 7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

Review Questions

1. In what way did the Gentiles also miss it with the Divine Purpose and Pattern?
2. Which aspect of the 12 elements of Kingdom Culture do you consider missing in your experience of Church' that needs to be restored?

Chapter 42

From Adversary to Partner!

In this lesson, we will now focus on the tracking developments in the Roman Empire which prepared the grounds for the ultimate shift in the relationship between the Roman Empire and its Adversary, The Church. The dramatic nature of the change in the relationship was simply breath taking: From intense persecution by Rome to a state of partnership which laid the grounds for an eventual union. We will examine several documents from three sources to get a holistic view of the underlying factors (role of persecution) which prepared the hearts of majority of Christians and Bishops to see the emergence of a Charismatic personality (Constantine the Great) as a literal saviour to be embraced and even canonized as a saint and even regarded by Orthodox groups as 'equal in rank' to apostles of Yeshua, Jesus!

Persecution was the sword which revealed and separated the Remnant from the crowd of believers! Looking back to the period of Roman history from Nero to Diocletian, we can see Christians responded to the fire of persecution according to the strength of their convictions. To those whose faith was not deeply anchored in a warm personal relationship with Yeshua, the response was to fall away. Of these, let us place these scriptures in that context:

Philippians 2:19-21 (KJV) *19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. 20 For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. 21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.*

Philippians 3:17-21 (KJV) *17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. 18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.) 20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*

2 Timothy 4:10-11 (KJV) *10 For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. 11 Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.*

To those who were dead to self, enthroned Yeshua as Lord, who lived entirely for the Kingdom to come, death was simply translation into the spirit realm and resting in the King until that Day when He would return. Of these, the testimonies of Paul who is believed to have been beheaded and Peter who is believed to have been crucified during the reign of Nero (Nero died in June of AD 67):

2 Timothy 4:6-8 (KJV) *6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*

2 Peter 1:13-15 (KJV) *13 Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; 14 Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. 15 Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.*

These two sets of people were walking down two parallel lanes: The Narrow and Broad ways spoken of by Yeshua!

Matthew 7:13-14 (KJV) *13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*

Knowing the sold-out state of their fixed hearts, Yeshua sustained the remnant by His Grace. By the time the Edict of Milan was issued by Emperors Constantine (of the Western Roman Empire) and Licinus (of the Eastern Roman Empire), the distance between the two sets of Christians had widened considerably. The remnant was wary of the olive branch offered and remained in a 'primitive' state of intense personal relationship with Elohim, submission to the sovereign rule of Yeshua and sold out to His Kingdom Business. The remnant basically remained an organism devoid of stiff organizational norms and hierarchies. Ministers functioned according to grace given to them by Holy Spirit sustained by their love for Elohim and each other. Their raw faith and simple lifestyles did not draw the crowd but rather put off many. Suspicious of the Roman authorities at various levels, their best approach was to remain under the radar, avoiding publicity or noise which could attract attention. In any case, they were not visible, so to say. Let us review these materials from Wikipedia:

"Prior persecutions"

Further information: Persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire

From its first appearance to its legalization under Constantine, for the first two centuries of its existence, Christianity and its practitioners were unpopular with the people at large. Christians were always suspect, members of a "secret society" whose members communicated with a private code and who shied away from the public sphere. It was popular hostility—the anger of the crowd—which drove the earliest persecutions, not official action. In Lyon in 177, it was only the intervention of civil authorities that stopped a pagan mob from dragging Christians from their houses and beating them to death. The governor of Bithynia–Pontus, Pliny, was sent long lists of denunciations by anonymous citizens, which Emperor Trajan advised him to ignore.

To the followers of the traditional cults, Christians were odd creatures: not quite Roman, but not quite barbarian either. Their practices were deeply threatening to traditional mores. Christians rejected public festivals, refused to take part in the imperial cult, avoided public office, and publicly criticized ancient traditions. Conversions tore families apart: Justin Martyr tells of a pagan husband who denounced his Christian wife, and Tertullian tells of children disinherited for becoming Christians. Traditional Roman religion was inextricably interwoven into the fabric of Roman society and state, but Christians refused to observe its practices. In the words of Tacitus, Christians showed "hatred of the human race" (odium

generis humani). Among the more credulous, Christians were thought to use black magic in pursuit of revolutionary aims, and to practice incest and cannibalism.

Nonetheless, for the first two centuries of the Christian era, no emperor issued general laws against the faith or its Church. These persecutions were carried out under the authority of local government officials. At Bithynia–Pontus in 111, it was the imperial governor, Pliny; at Smyrna (İzmir) in 156 and Scilli near Carthage in 180, it was the proconsul; at Lyon in 177, it was the provincial governor. When Emperor Nero executed Christians for their alleged involvement in the fire of 64, it was a purely local affair; it did not spread beyond the city limits of Rome. These early persecutions were certainly violent, but they were sporadic, brief and limited in extent. They were of limited threat to Christianity as a whole. The very capriciousness of official action, however, made the threat of state coercion loom large in the Christian imagination.”

Persecutions from the Third Century

In the 3rd century, the pattern changed. Emperors became more active and government officials began to actively pursue Christians, rather than merely to respond to the will of the crowd. Christianity, too, changed. No longer were its practitioners merely "the lower orders fomenting discontent"; some Christians were now rich, or from the upper classes. Origen, writing at about 248, tells of "the multitude of people coming in to the faith, even rich men and persons in positions of honour, and ladies of high refinement and birth." Official reaction grew firmer. In 202, according to the *Historia Augusta*, a 4th-century history of dubious reliability, Septimius Severus (r. 193–211) issued a general rescript forbidding conversion to either Judaism or Christianity. Maximin (r. 235–38) targeted Christian leaders. Decius (r. 249–51), demanding a show of support for the faith, proclaimed that all inhabitants of the empire must sacrifice to the gods, eat sacrificial meat, and testify to these acts. Christians were obstinate in their non-compliance. Church leaders, like Fabian, bishop of Rome, and Babylas, bishop of Antioch, were arrested, tried and executed, as were certain members of the Christian laity, like Pionius of Smyrna. The Christian theologian Origen was tortured during the persecution and died about a year after from the resulting injuries.

The Decian persecution was a grave blow to the Church. At Carthage, there was mass apostasy (renunciation of the faith). At Smyrna, the bishop, Euctemon, sacrificed and encouraged others to do the same. Because the Church was largely urban, it should have been easy to identify, isolate and destroy the Church hierarchy. This did not happen. In June 251, Decius died in battle, leaving his persecution incomplete. His persecutions were not followed up for another six years, allowing some Church functions to resume. Valerian, Decius's friend, took up the imperial mantle in 253. Though he was at first thought of as "exceptionally friendly" towards the Christians, his actions soon showed otherwise. In July 257, he issued a new persecutory edict. As punishment for following the Christian faith, Christians were to face exile or condemnation to the mines. In August 258, he issued a second edict, making the punishment death. This persecution also stalled in June 260, when Valerian was captured in battle. His son, Gallienus (r. 260–68), ended the persecution and inaugurated nearly 40 years of freedom from official sanctions, praised by Eusebius as the "little peace of the Church". The peace would be undisturbed, save for occasional, isolated persecutions, until Diocletian became emperor.

The Diocletianic or Great Persecution

Wikipedia further states that this “was the last and most severe persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire. In 303, the Emperors Diocletian, Maximian, Galerius, and Constantius issued a series of edicts rescinding the legal rights of Christians and demanding that they comply with traditional Roman religious practices. Later edicts targeted the clergy and ordered all inhabitants to sacrifice to the Roman gods (a policy known as universal sacrifice). The persecution varied in intensity across the empire— weakest in Gaul and Britain, where only the first edict was applied, and strongest in the Eastern provinces. Persecutory laws were nullified by different emperors at different times, but Constantine and Licinius's Edict of Milan (313) has traditionally marked the end of the persecution.

Diocletian's accession in 284 did not mark an immediate reversal of disregard to Christianity, but it did herald a gradual shift in official attitudes toward religious minorities. In the first 15 years of his rule, Diocletian purged the army of Christians, condemned Manicheans to death, and surrounded himself with public opponents of Christianity. Diocletian's preference for autocratic government, combined with his self-image as a restorer of past Roman glory, presaged the most pervasive persecution in Roman history. In the winter of 302, Galerius urged Diocletian to begin a general persecution of the Christians. Diocletian was wary, and asked the oracle of Apollo for guidance. The oracle's reply was read as an endorsement of Galerius's position, and a general persecution was called on February 24, 303.

Persecutory policies varied in intensity across the empire. Where Galerius and Diocletian were avid persecutors, Constantius was unenthusiastic. Later persecutory edicts, including the calls for universal sacrifice, were not applied in his domain. His son, Constantine, on taking the imperial office in 306, restored Christians to full legal equality and returned property that had been confiscated during the persecution. In Italy in 306, the usurper Maxentius ousted Maximian's successor Severus, promising full religious toleration. Galerius ended the persecution in the East in 311, but it was resumed in Egypt, Palestine, and Asia Minor by his successor, Maximinus. Constantine and Licinius, Severus's successor, signed the Edict of Milan in 313, which offered a more comprehensive acceptance of Christianity than Galerius's edict had provided. Licinius ousted Maximinus in 313, bringing an end to persecution in the East.

Edict of Toleration of Galerius

Ever since the fall of the Severan dynasty in 235, rivals for the imperial throne had bid for support by either favoring or persecuting Christians. The previous Edict of Toleration by Galerius had been recently issued by the emperor Galerius from Serdica and was posted at Nicomedia on 30 April 311. By its provisions, the Christians, who had "followed such a caprice and had fallen into such a folly that they would not obey the institutes of antiquity", were granted an indulgence. Wherefore, for this our indulgence, they ought to pray to their God for our safety, for that of the republic, and for their own, that the commonwealth may continue uninjured on every side, and that they may be able to live securely in their homes.”

Their confiscated property, however, was not restored until 313, when instructions were given for the Christians' meeting places and other properties to be returned and compensation paid by the state to

the current owners: "the same shall be restored to the Christians without payment or any claim of recompense and without any kind of fraud or deception. "It directed the provincial magistrates to execute this order at once with all energy so that public order may be restored and the continuance of divine favor may "preserve and prosper our successes together with the good of the state." The persecution failed to check the rise of the church. By 324, Constantine was sole ruler of the empire, and Christianity had become his favored religion. Although the persecution resulted in death, torture, imprisonment, or dislocation for many Christians, the majority of the empire's Christians avoided punishment. The persecution did, however, cause many churches to split between those who had complied with imperial authority (the traditores), and those who had remained "pure". (Note: Elohim preserved a remnant that was pure unto Himself amid a great falling away!)

Roman Catholicism emerges from War: Victory and 'Conversion' of Emperor Constantine

For those on the other side of the spectrum, the Edict of Milan was the best news that promised rest! They settled down to build and to play the beautiful Bride with resources across the vast empire which caught the eyes of the Roman authorities. The final turning point leading to transition of the larger wing from an organic Kingdom community of saints called out of the world to demonstrate the Body of Yeshua, Jesus in the earth realm came about by the 'conversion' of Constantine the Great to Christianity in AD 312. The larger than life role Emperor Constantine subsequently played in shaping the content and outline of the emergent Religious giant cannot be glossed over. As the first Roman Emperor to officially be a Christian convert, many things naturally gravitated towards his taste being a Charismatic leader. We need to examine two insights into the life and contributions of Constantine to nature of the emergent publicly accepted Church in his time.

Let us use this material culled from National Geographic online:

"Emperor Constantine I is often credited with converting the Roman Empire to Christianity. In fact, though he ended the persecution of Christians and eventually converted, some historians debate the true nature of his faith. His association with Christianity began with a fateful battle for control of the Western Roman Empire. Constantine faced Western Roman Emperor Maxentius at the Tiber River's Mulvian Bridge in A.D. 312. Fourth-century historian and bishop Eusebius of Caesarea reported that before the great battle Constantine saw a flaming cross in the sky bearing the words "in this sign thou shalt conquer." Constantine did indeed conquer, routing and killing his enemy on a day that loomed large not only for the emperor but for the Christian faith.

The next year Constantine, now the Western Roman Emperor, and Eastern Roman Emperor Licinius signed the Edict of Milan, which finally ensured religious tolerance for Christians. The agreement granted freedom of worship to all, regardless of deity, and brought an end to the Age of Martyrs, which had begun after Jesus' death. Christians were also given specific legal rights such as the return of confiscated property and the right to organize dedicated churches. After unifying the Roman Empire under his rule in A.D. 324, Constantine rebuilt his seat of his power in largely Christian Byzantium, which was renamed Constantinople and today is Istanbul. The growth of a Christian ruling class under

Constantine ensured the faith's increasing and enduring prominence through the Roman, and later Byzantine, Empire.

Constantine convened and took part in the first meeting of Christian churches, the Council of Nicea, held in 325 in what is today Iznik, Turkey. He hoped to help church leaders find common ground on some contentious aspects of Christian doctrine. Chief among these issues was the relationship and relative divinity of God the Son (Jesus) and God the Father. Arianism was popular during this period. This Christian belief championed by Arius, a priest of Alexandria, Egypt, held that Jesus, though the Son of God, was inferior to God the Father.

The Council of Nicea established the equality of Father and Son and documented this in a creed, or universal statement of faith, to which all but two attending bishops agreed. The dissenting bishops were exiled, as was Arius himself. After this council, orthodox Christians agreed on the critical point that Jesus and God were equally divine and created of the same substance. The council also condemned the practice of money lending by clerics and attempted, unsuccessfully, to standardize the date of Easter.

Ancient Christian historians enthusiastically portrayed Constantine as a pious Christian convert. In later years, some scholars suggested that the emperor simply used the faith to his political advantage. The truth may lie somewhere in between, but Constantine's importance to his adopted religion is beyond doubt." Orthodox Christians view Constantine as a saint, equal in stature with the apostles! Robert Arakaki published in *Again Magazine* (2005) which was reproduced in Antiochian.org, the official website of the Anthiochian Orthodox Diocese of North America the following excerpts which give us an insight into the way Orthodox Christians view Constantine:

"Constantine the Great"

Constantine was born at Naissus on February 27, 272 or 273, to Flavius Constantius and his wife Helena. Flavius Constantius was an army officer, and in 289 he divorced Constantine's mother to marry Theodora, the daughter of his commanding officer. Constantine embarked on his own military career, which took him all over the Roman Empire, from Palestine and Asia Minor to Britain, Spain, and Gaul. While crossing the Alps with his army, Constantine had a vision (or dream) of a cross of light shining in front of the sun and the words: In this sign conquer. Shortly after that vision, Constantine defeated his rival, Maxentius, captured Rome, and was acclaimed the next emperor.

History often turns upon certain pivotal events or individuals. Early Christianity faced two significant perils: one external—violent persecution by the Roman government, and one internal—the Arian heresy, which denied Christ's divinity. In a providential twist of events, God raised up an emperor who would play a key role in confronting each of these perils, becoming one of Christianity's greatest defenders. Constantine's rule precipitated an avalanche of events that radically altered the course of the history of Christianity.

External Danger - Persecution

Prior to Constantine's becoming emperor, the early Church was going through one of the fiercest and bloodiest of the persecutions by the Roman government, the Diocletian persecution. During this wave of

persecution thousands of Christians lost their lives, churches were destroyed, and scriptures were burned. Then in 313, the situation reversed itself. Constantine (with his co-emperor Licinus) issued the famous Edict of Milan, declaring Christianity to be a legal religion. Christianity was not yet the official religion of the Empire—this would not happen until 380 under Emperor Theodosius. And Constantine's edict of toleration was not the first—Galerius had issued a similar edict in 311. But it marked a major turning point for the Roman government. With the Edict of Milan, the three-centuries-long era of persecution came to an end.

Contrary to popular belief, Constantine did not rescue Christianity from extinction. Even if he had not adopted the Christian cause, the majority of the Roman population was well on its way to becoming Christian. What Constantine did do was hasten the process of evangelizing the Roman Empire. Constantine's conversion marked the climax of a centuries-long process of evangelization that began in an obscure corner of the Roman Empire. For the first time, the entire structure of Roman civilization, from the emperor down to the lowliest slave, shared the Christian faith.

Internal Danger - Heresy

In the early fourth century, a theological controversy broke out that threatened to derail the Christian faith. Arius taught that the Son of God had a beginning and was a created being. The controversy threatened deeply to divide the Christian Church, and in so doing to imperil the unity of the Roman Empire. Concerned for the unity of the empire, Constantine wrote letters to Bishop Alexander and to Arius, urging them to make up their differences and forgive each other. When that failed, he convened an ecumenical council of the entire Church. Previously there had been regional and local synods, but this was the first worldwide gathering of bishops. Constantine aided this historic gathering by covering the travel expenses of bishops coming from the far-flung corners of the empire.

In order to repudiate the Arian heresy, the bishops inserted the word *homoousios* ("of the same essence") into the baptismal creed. By asserting that Christ was of the same essence as God the Father, the Council decisively affirmed the divinity of Christ. This was approved by an overwhelming majority of the Council (only three persons—including Arius—out of three hundred disagreed). Although Constantine may have suggested that *homoousios* be inserted into the creed, the word was not invented by him. Even Arius made use of it, albeit in his arguments against the divinity of Christ.

Although he presided over the council, it is an exaggeration to claim that Constantine controlled the direction of the Council of Nicea, as many Protestants argue. Many of the bishops present at the council were survivors of the Diocletian persecution and would have been more than willing to put their lives on the line for the gospel of Christ once more. Another weakness of the Protestant stereotype of Constantine is that it gives short shrift to the theological genius of Athanasius. Anyone who reads Athanasius' theological classic *Against the Arians* will see that it was Athanasius, not Constantine, who turned the tide against the Arian heresy. Also, the limitations of Constantine's ability to coerce the Church into doing his will can be seen in his earlier failure to resolve the Donatist controversy in 320. As W. H. C. Frend notes in *The Rise of Christianity*, "The lesson, however, had been learned. Never again did he seek to beat into submission a movement within the church."

Equal-to-the-Apostles

Constantine's legacy can be seen in Christianity's transformation from a private sect into a public church that encompassed the whole of society. He put it on an institutional footing, which enabled the Church to be the leading cultural force in the ancient world. The Christianization of Roman society can be seen as a partial fulfillment of Revelation 21:24: "The nations . . . shall walk in its [New Jerusalem] light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it." The Church is the New Jerusalem—replacing the Jerusalem of the Old Testament—which brings spiritual enlightenment to the pagan nations throughout the Roman Empire. However, a balanced assessment of the historical evidence shows that, as much as Constantine may have contributed to the Christianization of the Roman Empire, he did not originate Holy Tradition as many Protestants believe.

Constantine a Saint?

Constantine died in 337. Shortly before his death, he was baptized by Eusebius of Nicomedia. Following his baptism, Constantine refused to wear the imperial purple and died wearing the white baptismal robe. He was buried in the Church of the Holy Apostles just days after he had dedicated it. The day of his death—May 21—is commemorated in the Orthodox Church as a major feast day. Skepticism about the sincerity of Constantine's Christianity stems from many factors. Constantine did not openly repudiate the pagan gods, but tolerated pagan belief even as he began favoring the Christians. Another source lies in his execution of his son, Crispus, and his wife, Fausta, in 326, a year after the Council of Nicea. A third factor was Constantine's delaying of his baptism until just a few days before his death.

On closer examination, however, the basis for this skeptical attitude becomes problematic. Constantine's participation in the pagan rites most likely stemmed from his obligations as military and political leader. Regarding his execution of his son and wife, it is not clear what the reasons were. Unless the reasons for this drastic action are known, it is not fair to condemn Constantine. Also, modern evangelicalism may frown on deathbed conversions, but in the early Church such delaying of one's baptism was not uncommon. Constantine's conversion follows more closely the Orthodox understanding of salvation than the Protestant understanding. Where Protestants, especially evangelicals, tend to see salvation in terms of a one-time conversion experience, Orthodoxy sees salvation as a mystery and as a process that unfolds over time. While Constantine's personal faith may be a matter of debate, his historical contributions to the Church under his reign are undeniable. Frend writes, "The 'Age of the Fathers' would have been impossible without Constantine's conversion. The church's councils under the emperor's guidance became assemblies where the new, binding relationship with the Christian God, on which the safety of the empire depended, was established."

The Orthodox Church sees Constantine as the emperor who assisted the early Church in evangelizing the Roman Empire. For this reason, it honors him as Saint Constantine Equal-to-the-Apostles.

Constantine and the Church

For Orthodoxy, Constantine represents an important link to the past. The persecuted underground Church and the official state Church are the same Church. Constantine played a key role in the historic

transition from the former to the latter. For Orthodox Christianity, there is no "fall of the Church." The Orthodox Church believes that it stands in unbroken continuity with the Church of the first century. There is a popular belief among evangelicals that the true Church was the underground Church, which refused to compromise with the worldly state Church, and that this true Church remained in hiding over the following centuries, leaving few records of its existence until it was rediscovered by the Protestants in the sixteenth century.

Symphonia—The Harmony of Faith and Politics

Constantine's support for the early Church laid the foundation for the doctrine of symphonia—the ideal of political and religious leaders working in harmony to realize God's will here on earth. This ideal is rooted in the Lord's Prayer: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Symphonia avoids two extremes: the separation of Church from State on the one hand, and the fusion of Church and State on the other. Despite his active participation in the Ecumenical Council, Constantine did not view himself as one of the bishops, but rather as "bishop of those outside." This ideal found concrete expression in the Byzantine Empire, which lasted for a thousand years. Under Constantine's rule began the transformation of Roman culture. Execution by crucifixion ceased, gladiatorial battles as punishment ended."

Conclusion

The history of Roman Catholicism cannot be divorced from the life and reign of Constantine. His place in its history is securely fastened together.

Review Questions

1. Please share with us your thoughts on the role of persecution in preparing the larger wing
2. From the materials we read today, kindly share your thoughts on significance of Emperor Constantine to emergence of Christianity as a Religion embraced by Rome.

Chapter 43

From Relationship/Kingdom to Religion/Christendom

As seen from Lesson 42, Orthodoxy celebrates the embrace and benefice of Emperor Constantine as a boost from heaven and a well needed breadth of fresh air for the long-persecuted Church. As evidence, they cite the apparent Christianization of the empire in subsequent years. While there is no doubt that the Roman empire was indeed impacted by the Church it had despised and oppressed for centuries, by the time Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity (relying on accounts of Orthodox Christianity), the larger wing of the Church was on the way to be ready for a new groom. Like the Church in Laodicea which by opening its heart to the World ejected Yeshua, Jesus to the outside of it (See Revelations 3:14-22), the embrace of Rome, predominant worldly power of the age was a strategic detour out of the narrow way Yeshua spoke of in Matthew 7.

Focusing on the spiritual life of Constantine as evidence of that miss-step is not enough evidence that the larger wing of the Church had taken a turn for the worse. Those who defend the role of Constantine point to the Council of Nicaea which he convened and chaired for the purpose of dealing with Arianism which denied the Divinity of Jesus. Significantly, the Bishop of Rome, Silvester (supposedly the reigning Pope) did not attend the Council of Nicaea but was rather represented by two delegates. This historical reality was sure enough proof that a 'new Sheriff' was in town. The supposed 'personal representative of Jesus' as Roman Catholic Popes were regarded was not present to personally chair the Nicaea Council but rather a 'convert' who had not been baptized; a man whose only claim to the chair of that Council was the fact that as Emperor of Rome, he was now 'benefactor of the Church'. He represented the new groom, Rome!

Arianism: A Boost for Constantine

Arianism was an anti-Christ heresy (departure from truth) of the fourth century which rocked the Church. Advocated by Arius the infamous priest of Alexandria, here is how Encyclopedia Britannica describes the false teaching. It was the Council of Nicaea which Constantine convened and presided over in AD 325 which officially denounced the heresy:

"Arianism, in Christianity, the Christological (concerning the doctrine of Christ) position that Jesus, as the Son of God, was created by God. It was proposed early in the 4th century by the Alexandrian presbyter Arius and was popular throughout much of the Eastern and Western Roman empires, even after it was denounced as a heresy by the Council of Nicaea (325).

Arianism is often considered to be a form of Unitarian theology in that it stresses God's unity at the expense of the notion of the Trinity, the doctrine that three distinct persons are united in one Godhead. Arius's basic premise was the uniqueness of God, who is alone self-existent (not dependent for its existence on anything else) and immutable; the Son, who is not self-existent, cannot therefore be the self-existent and immutable God. Because the Godhead is unique, it cannot be shared or communicated.

Because the Godhead is immutable, the Son, who is mutable, must, therefore, be deemed a creature who has been called into existence out of nothing and has had a beginning. Moreover, the Son can have no direct knowledge of the Father, since the Son is finite and of a different order of existence.”

An article in Wikipedia provides some clue that the motives of Constantine in delving into the sphere of spirituality may have been driven more by need to preserve the peace and harmony of the Roman Empire:

“The reign of Constantine established a precedent for the position of the emperor as having great influence and ultimate regulatory authority within the religious discussions involving the early Christian councils of that time, e.g., most notably the dispute over Arianism. Constantine himself disliked the risks to societal stability that religious disputes and controversies brought with them, preferring where possible to establish an orthodoxy. His influence over the early Church councils was to enforce doctrine, root out heresy, and uphold ecclesiastical unity; what proper worship and doctrines and dogma consisted of was for the Church to determine, in the hands of the participating bishops” (Wikipedia).

As Wikipedia further observed, even some of the Bishops of the day drew him into the role of umpire when they could not resolve some of their theological disputes:

“Most notably, from 313 to 316 bishops in North Africa struggled with other Christian bishops who had been ordained by Donatus in opposition to Caecilian. The African bishops could not come to terms and the Donatists asked Constantine to act as a judge in the dispute. Three regional Church councils and another trial before Constantine all ruled against Donatus and the Donatism movement in North Africa. In 317 Constantine issued an edict to confiscate Donatist church property and to send Donatist clergy into exile. More significantly, in 325 he summoned the Council of Nicaea, effectively the first Ecumenical Council (unless the Council of Jerusalem is so classified), most known for its dealing with Arianism and for instituting the Nicene Creed.”

In tracing, also how Constantine’s supposed faith clashed with some of his royal actions, these passages from Wikipedia are worthy of consideration:

“Apparently Constantine did not patronize Christianity alone. After gaining victory in the Battle of the Milvian Bridge (312), a triumphal arch—the Arch of Constantine—was built (315) to celebrate his triumph. The arch is decorated with images of the goddess Victoria. At the time of its dedication, sacrifices to gods like Apollo, Diana, and Hercules were made. Absent from the Arch are any depictions of Christian symbolism. However, as the Arch was commissioned by the Senate, the absence of Christian symbols may reflect the role of the Curia at the time as a pagan redoubt.

In 321, he legislated that the venerable day of the sun should be a day of rest for all citizens. In the year 323, he issued a decree banning Christians from participating in state sacrifices. Furthermore, Constantine's coinage continued to carry the symbols of the sun. After the pagan gods had disappeared from his coinage, Christian symbols appeared as Constantine's attributes: the chi rho between his hands or on his labarum, as well on the coin itself.

Constantine enforced the prohibition of the First Council of Nicaea against celebrating the Lord's Supper on the day before the Jewish Passover (14 Nisan)

(see Quartodecimanism and Easter controversy). This marked a definite break of Christianity from the Judaic tradition. From then on the Roman Julian Calendar, a solar calendar, was given precedence over the lunisolar Hebrew Calendar among the Christian churches of the Roman Empire.”

Equally troubling is the reality that Emperor Constantine signed the warrant for execution of both his son Crispus and wife Fausta in 326 AD barely a year after Nicaea! Interestingly, he still tolerated paganism across the empire among both nobles and commoners and was not baptized until when on his deathbed.

Debunking the claim that Constantine and Council of Nicaea formulated theology of Elohim

Those who claim that the Council of Nicaea defined the Triune nature of Elohim do a disservice to the Kingdom and Truth in the Holy Scriptures! The reality of the Triune Personality of Elohim had been an existential reality starting from the Creation Day!

Genesis 1:26 (KJV) *26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

It had been declared in the response of Elohim to the Fall of Adam, and Eve

Genesis 3:22 (KJV) *22 And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:*

It was also manifested when Elohim deemed it necessary to deal with those who gathered to build the Tower of Babel

Genesis 11:5-7 (KJV) *5 And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. 6 And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. 7 Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.*

Abraham had encountered the Triune Elohim as a careful reading of Genesis 18 shows

David had spoken about the mystery of Elohim in some of His Psalms dealing with the Messiah.

In the days of His Incarnate State, the manifest declarations of Scripture of His Divine origin are simply spot on:

The way Yeshua was conceived revealed how the mystery unfolded in the earth realm (Luke 1:34-35). At His Baptism, attestation of the Triune Elohim was clear (Matthew 3:16-17)

Yeshua Himself taught the disciples two profound realities of His dual nature:

i. He and the Father are of one essence John 8:12-59

John 10:29-30 (KJV) 29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. 30 I and my Father are one.

John 14:6-11 (KJV) 6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. 7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. 8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. 9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? 10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. 11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

John 17:11, 21-23 (KJV) 11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are

21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

ii. To undertake His redemptive assignment, He needed to function as a human whose will was totally submitted to that of the Father as an example to the redeemed of how to live in such a way to please the Father

John 4:34 (KJV) 34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

John 5:30 (KJV) 30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

John 6:38 (KJV) 38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

In the Gospels, we also see that Holy Spirit was clearly presented not as a Force or Thing but as a Person. As a Person, these clearly Divine attributes were manifested through the Bible:

iii. He is Spirit of Elohim

Genesis 1:1-2 (KJV) 1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. 2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

iv. He planted Yeshua in the womb of Mary (Luke 1:29-35)

v. He empowered Yeshua for the work of ministry

Acts 10:38 (KJV) 38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

vi. He raised Yeshua from the dead (Romans 8:11)

vii. He was the other Comforter that would be with the Church after Ascension of Yeshua

John 14:16 (KJV) 16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

John 14:26 (KJV) *26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

John 15:26 (KJV) *26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:*

John 16:7 (KJV) *7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*

x. He was to be everything to humans: convict them of Sin; reveal Yeshua as sufficient sacrifice for their sins; Seal them unto day of redemption; transform their lives from glory to glory; unite them as one Kingdom nation in the earth realm and endue them with power from heaven to witness for Yeshua throughout the earth realm

2 Corinthians 1:22 (KJV) *22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.*

Ephesians 1:13 (KJV) *13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,*

Ephesians 4:30 (KJV) *30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*

Acts 1:4-5, 8 (KJV) *4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. 5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence*

8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

The point is this: Saints who lived in the Alpha Church did not need the Theological formulations of Nicaea to know their Elohim! In the almost 300 or so years preceding that Council, all the original apostles, leaders and brethren knew Yeshua Who called them was divine. The words of John was an accepted truth all these centuries:

John 1:1-3 (KJV) *1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.*

Saints ever since the first 120 at the Upper Room knew by experience that Yeshua was Divine; that Holy Spirit Is Divine and that there was only one Elohim, not three Gods! They also knew that it is not entirely possible for a finite mind to fully grasp an infinite Elohim. The issue of Elohim as the God Head was a mystery they knew would be one day accomplished according to the revelation granted John the beloved and were content to walk with Him by Faith in His Word!

Revelation 10:7 (KJV) *7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.*

Those who were truly born again may not have had all the theological arguments but nevertheless, they knew experientially the King Who ruled in their hearts was not a mere human or Prophet or Rabbi. They knew Him to be Elohim made flesh, Emmanuel to dwell amongst them! How did they know? They knew

because they were in a vibrant, personal relationship with Him! Because of this relationship, Holy Spirit illuminated the pages of scripture and released grace for them to walk by Faith not by sight. Consequently, they lived like Paul who in Romans 8:28-39 declared defiantly that nothing could separate them from the love of Elohim in Yeshua. They were citizens of the Kingdom of Elohim and did not cower in fear to the kingdoms of humans. This was the reason why the intensity of martyrdom and other forms of persecution did not move them away from the hope of the gospel!

Nicaea did not stamp out Arianism!

In any case, the Council of Nicea did not successfully stamp out Arianism. History of the Roman Empire reveals that various Emperors took the Church in the direction they favored. Those, who like Constantine favored the Trinity ensured it was the prevalent theology in the empire. When they died, and were succeeded by Arianist Emperors, the order was reversed. Consequently, Bishops and Priests were favored or demoted according to the whims of the various Emperors!

Each generation till today, Arianism – just like other heresies and errors - has continued and will remain so as long as humans have itchy ears to hear what sounds exotic! A strain of Arianism we dub the pseudo-Kingdom teachings of a man from the Caribbean basin in the 21st Century has captured the hearts and imaginations of some diehard fans. At the center of his theology is this postulation: The Kingdom is greater and more significant than Jesus and the Salvation that is obtainable by Faith in Him. This twisted logic counsels that saints should not preach Jesus but rather the Kingdom. Unfortunately for those caught up in this error, the word of scripture makes it clear that the true Holy Spirit will never lead a saint to depreciate the centrality of Yeshua!

1 Corinthians 12:3 (KJV) *3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.*

The King of Kings is the Center and Circumference of His Kingdom! The Kingdom derives from His beneficence and is not external to Him. To receive Him and submit to His sovereign rule is to be part of His Kingdom! Here is a short description of the True Kingdom Message which Yeshua preached:

The Kingdom He spoke of had three dimensions:

- i. Submitting totally to His Sovereign rule. Saints are to die to self; become his disciples, make their vessels available as instruments through which the presence of the King and reality of His kingdom within them is manifested to those outside. The Kingdom is not about accumulation of stuff but is rather Righteousness, Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost (Romans 14:17-18) The evidence of this reality is Fruit of the Spirit and absence of works of the flesh (Galatians 5:13-26)
- ii. Kingdom Nation. This is the spiritual reality that all who live as described above though in the world, are not of the world. United in Him and each other by Holy Spirit, they are in a state of spiritual unity as His Royal Priesthood, Peculiar people and Holy Nation distinct from the world from which they were redeemed. (1 Peter 2: 9-12; Ephesians 4:1-6; Philippians 4:12-16; John 17)

iii. Kingdom Come: This is the manifest or physical state of the Kingdom which will occur when Yeshua returns to rule and reign in the earth realm. All saints are to have their eyes firmly fixed on this reality and be willing to suffer whatever it takes to be part of those who will rule and reign with Him as Priests and kings (in a sense, saints are in a dress rehearsal in this present life for that role which will manifest in fullness in the age to come). It was this reality which energized all saints of all ages to gladly suffer and be killed for the sake of faith in Yeshua. (Matthew 16:24-26; Matthew 10; Matthew 24; Romans 8:14-23; 1 Timothy 2:12).

By embracing the temporary gain offered by the Roman Empire, the larger wing of the Church basically gave up the grand crown of the Kingdom to come! It was indeed a case of temporary gain being preferred to the lasting glory of the manifest Kingdom! The Deal was Sealed with the Union of the universal (Catholic) Church with the Roman Empire.

The fruit: The Roman Catholic Church

If Emperor Constantine proposed the marriage between the larger wing of the Church with the reigning empire of the day, the deal was sealed finally by Emperor Theodosius. Let us consider this piece of historical information by National Geographic online:

“Though Constantine I (circa A.D. 280 to 337) was the first Christian emperor of Rome, it was not until decades after he died that Christianity became the official religion of the empire.

Ruling from 379 to 395, Emperor Theodosius I was the first emperor to decree that all citizens should be Christian. He was also the last ruler to preside over a united Eastern and Western Roman Empire. Indeed, east and west had been diverging since long before his reign.

Theodosius allowed most pagans to worship in peace. But he forcibly removed "heretic" Arian or Gnostic bishops from Christian churches throughout the eastern empire.

These officials were replaced with "catholic" Christians, as defined by the circa-325 Council of Nicea. The creed recognized the equal divinity of the holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.”

Knowing human nature, it is obvious that even if well intentioned, the attempt to expand Christianity by imperial fiat ensured that the gospel would become Religion! Nobles, Soldiers and commoners became ‘Christian’ by decree, not by repentance and conversion. They learnt how to dress and look the part even though their spirit-man and souls were filled with the nature of Sin. Six days a week, they lived any how that was convenient in sin but dressed up on Sundays and Feast days to attend services as spectators of the religious performance of priests and engage in endless rituals seeking to appease what was essentially an ‘Unknown God’.

Christian religion was born, alive and well. The Roman Empire helped to structure and empower it as an instrument of advancing its imperial designs for expansion and dominance of humans from various cities, nations and cultures.

Review Questions

1. Please present a brief summary of why the assumed blessings derived from the reign of Constantine was, spiritually speaking, a dangerous leaven which eventually destroyed the pure gospel of the Kingdom

2. Please explain why the Kingdom cannot be greater than King Yeshua Himself

Chapter 44

Pillars for Consolidation of Roman Catholic Religion Part 1

The Roman Catholic Church is the face of Christianity most of the world knows. Its claim to pre-eminence is largely accepted by humanity. A brief synopsis of what it wants people to believe and some of the powers it ascribes to itself can be found in this text from Wikipedia:

“The theology of the Catholic Church is based on natural law, canonical scripture, divine revelation, and sacred tradition, as interpreted authoritatively by the magisterium of the Catholic Church. The teachings of the Catholic Church are summarized in various creeds, especially the Nicene (Nicene-Constantinopolitan) Creed and the Apostles' Creed, and authoritatively summarized in the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Catholic teachings have been refined and clarified by major councils of the Church, convened by popes at important points throughout history. The first such council, the Council of Jerusalem, was convened by the Apostles c. AD 50. The most recent was the Second Vatican Council, which was held from 1962 to 1965.

The Catholic Church believes that it is guided by the Holy Spirit, and that it is protected from definitively teaching error on matters of faith and morals. According to the Church, the Holy Spirit reveals God's truth through sacred scripture and sacred tradition. Sacred tradition consists of those beliefs handed down through the church since the time of the Apostles. Sacred scripture and sacred tradition are collectively known as the deposit of faith. This is in turn interpreted by the magisterium, the teaching authority of the Church. The magisterium includes those pronouncements of the popes that are considered infallible, as well as the pronouncements of ecumenical councils and those of the College of Bishops in union with the pope when they condemn false interpretations of scripture or define truths. The first person to distinguish Catholic theology from secularism was the Italian Protestant Alberico Gentili.

Formal Catholic worship is ordered by means of the liturgy, which is regulated by church authority. The celebration of the Eucharist, one of seven sacraments, is held at the center of Catholic worship. There are numerous additional forms of personal prayer and devotion including the Rosary, Stations of the Cross, and Eucharistic adoration. The Church community consists of the ordained clergy (consisting of the episcopate, the priesthood, and the diaconate), the laity, and those like monks and nuns living a consecrated life under rule.

According to the Catechism, Christ instituted seven sacraments and entrusted them to the Church. These are Baptism, Confirmation (Chrismation), the Eucharist, Penance, the Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders and Matrimony. They are vehicles through which God's grace is said to flow into all those who receive them with the proper disposition. The Church encourages people to engage in adequate preparation before receiving certain sacraments.

Pillars of Roman Catholic Christianity

For the new entity which emerged from the union of State and Church – Roman Catholic Church - to thrive, it needed an identity befitting its status as official religion of the greatest empire in the then world. Every Religion is sustained by pillars which make it distinct from others.

Because it was a fusion of State and Church, the pillars of the Roman Catholic Church derive their origins from some biblical texts as well as Roman and Greek culture. Without factoring in this reality, critics will always miss the mark in assessing this extremely powerful entity which captured the imagination and hearts of the most ardent followers on planet earth equaled only by Islam.

1. Replacement Theology

Rome conquered and colonized the land of Israel. The Hebrews/Jews as a people had a reputation as fiercely independent people. They had suffered under various empires before Rome notably, Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia and even Greco-Macedonia. When the Greco-Macedonian Empire was divided into four after death of Alexander the Great, the Seleucid Empire based in Syria became overlord to Israel. One of the most wicked and anti-Semitic ruler to have lived on earth, Antiochus Epiphannes IV did the unthinkable by defiling the Temple with sacrifice of the unclean animal, a Pig on the altar.

In response, the Maccabean – family of zealots raised up what many considered a rag-tag guerrilla army which was fired by zeal to take away the reproach to Elohim. This tiny band of soldiers prevailed over the mighty army of Antiochus Epiphannes IV. Cleaning up the Temple to restore it for worship led to the miraculous supply of oil for the Menorah which led to establishment of the Festival of Lights, the Hanukkah.

The Hasmonean dynasty which followed ensured Judah lived as an independent entity for about 105 years. When Rome defeated the Seleucids the reputation of the Hebrews/Jews preceded them as a rugged people. Rome went on to exert proper colonial rule over Israel on a two-track way:

- It appointed an Idumean/Edomite, Herod to be King with limited powers
- It permitted the reigning High Priest to be spiritual leader of Judaism
- It appointed Roman Governors backed by a large Garrison of Soldiers to exercise Administrative rule and ensured that the person and name of the reigning Caesar was honoured

At various times, the Hebrews/Jews of Israel tried to defy Roman authority. Each was met with the crushing power of the imperial Roman army.

In AD 70, Roman General Titus led his army to destroy Jerusalem and the Temple

The Bar Kokhba revolt between 132-136 was another major rebellion of the people against Roman rule which was met with drastic measures.

In seeking union of Church and State, Roman Emperors including Constantine were not about to hand over Roman Identity to it. The rather desired to adapt its identity to fit into that of Rome. Throughout

history, victorious side in any war often end up writing the story. The history of Roman Catholicism followed that trend.

The solution was simple: recreate history! In this scenario, Replacement Theology became the way forward. Under this new theology, these features were prominent:

- i. Since the Hebrews/Jews as a people rejected Yeshua, Elohim was through with them.
- ii. The Gentiles of the Roman Empire who embraced the gospel are now inheritors of the Blessings of Israel.
- iii. The City of Rome, capital of the Empire was now the new Jerusalem

Knowing how dangerous this trend of thought – Replacement Theology was, Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write a powerful; refutation of it in his epistle to the Church at Rome (Romans chapters 9, 10, 11). Elohim is not through with Israel and its Hebraic people. Their temporary falling away was a divine mechanism for the Gentiles to come into the Commonwealth.

1. Change of Priesthood

Whereas Yeshua came to inaugurate the Royal Priesthood of Melchizedek – where all saints are called, the new Church of Rome needed to borrow from the playbook of the defunct Aaronic/Levitical Priesthood. It was one in which a tiny, exclusive male priestly class would function as Clergy with real spiritual, administrative and social lordship over the people in their spheres of influence.

- A single Priest with either two or three assistants could in effect rule a Parish of say 1000 – 5000 persons. He was their intermediary with God. He alone had access to the high altar and could celebrate the Eucharist (Communion). He heard their confessions of sins and gave them particular prayers for repentance and decided what level of penance (flagellation of their physical bodies) was sufficient to attract forgiveness. With this arrangement, the Roman Church had real control over the people and more importantly the nobles of the empire. To elevate the esteem and prestige of the office of Parish priest, he needed to be clothed with elaborate costumes whose colors matched various types of occasions – celebrating mass; conducting weddings, baptisms or funeral mass. The Parish priest was automatically in the middle class, attended major civic occasions as the lord spiritual. Often the Parsonage or residence of the Parish was one of the best houses in the area and situated close to the Church building
- A Bishop was over all the priests and ecclesiastical assets in his diocese. Automatically, such people were in the upper class and lived in elaborate bishopric manors complete with all that made life comfortable.
- The Archbishop literarily ruled his ecclesiastical province or Archbishopric
- The Pope ruled as ‘supreme pontiff’. Over the years, there have been all kinds of human occupying this office. Some like the current Pope Francis are wonderful humans with excellent public relations techniques that win the hearts of multitudes. Others were extremely wicked, reveling in the blood of saints spilled.

Levitical Priesthood with emergence of Priests as 'lords spiritual'/Clergy whereas the Lord instituted the Melchizedek Priesthood Division of Church into two: The Clergy as a tiny professional, male priestly caste which attends to a large dormant laity

Theatre of Action moves from human hearts to Cathedrals & Church buildings

In gospel of the Kingdom, the heart of humans is the main theatre of action where Elohim meets with His Own. This is because that is where the new birth experience takes place (John 3:3-16; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:1-8). Religions of this world are united in rejecting the new birth experience and transformation from sinner to saint in a split of time. That is why they are all particular about places where their adherents gather to worship.

Because the new church was the religion of the empire, there was need to provide befitting buildings designated as "church". The best architects were commissioned to design the elaborate buildings fit for use by the nobles and emperors of the empire. The best of materials – from stone, brick, to glass, wood was employed to build the imposing structures which have stood the test of time. Well-known artists and painters of each era were commissioned to produce high works of art either as frescos on ceilings/roofs or stained-glass paintings to give the buildings the befitting look they deserved as House of God.

From being conscious of their bodies as temples of Elohim (1 Corinthians 6:18-20), adherents of the new religion were programmed to see Him as resident in the Church building or Cathedral. Practically speaking, Roman Catholicism again borrowed from the concepts of Judaism where the Temple was the physical residence of Elohim.

1. Division of days to be either 'holy' or secular

The tendency to position the Church as a building people went into naturally fostered another error: where there were specified 'holy days' while others were regarded as 'secular'. The result was that people felt 'His presence' when they got close to or inside the church buildings. When outside it, they felt 'ordinary' and lived as they deemed fit. Ahead of the next religious day, they made necessary ablutions and acts of penitence to qualify to enjoy the holy communion.

2. Spectators, not participants

Inside church buildings, Priests were the actors. They said the mass and the people were basically spectators who came in their best dresses to meet up with a vital requirement of their faith. There were of course some lines or responses they were required to memorize and recite. But the essential work inside the building was done by the priest or Bishop.

3. Membership of the Church was by Infant Baptism rather than the New Birth

Membership of the church was by Baptism through sprinkling of water upon infants who were too tender to know what was going on. As people grew older, they were required to maintain membership through payment of annual dues, works of penance and partaking of the Eucharist. It was a case of

Salvation by works rather than Salvation by Grace through faith. This was contrary to what Yeshua instituted: The New birth experience as basis of being part of His Universal Body

4. Essential Nature: An Organization rather than organism

The essential nature of the emergent church was designed to be a powerful religious organization with a pyramidal structure. At the apex, would be the papacy while the parish would be the bottom with the Bishopric and Archbishopric and Cardinals in between. The organism that Yeshua left on planet earth could not fit this new robe. By organizing the new church, the people could be controlled through the levers of ecclesiastical authority. Organizations are external entities that people 'join' to belong. What Yeshua left on earth was an organism comprising all who are born again.

5. The Language Factor

A factor which suited the redefinition of the church and its replacement themed theology is the way Roman Empire embraced Greek language as an instrument of education in its vast empire. Greek language and literature were already of global application before Rome took over as world power. Writers of the biblical texts used Greek to document their accounts.

6. Canonization of dead people

Roman culture was rife with many deities and cults centered on the spirit-world. In ancient Rome, the cults had patron deities that were revered and honoured. As Roman Catholicism emerged from fusion of State and Church, it embraced the concept of canonization of dead people who lived good lives so that they would intercede for the living. The annual calendar of the Roman Catholic Church is thus clogged with days dedicated to various saints who are patrons of various causes.

7. Arrogation of the right to define Doctrines, Dogma, and Traditions of men which are not substantiated by the Word

The power of the Holy Scriptures as central instrument through which the righteousness received by Grace through Faith is sustained is well explicated in the New Covenant.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (KJV) *16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

It is for this reason ministers and saints are exhorted to study the Holy Scriptures intently:

2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV) *15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

The way Peter puts it no human or council of humans has the right or liberty to use human wisdom to interpret any portion of scriptures.

2 Peter 1:20-21 (KJV) *20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

Once there is any diversion from the Truths of the Holy Scriptures, the basis is laid for error and diversion into religion. It is not surprising therefore to note that the Roman Catholic Church arrogated to itself the power to determine doctrine and dogma. Writing in a 2011 article posted in Catholic.com, Jim Blackburn released this insight into the kind of authority the Roman Catholic Church ascribes to itself for defining Doctrines and dogmas:

Full Question: I have heard that the teaching on Mary as Mediatrix of All Graces is official Catholic doctrine but not a dogma of faith. I am not clear on the difference between doctrine and dogma. Can you clear it up for me?

Answer: In general, doctrine is all Church teaching in matters of faith and morals. Dogma is more narrowly defined as that part of doctrine which has been divinely revealed and which the Church has formally defined and declared to be believed as revealed.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains,

The Church's magisterium exercises the authority it holds from Christ to the fullest extent when it defines dogmas, that is, when it proposes, in a form obliging the Christian people to an irrevocable adherence of faith, truths contained in divine Revelation or also when it proposes, in a definitive way, truths having a necessary connection with these. (CCC 88)

Concerning the Church's teaching that Mary is the Mediatrix of All Graces, while this doctrine has been divinely revealed, it has not yet been—although could be—elevated to dogma. In Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma, Dr. Ludwig Ott explains, "The doctrine of Mary's Universal Mediation of Grace based on her co-operation in the Incarnation is so definitely manifest in the sources of the faith, that nothing stands in the way of a dogmatic definition" (215)."

The power to add or subtract from the Word is given to no human and therefore dangerous in the extreme!

Revelation 22:18-19 (KJV) *18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: 19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*

1. Papal Authority went way beyond what the Lord could ever have permitted

The basis of what Rome did was re-definition and wrong interpretation of Matthew 16:18. To the Roman Catholic Church, this was a sign that Yeshua built His Church on Peter and that all its popes who claim succession to him automatically walk in that same authority of infallibility.

Fortunately, the whole counsel of the Word of Yeshua is documented so we can understand what He meant

Matthew 16:13-20 (KJV) *13 When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? 14 And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. 15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? 16 And*

Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. 17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. 18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. 20 Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.

Yeshua was commending Peter for getting the revelation that He Is the Messiah! He was proclaiming that upon the revelation and acceptance of His Divinity would His Church in the earth realm be built. In other words, the Divine nature and Personality of Yeshua is the ultimate Rock or Cornerstone of His Church. Anyone who receives this truth becomes a lively stone placed thereon! In his epistle, Peter confirmed this interpretation

1 Peter 2:4-6 (KJV) *4 To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, 5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. 6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.*

Nowhere did Peter ascribe to himself infallibility of interpretation of doctrine. As a matter of fact, he commended the vastness and depth of the revelations committed to the trust of Paul:

2 Peter 3:14-16 (KJV) *14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. 15 And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; 16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*

The Divine origin of Yeshua had been the main issue of contention for the Hebrews/Jews of His day and so He was delighted that His disciples received the truth!

Review Question

1. Please briefly described what you learnt from any 5 of these Pillars of Roman Catholicism.

Chapter 45

Pillars for Consolidation of Roman Catholicism Part 2 Another Mary

Let us continue our study of Doctrinal errors of Rome, the Alternative Church. The Pillar today happens to be perhaps the most profound and bold!

Pillar #.12. Veneration of Mary as the Mediatrix

One of the most outstanding pillars of the Religion of Roman Catholicism is the veneration of Mary to an extent that is entirely unhelpful and dangerous to souls because it bothers on creation of something which directly contradicts both the Torah and the New Covenant. The real biblical Mary was a humble vessel chosen and favored by Elohim as instrument of bearing the Holy Seed. Both Matthew chapters 1 and 2 and Luke Chapters 1 and 2. Unfortunately, in dealing with this doctrinal error, most Protestants go to extreme lengths to denounce Mary. This is equally reprehensible because it contradicts what the Bible says. On the day Mary went to visit with Elizabeth, the words spoken by both reveal that indeed Elohim desires that Mary be deemed a blessed personality!

Luke 1:40-49 (KJV) *40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. 41 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: 42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. 43 And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. 45 And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord. 46 And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, 47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. 48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. 49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.*

As one elected for the assignment of receiving the Holy Seed for Incarnation of Yeshua as Emmanuel (Elohim amongst His people), this blessedness is already a done deal!

Luke 1:30-35 (KJV) *30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. 34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? 35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.*

As the uniform testimony of the Holy Scriptures reveal, after this awesome assignment of bringing forth the Baby Yeshua, Mary and Joseph enjoyed their full conjugal relationship as spouses and were blessed with four other sons (James, Joses, Simon and Judas) and at least two daughters

Matthew 1:24-25 (KJV) *24 Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: 25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name Jesus.*

Matthew 13:54-57 (KJV) *54 And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? 55 Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? 56 And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things? 57 And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.*

Yeshua even shut down anything which would lead to idolization of Mary

Luke 11:27-28 (KJV) *27 And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. 28 But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.*

As the Roman Gentile led Church began to evolve within the fourth and fifth centuries, various strange doctrines were introduced by advocates with power of the pen and speech through which they swayed the hearts and minds of many. In this way, the emergent church developed doctrines, dogma and traditions which directly contradict the Holy Scriptures in both Spirit and Truth of the letters. Here is an entry by Wikipedia concerning how the matter evolved from the 4th-5th century till date:

“In the 5th century, the Third Ecumenical Council debated the question of whether Mary should be referred to as Theotokos or Christotokos. Theotokos means "God-bearer" or "Mother of God"; its use implies that Jesus, to whom Mary gave birth, is truly God and man in one person. Nestorians preferred the title Christotokos meaning "Christ-bearer" or "Mother of the Messiah" not because they denied Jesus' divinity, but because they believed that God the Son or Logos existed before time and before Mary, and that Mary was mother only of Jesus as a human, so calling her "Mother of God" was confusing and potentially heretical. Both sides agreed that Jesus took divinity from God the Father and humanity from his mother. The majority at the council agreed with the Pope that denying Mary the title Theotokos would either imply that Jesus was not divine, or that Jesus had two separate personhoods, one of whom was son of Mary and the other not. Ultimately, the council affirmed the use of the title Theotokos and by doing so affirmed Jesus' undivided divinity and humanity.

Thus, while the debate was over the proper title for Mary, it was primarily a Christological question about the nature of Jesus Christ, a question which would return at the Fourth Ecumenical Council. Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, Lutheran and Anglican theological teaching affirms the title Mother of God, while other Christian denominations give no such title to her.”

In speaking of Ambrose, Bishop of Milan who provided much of the logical foundation of Mariology, we see that the basic premise was essentially a human attempt to use logic to discern spiritual things as stated in a Wikipedia entry on:

“The theological treatises of Ambrose of Milan would come to influence Popes Damasus, Siricius and Leo XIII. Central to Ambrose is the virginity of Mary and her role as Mother of God.

- The virgin birth is worthy of God. Which human birth would have been more worthy of God, than the one, in which the Immaculate Son of God maintained the purity of his immaculate origin while becoming human?
- We confess, that Christ the Lord was born from a virgin, and therefore we reject the natural order of things. Because not from a man she conceived but from the Holy Spirit.
- Christ is not divided but one. If we adore him as the Son of God, we do not deny his birth from the virgin... But nobody shall extend this to Mary. Mary was the temple of God but not God in the temple. Therefore, only the one who was in the temple can be worshipped.
- Yes, truly blessed for having surpassed the priest (Zechariah). While the priest denied, the Virgin rectified the error. No wonder that the Lord, wishing to rescue the world, began his work with Mary. Thus she, through whom salvation was being prepared for all people, would be the first to receive the promised fruit of salvation”.

This seemingly harmless treatise has now morphed into a global religious movement full of statues of all shapes and sizes dedicated to Mary, holy orders of male priests and female nuns; apparitions of her and mass veneration experiences which are indeed troubling.

All this arise because Roman Catholics have been indoctrinated with the belief that because she was the vessel used to bring forth Yeshua:

1. She is elevated as Mother of God
2. Since Yeshua was conceived without Sin, the vessel who bore Him must also have had an Immaculate Conception (born without Sin)
3. Accordingly, they formulated another fantastic tradition that because of 1 and 2 above, Mary’s body could not have seen corruption and she therefore experienced an Assumption into heaven in her body
4. Because of these 3-preceding point, Mary is enthroned as the Mediatrix standing in the gap between those who venerate her and Jesus. So, whatever you need from heaven, all you need to do is invoke the name of Mary which guarantees that her ‘Son’ would speedily grant same!

This four-point logic represents human reason gone haywire:

1 Corinthians 2:4-14 (KJV) *4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. 6 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: 7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: 8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*

14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Let us note that after pronouncing in Genesis 3:15 that redemption would come forth through Seed of the woman, Elohim all through history laid hold of sinful men and women as instruments of bringing Him forth! The lineage of Yeshua is thus filled with normal humans whose life stories or backgrounds are less than noble! Chief among them, let us consider these:

- Noah, the man who in Genesis 6:8 found Grace in the eyes of Elohim and was saved with his family from the Great Flood. As Genesis 9 reports, he got drunk after the Flood and lay naked, a situation which led his son Ham to stumble. In rage, Noah issued a proclamation which defined the history of humanity.
- Abraham was a direct progenitor of Yeshua and therefore carrier of the promised Seed. He had flip flops in his walk with Elohim in the matter of Hagar (trying to help Elohim with the Seed) in Genesis 16 and 21. In Genesis 20 we see that he lied to Abimelech about Sarai his wife just to save his skin. Despite these infractions, Elohim still chose and used him.
- Judah, great grandson of Abraham who received the promise of the Sceptre (bearer of the Seed and Authority) from Jacob his father went on to deliver it through the most unimaginable process: incest with his daughter in law, Tamar who disguised as a prostitute. The seed of that unholy relationship, Pharez, became bearer of the Seed, not all the other children and grandchildren who lived 'good lives'! (Genesis 38; Ruth 4:12; 1 Chronicles 2:4)
- Rahab, the common prostitute of Jericho became part of the lineage when she saved the spies sent by Israel. She evidently married one of the invading army when Israel entered the Promised land. Joshua chapters 2 & 6; Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25
- Ruth who married Boaz and became part of the lineage of the Seed was a Moabites. Moab and Ammon were products of the incestuous relationship of Lot and his two daughters after they were rescued from Sodom (Genesis 19:30-38; Ruth chapters 1, 2, 3, 4 and Matthew 1:5)
- David who was a revered personality in the lineage of the Seed was a man who messed up big time. He committed adultery with Bathsheba, wife of Uriah, one of his most loyal military officers. To cover it up, he had Uriah compromised unto death in battle and went on to marry the widow. (2 Samuel chapters 11 and 12; 1 Kings chapter 1; Matthew 1:6)
- Solomon was product of that very negative relationship between David and Bathsheba. Of all the children of David, he was the one through which the Seed would come. His life was an example of vanity, with 1000 wives and Concubines as well as gross idolatry. 2 Samuel chapters 11 and 12; 1 Kings chapter 1; Matthew 1:6,7)
- Some of those in the lineage from Solomon to Yeshua were very terrible human beings. The full list of ancestors of Yeshua in both Matthew Chapter 1 and Luke chapter 3 confirm the reality that Elohim does not consult the past to determine who to call or His determinate counsel and Purpose in that vessel! in His Pre-eminence laid hold of various vessels to serve His determinate counsel!

The point being made here is that in the economy of Elohim, any vessel can be used for Divine purpose. This knocks down the humanistic arguments of why Mary needed to be conceived Immaculately and why she had to be taken up to heaven in her 'immaculate' body! Like every other person who lived since Adam, Mary is part of *this scripture*

Romans 3:23 (KJV) *23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*

She was a vessel who found favor with Elohim and experienced His election to be the vessel who was used to consummate the Incarnation as Luke 1:29-35 says.

Luke 1:26-35 (KJV) *26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, 27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. 28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. 29 And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. 30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. 34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? 35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.*

The Roman Catholic teaching and practice of regarding Mary as Mediatrix totally contradicts the express provisions of the Holy Writ which states:

1 Timothy 2:5 (KJV) *5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;*

It is this positioning of Mary that is responsible for the nearly endless invocation of her name through both the Rosary and in normal daily lives of Roman Catholics. Kevin Rudd in his 'Overview of how Catholic Faith contradicts the Bible' notes that

"Catholics also engage in more praising of Mary than Jesus Christ himself and actually pray to her to have their prayers answered. Rosary Beads graphically represent how Roman Catholics heap 10 times more praise upon Mary than God himself. Of the 59 total beads of the Rosary, 53 beads are "Hail Marys", but only 6 beads are "Our Father". The Rosary most often ends with a "Hail, Holy Queen" prayer to Mary, not God

Let us examine this take from Wikipedia on how the veneration of Mary dominates the liturgical year of Rome:

"The Roman Catholic Church celebrates three Marian solemnities which are also holy days of obligation in many countries during the liturgical year (in liturgical order): December 8 Feast of the Immaculate Conception. January 1 Mary, Mother of God. August 15 The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary."

The only Biblical Conclusions

The only biblical conclusion we can arrive at is this:

#.1. The Roman Catholic Mary is not the same as the Biblical Mary! That of Rome has been used to cause multitudes to roundly reject the simplicity of Salvation by Grace through Faith which brings former sinners into a place of vibrant personal relationship with Elohim in which Yeshua alone reigns Supreme in their lives as they are led by Holy Spirit.

#.2. The Roman Catholic Mary is more like a divine personality, The Queen of Heaven. The Biblical Mary was a humble, holy woman who saw herself as a vessel of honour made fit for the Master's use entirely by His Grace.

Luke 1:46-55 (KJV) *46 And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, 47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. 48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. 49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. 50 And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. 51 He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. 52 He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. 53 He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. 54 He hath helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; 55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.*

#.3. The Roman Catholic Mary was a Mediatrix almost supreme in herself. The Biblical Mary knew the limit of her access and influence on Yeshua. She followed the footsteps of John the Baptist and pointed people to Yeshua as ultimate solution:

John 2:1-5 (KJV) *1 And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: 2 And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. 3 And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. 4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. 5 His mother saith unto the servants, whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.*

#.4. The Roman Catholic Mary did not have a conjugal relationship with Joseph. The Biblical one had a fulfilled conjugal relationship with Joseph until he died:

Matthew 13:55-56 (KJV) *55 Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? 56 And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?*

Initially and possibly until He was crucified, died and arose, it appears his siblings had the same attitude of familiarity deception like the people of Nazareth who doubted his Divinity:

John 7:2-8 (KJV) *2 Now the Jew's feast of tabernacles was at hand. 3 His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. 4 For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. 5 For neither did his brethren believe in him. 6 Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is alway ready. 7 The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. 8 Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast: for my time is not yet full come.*

Of these children, two went on to become apostles: James and Jude who wrote the epistles with their names. One of them James was the Chair/Moderator of the first Jerusalem Council (significantly, not Peter who the Bible never cast as a Pope):

Acts 15:13-22 (KJV) 13 And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: 14 Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. 15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, 16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: 17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. 18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. 19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: 20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. 21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day. 22 Then pleased it the apostles and elders with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas and Silas, chief men among the brethren:

#.5. The Roman Catholic Mary was without Original Sin and had Immaculate Conception. The Biblical Mary had a relationship with Yeshua as her Saviour and Lord and followed Him to the end. She was there at the Cross until Yeshua gave up His Spirit. She was also there at the Upper Room on the day of Pentecost and was filled with Holy Spirit just like others:

John 19:25-27 (KJV) 25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! 27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

Acts 1:12-14 (KJV) 12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. 13 And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. 14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

The Father wants to equip the remnant of the end times with the Truth backed by deep compassion for those who are trapped in this great Religion so that they can be enabled to also know the Truth which sets free. John 8:32. Let no one therefore be puffed up with the revelation of these truths or to be contemptuous of fellow humans. To be instruments of saving their souls will require true agape love!

Review Questions

1. Please summarize this lesson.
2. What new thing did you learn from it?

Chapter 46

Pillars of Roman Catholicism Part 3 Purgatory, Indulgence + others

We cannot be careful enough to posture before the Lord to receive further insight into the human philosophies and dangerous doctrines/dogma which collectively make up the theology and determine the liturgy of the Alternate Church of Rome. Steve Rudd wrote an insightful article titled "Overview of how Catholic faith contradicts the Bible" which was published in <http://www.bible.ca/cath-overview-false-teaching.htm>. You are encouraged to read all of it for as there is no need to re-invent the wheel of truth. What we will do is to provide a running commentary which links the issues he flags up concerning this Alternate Christian Religion which Rome offered the world and which will continue to dominate the religious scene until Yeshua consummates His union with His True Remnant Church and establishes the manifest phase of the Kingdom. Most of what we will share is from the work of Rudd. His style is to state a fact, ask questions and cite the biblical passages. We have taken off the snap tests in the questions to ensure there is smoother flow of the message.

All Christians are saints

FACT: The Pope says only very special dead Catholic people qualify to be called "saints". For example, Pope John Paul II could not make Mother Teresa a saint (official canonization) until after she was dead. The average Catholic in the pew is never called a "saint" dead or alive! In fact, if a pew dwelling Catholic started calling himself a "saint", he would be rebuked by the parish priest!

Question #1: Was every living Christian in the church in Corinth called a saint?

Answer: 1 Corinthians 1:2 (KJV) 2 To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and our's:

Question #2: Did Paul write the book of Ephesians to dead saints?

Answer: Ephesians 1:1 (KJV) 1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

Question #3: Was the average Christian in the church at Philippi called a saint, in distinction to bishops and deacons?

Answer: Philippians 1:1 (KJV) 1 Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: Question #4: Was every Christian living in Rome called to be a saint?

Answer: Romans 1:7 (KJV) 7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

All Christians are Priests

FACT: The Pope decided to reserve the title of "priest" to be worn by church leaders only. The average pew dwelling Catholic never refer to themselves as "priests". In fact, if a lay Catholic started calling himself a "priest", he would be rebuked by "the parish Priest"!

Question #1: Did Jesus make all Christians to be priests, including the average member in the pew?

Answer: 1 Peter 2:5 (KJV) 5 you (all Christians) also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2:9 (KJV) 9 But you (all Christians) are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvellous light;

Revelation 1:6 (KJV) 6 Jesus has made us (all Christians) to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father—to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Revelation 5:10 (KJV) 10 You have made them (all Christians) to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth."

Bishops Must be Married

FACT: In 1079 AD, celibacy was first enforced for priests and bishops by Pope Gregory VII. Before this time, they were permitted to marry.

Question #1: Does the Bible teach that a bishop (overseer) must be married AND ALSO have children as one of the conditions of being qualified to be a bishop?

Answer: 1 Timothy 3:2-5 (KJV) 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; 3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; 4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; 5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

Note: Paul was not saying only married people who had children could be Bishops as interpreted by Rudd.

Question #2: In the very next chapter of the Bible after bishops are told they must be married with children, does the Holy Spirit warn that "forbidding to marry" is a "doctrine of demons"?

Answer: 1 Timothy 4:1-3 (KJV) 1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; 3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

Peter was Married

FACT: Most Catholics believe that Apostle Peter was the first Pope and was not married. As one Roman Catholic leader said, "if Peter had a wife when he first met Jesus, he got rid of her quick!"

Question #1: Did Peter have a wife?

Answer: Mark 1:30 (KJV) 30 But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her.

Question #2: Did Paul say all the apostles including Peter had a right to be married?

Answer: 1 Corinthians 9:5 (KJV) 5 Do we not have a right to take along a believing wife, even as the rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas?

Let us note this important fact here: Celibacy (ability to live without pressure for drives for sexual satisfaction so that one can serve the Lord) is a gift from heaven. Those who, considering the weight of their calling abstain from marriage like Paul the apostle are in a world of consecration which cannot and should not be imposed by fiat on those have no such gift.

Matthew 19:7-12 (KJV) 7 They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? 8 He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. 9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery. 10 His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry. 11 But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. 12 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.

It is noteworthy that according to some accounts, Celibacy was required from priests to safeguard the Roman Catholic Church assets from claims by their widows and orphans. Unfortunately, while that economic problem seemed to have been resolved with compulsory celibacy, the sexual scandals that plagued the Roman Catholic Church for many years can be directly traceable to that very concept of forced celibacy!

Observance of Special Days Condemned

FACT: The Roman Catholic church has invented an entire yearly calendar of non-Biblical holy Days like Lent, Easter, Christmas.

Historical note: No one prior to 335AD celebrated the birthday of Jesus. The word "Christmas" (Christ + Mass) was first used in 1038AD. Before 335AD, the pagan cult of Mithra, the Iranian "god of light", had long celebrated December 25 as Mithra's birthday. December 21, being the winter solace, marked the beginning of days with increasing amount of light, hence December 25 celebrated Mithra's triumph over darkness. Because the pagan festival that celebrated Mithra's birthday was so popular, the Roman

Catholic church adopted the day, but changed the meaning from the birthday of Mithra, the "god of light", to Christ's birthday, God the son, "light of the world". The old meaning of December 25 was connected with Mithra's triumph over physical darkness. The new meaning celebrated Jesus triumph over spiritual darkness. Eventually Christmas became dominant, the Mithra cult went extinct and today this origin is not widely known among Roman Catholics. None of the apostles or the early church celebrated the birthday of Jesus.

Question #1: Did the early Christians celebrate Christmas, Lent and Easter?

Answer: Galatians 4:10-11 (KJV) 10 Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. 11 I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

Worshipping Idols, Icons and Images Violates the 2nd Commandment

FACT: Catholics regularly bow down to idols, icons and images of Jesus, Mary and the apostles, kissing the feet of the statues and praying to them. Now Catholics get very upset when you accuse them of worshipping Mary. They deny they are worshipping Mary with loud illogical and irrational protests. What they need to understand, is that the Bible teaches that WE ONLY PRAY TO DEITY and Christians considers it paganism and polytheism to pray to anyone EXCEPT the Father, Son or Holy Spirit.

So, while Catholics pray to Mary, they fail to comprehend that only deity is to be prayed to, and this is the underlying reason why non-Catholics correctly lay the charge they worship Mary AND ALL THE SAINTS, they pray to. The Bible clearly teaches that all dead humans, though conscious in the spirit world, are unable to know anything, much less hear prayers addressed to them. Bowing down to icons and kissing them etc. so closely resemble idol worship it is actually shocking that any Roman Catholic would attempt to defend the practice. But again, they simply do the practice but deny it is worship.

Catholics get mad when you point out they are worshipping the Mary and the saints when they pray to them. When a child stands in the middle of a room and puts his hand over his eyes and says, "you can't see me", that doesn't mean they are invisible, except in the mind of the child. Roman Catholics put their hands over their eyes and say, "We do no worship idols and we do not consider praying to Mary and act of worship". Saying so doesn't make it so. Roman Catholic apologists who harshly criticize protestants who accuse them of worshipping idols and Mary need to take a close look in the mirror and be honest with reality. At the very least, they could tone down their ranting against protestants "misrepresenting Catholic faith" with a bit of self-reflection and a good history lesson.

Historical note: The Pope deleted the 2nd of the 10 commandments so they could use statues & images in worship. They split the 10th commandment on coveting into two commandments so they could still have 10 in number. Don't believe this? Look at the list of 10 commandments published by the Roman Catholic church! The issue here is not how the Ten Commandments are numbered, rather the issue is that most published lists of the 10 commandments do not include the words, "you shall not for yourself an idol". Open your Catholic Bible and look for yourself!

Question #1: Does the 2nd commandment approve of bowing down and kissing idols?

Answer: Exodus 20:4 (KJV) 4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

Baptism is Full Immersion in Water, not Sprinkling

FACT: The Catholic church baptizes babies by sprinkling a little water on them.

Historical note: Greek word for baptism literally means immersion. There are separate words in Greek for sprinkling, pouring and immersion. Only the Greek word for immersion is ever used for Baptism in the Bible. The first recorded case of sprinkling was in 257 AD to someone on a sick-bed. It was then an exception to the rule and brought about fierce opposition from the whole church. Not until 757 AD did the church accept sprinkling in such sick-bed cases of necessity. It wasn't until 1311 AD, when the Catholic council of Ravenna, declared that sprinkling was an acceptable substitute for immersion and from that time forward sprinkling replaced immersion in the Roman Catholic church. The Orthodox church refused sprinkling and still immerses to this day.

Question #1: Was Jesus baptized by full immersion in the Jordan River?

Answer: Matthew 3:16 (KJV) 16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

Question #2: When Philip baptized the Eunuch, did both of them go into the water?

Answer: Acts 8:38-39 (KJV) 38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. 39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

Question #3: Can babies be baptized since they do not first believe?

Answer: Mark 16:16 (KJV) 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Acts 8:36-37 (KJV) 36 And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? 37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Question #4: Can babies be baptized since they do not first repent?

Answer: Acts 2:38 (KJV) 38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Every Christian can Understand the Bible by Merely Reading it

FACT: Catholics are taught that only the priests can understand the Bible and the common man in the pew cannot understand the Bible without the priests help.

Question #1: Do the scriptures say that when anyone reads the Bible, they can understand for themselves?

Answer: Ephesians 3:4 (KJV) 4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)

Human Tradition and Man-made Doctrine is Apostasy

FACT: The Pope teaches that he can change what is in the Bible if he wants.

Question #1: Did Jesus say it was OK for man to change what the word of God teaches for man-made Catholic doctrine?

Answer: Mark 7:7-9 (KJV) 7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. 8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. 9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

Credit: Steve Rudd in Bible.ca/catholic-doctrine

Two Other Errors: Purgatory and Indulgences

Before we conclude, let us examine two more unbiblical and extremely dangerous doctrine of the Roman Catholicism: Purgatory and indulgences These two doctrines combine to essentially give people a false hope concerning their eternal destinations.

Purgatory

According to Wikipedia, "In Roman Catholic theology, Purgatory (Latin: Purgatorium, via Anglo-Norman and Old French) is an intermediate state after physical death in which some of those ultimately destined for heaven must first "undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven," holding that "certain offenses can be forgiven in this age, but certain others in the age to come." And that entrance into Heaven requires the "remission before God of the temporal punishment due to [venial] sins whose guilt has already been forgiven," for which indulgences may be given which remove "either part or all the temporal punishment due to sin," such as an "unhealthy attachment" to sin. Only those who die in the state of grace but have not yet fulfilled the temporal punishment due to their sin can be in Purgatory, and therefore no one in Purgatory will remain forever in that state nor go to hell.

What the Bible Teaches on Fate of the Dead

In the holy scriptures, those living have opportunity to hear the gospel, repent of their sins and live righteously by grace until the date of death or the rapture. This story by Yeshua makes the case clear:

Luke 16:19-31 (KJV) 19 *There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: 20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked*

his sores. 22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. 25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. 26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. 27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: 28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. 29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. 30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. 31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

Mortal life therefore is an opportunity to determine where one will spend eternity! Those who die in Yeshua have hope while those who reject him while alive seal their fates at death!

John 3:16-19 (KJV) *16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

Hebrews 9:27-28 (KJV) *27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: 28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*

Indulgences

The Catholic doctrine of Purgatory is the direct cause of the practice of selling indulgences. Wikipedia explains the concept in this way: In the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, an indulgence is "a way to reduce the amount of punishment one has to undergo for sins". It may reduce the temporal punishment after death, in the state or process of purification called Purgatory. The Catechism of the Catholic Church describes an indulgence as "a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains under certain prescribed conditions through the action of the Church which, as the minister of redemption, dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints".

The recipient of an indulgence must perform an action to receive it. This is most often the saying (once, or many times) of a specified prayer, but may also include the visiting of a particular place, or the performance of specific good works. Indulgences were introduced to allow for the remission of the severe penances of the early Church and granted at the intercession of Christians awaiting martyrdom or at least imprisoned for the faith. They draw on the Treasury of Merit accumulated by Christ's superabundantly meritorious sacrifice on the cross and the virtues and penances of the saints. They are

granted for specific good works and prayers in proportion to the devotion with which those good works are performed or prayers recited.

In other words, the concept of indulgence encouraged people to remain in their assumed 'venal/minor sins' and use works and money to buy their way out of purgatory and therefore escape hell! Some Religious leaders, in the desire to expand revenue of the church added the fantastic offer that people could buy indulgence for their deceased friends and family!

The dangers that these erroneous and clearly unbiblical beliefs had on people can only be imagined. Centuries of teaching doctrines which contradict clear provisions of scripture has caused many to remain in a state of religion and works which weary the flesh but produces no inward transformation and readiness for eternity!

Protestants, especially Pentecostals must also beware that 'Seed sowing' is taking the form of 'indulgence as many remain in sin but feel smug because they 'sow' into a popular minister or ministry and regard the branded gift items they receive as 'evidence' of divine acceptance! In the same way, the doctrine of eternal security and the hyper Grace movement preached so glibly and out of scriptural balance are leading many onto the broad way of Hell by making Christians live carelessly, unmindful of the reality that sin cannot be excused as Hebrews 6:1-8 and Hebrews 10:28-31 say.

Review Questions

1. Please discuss any 3 of the doctrinal errors of Rome which you consider most significant.

Chapter 47

Pillars of Roman Catholicism Part 4 The Dark Ages

Roman Catholic Church of the Middle

We will utilize materials from a file compiled by the Research Team of the Global Advanced Mentorship Program led by Apostle Eva Powell Grant and comprising Minister Mary Alice Gooch and Minister Dionne Maxwell. Minister Mary Alice Gooch located this excellent and comprehensive work attributed to Dr. Jack Arnol. Some of the things we will learn from him have been covered in previous lessons. However, he brings some fresh insight and depth that is evidently necessary for our full understanding of what many are convinced is 'Mystery Babylon'! In any case, our brother Paul was used of Holy Spirit to espouse the principle that repeating of truth leads to safety for the hearers!

Philippians 3:1 (KJV) 1 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE MIDDLE AGES:

Reformation Men and Theology, Lesson 1 of 11 by Dr. Jack L. Arnol

From 590 to 1517, the Roman Church dominated the western world. The Roman Catholic Church controlled religion, philosophy, morals, politics, art and education. This was the dark ages for true Christianity. The vital doctrines of Biblical Christianity had almost disappeared, and with the neglect of true doctrine came the passing of life and light that constitutes the worship of the One True God as declared in Christ. The Roman Catholic Church was theologically sick and its theology led to atrocious corruptions. It was spiritually exhausted, enfeebled and almost lifeless. Rome had seriously departed from the teaching of the Bible and was engrossed in real heresy.

There can be no appreciation for the Reformation until one sees the great spiritual need of the western world in the 16th century. No Christian, Roman Catholic, Protestant or Independent can gloss over the period of history from 590 to 1517. This period is a "black spot" to all who name the name of Christ, but it is Christian history. This was the beginning of the heretical teachings some which continue today.

ROME'S THEOLOGY BEFORE THE REFORMATION

1. Infallibility of the Pope. While this was not an officially declared dogma of the Roman Church (it became official dogma in 1870), it was an assumed fact. As early as 590, Gregory the Great called himself "the servant of servants," believing that he was supreme among all bishops. Another pope, Hildebrand or Gregory VII (11th century), held that, as vicar of Christ and representative of Peter, he could give or take empires. Everyone from the lowest peasant to the highest ruler was to recognize him as Christ's representative on earth and supreme ruler over all religious and political matters. Another pope (14th century) Boniface VII, said,

"We declare, state, define and pronounce that for every human creature to be subject to the Roman pope is altogether necessary for salvation" (Caper, The Church in History).

2. Salvation in the Roman Church Only. Rome taught that all who did not acknowledge the pope as God's representative on earth and the Roman Catholic Church as the only true church were damned. Salvation was confined within the teachings of the Roman Church. Every person who disagreed with the Roman Church was in line for a heresy trial and perhaps excommunication. Excommunication meant the loss of one's soul.

3. Salvation by Works. By the 14th century, Augustinian theology was lost or badly neglected. Rome had accepted almost in totality the freewill teaching of Pelagius (5th century) that it had formerly repudiated. Salvation was not caused by God's grace through a supernatural new birth, but by assent to Roman Catholic dogma and practice. Faith was not trust in Christ for salvation, but submission to the church. Salvation was not by grace through faith in Christ alone, but by faith in the church and good works prescribed by the church. Practically speaking, "good works" consisted of mere external obedience to the church, and did not necessarily flow from a life of faith in Christ. The Roman Catholic Church stressed external actions, legal observance and penitential works. Man, actually gained heaven by his works.

4. Complete Sanctification. Rome taught sinless perfectionism. They confused justification and sanctification, teaching that men were justified by God's work in their own hearts and experience. Justification became subjective rather than objective. God was said to infuse grace and transform the sinful nature. By this transforming change within him, the believer was said to be made just in God's sight. As the Christian received more grace, he was said to become less sinful and therefore more just in God's sight.

"Rome held out to men the possibility of becoming pure and sinless saints (ontological perfection), and those who attained this perfection reached sainthood and were qualified to enter heaven at the hour of death. Those who did not become perfect and absolutely sinless in the flesh would need to go to purgatory after death and thus be made completely just and qualified to enter heaven" ("The Great Issues of the Reformation," Present Truth).

5. Worshiping of Saints. The more a person practiced external works, the more saint like he became and the closer he came to heaven. Some men, who were good enough to be called saints, lived lives advanced in holiness beyond what was required of them. They were made saints by the church. Many of these saints were worshiped by the Roman Catholic Church and became mediators between God and man.

"When Pelagianism laid down the doctrine that man could attain a state of perfect sanctification, it affirmed also that the merits of saints and martyrs might be applied to the Church. A peculiar power was attributed to their intercession. Prayers were made to them; their aid was invoked in all the sorrows of

life; and a real idolatry thus supplanted the adoration of the living and true God" (J. H. Merle D'aubigne, History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century, 1848).

6. Exaltation of the Clergy. The doctrine of sinless perfectionism strengthened the position of the Roman hierarchy. The clergy were thought to be more holy than the average people. Being more holy, they were special channels of the grace of God. Thus, the clergy had the authority from God to dispense God's grace.

"Salvation, taken from the hands of God, fell into those of the priests, who set themselves in the place of our Lord. Souls thirsting for pardon were no more to look to heaven, but to the Church, and above all to its pretended head. To these blinded souls the Roman pontiff was God. Hence the greatness of the popes - hence unutterable abuses" (D'aubigne).

ROME'S PRACTICE

7. System of Penance. From a "works" theology flowed the idea of penance. Men had to do certain external acts to prove the reality of their faith. At first penance consisted of certain public expressions of repentance for people involved in scandal, but it was soon extended to every sin, even to the most secret. Penance was considered as sort of a punishment to which it was necessary to submit to obtain the forgiveness of God through the priest's absolution. Instead of looking to Christ alone for forgiveness, it was sought in the church principally through penitential works.

"Great importance was soon attached to external marks of repentance --to tears, fasting, and mortification of the flesh; and inward regeneration of the heart, which alone constitutes a real conversion, was forgotten.

"As confession and penance are easier than the extirpation of sin and the abandonment of vice, many ceased contending against the lusts of the flesh, and preferred gratifying them at the expense of a few mortifications.

"The penitential works, thus substituted for the salvation of God, were multiplied in the Church from Tertullian down to the thirteenth century. Men were required to fast, to go barefoot, to wear no linen, etc.; to quit their homes and their native land for distant countries; or to renounce the world and embrace a monastic life.

"In the eleventh century, voluntary flagellations were super added to these practices; somewhat later they become quite a mania in Italy, which was then in a very disturbed state. Nobles and peasants, old and young, even children of five years of age, whose only covering was a cloth tied round the middle, went in pairs, by hundreds, thousands, and tens of thousands, through the towns and villages, visiting the churches in the depth of winter. Armed with scourges, they flogged each other without pity, and the streets resounded with cries and groans that drew tears from all who heard them" (D'aubigne).

8. System of Indulgences. Indulgences were a system of exchange whereby the priests employed their special rapport with God to perform certain religious acts for laymen. For a price, Clergy would pray, fast

and read scripture for a person. In other words, priestly services were bought. This was later developed into buying up time one might have to spend in purgatory.

"Incest, if not detected, was to cost five groats; and six, if it was known. There was a stated price for murder, infanticide, adultery, perjury, burglary, etc. 前 disgrace of Rome!' exclaims Claude d'Espence, a Roman divine: and we may add, O disgrace of human nature! for we can utter no reproach against Rome that does not recoil on man himself. Rome is human nature exalted in some of its worst propensities" (D'aubigne).

9. System of Confession. Since the clergy through the church were dispensers of God's grace, they also had the authority to forgive sins. Private confession was abandoned for auricular confession to the priest.

ROME'S SCANDALS

10. Immorality of the Clergy. Celibacy for clergy became Roman Church law in 1079. This mandate tempted all kinds of immorality. The abodes of the clergy were often dens of corruption. It was a common sight to see priests frequenting the taverns, gambling, and having orgies with quarrels and blasphemy. Many of the clergy kept mistresses, and convents became houses of ill fame. In many places, the people were delighted at seeing a priest keep a mistress, that the married women might be safe from his seductions.

"In many places, the priest paid the bishop a regular tax for the women with whom he lived, and for each child he had by her. A German bishop said publicly one day, at a great entertainment, that in one year eleven thousand priests had presented themselves before him for that purpose. It is Erasmus who relates this" (D'aubigne).

11. Immorality of the People. Morality declined with the decline of faith. Take away supernatural salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone and you take away sanctification and good works. Indulgences were looked upon by the common man as a license to sin, for men could buy their forgiveness.

12. Ignorance of Clergy. Many of the clergy had come to their offices through political maneuvering. In a country parish one person called the clergy "miserable wretches . . . previously raised from beggary, and who had been cooks, musicians, huntsmen, stable boys and even worse." Clergy no longer had to learn and teach the Scriptures, for the church told them what to do. Even the superior clergymen were sunk in great ignorance in spiritual matters. They had secular learning, but knew very little of the Bible.

A bishop of Dunfeld congratulated himself on having never learnt either Greek or Hebrew. The monks asserted that all heresies arose from those two languages, and particularly from the Greek. The New Testament,' said one of them, is a book full of serpents and thorns. Greek,' continued he, is a new and recently invented language, and we must be upon our guard against it. As for Hebrew, my dear brethren, it is certain that all who learn it immediately become Jews.'

"Even the faculty of theology at Paris scrupled not to declare to the parliament: Religion is ruined, if you permit the study of Greek and Hebrew" (D'aubigne).

13. Inquisition. This organization was designed to inquire into the spread of heresy and to call before its tribunal Catholics suspected of heresy with a view to securing their repentance. The accused were sometimes tortured and even put to death. The Inquisition was a disgrace to men who call themselves followers of God. (Please see additional text after #.16)

14. The Papal Schism. From 1378-1417 there were three simultaneous popes, each claiming to be the true pope: Urban VII, an Italian; Clement VII, a Frenchman; and a third pope elected by the Council of Pisa. For several years there were three popes anathematizing and excommunicating one another.

15. The Practice of Simony. Simony was the sinful practice of giving or obtaining an appointment to a church office for money. This was a common practice in the Middle Ages, even in the obtaining of the office of pope.

16. Relics. Rome, playing on the ignorance of people, held all kinds of relics in veneration.

"In the church of All Saints at Wittenberg was shown a fragment of Noah's ark, some soot from the furnace of the Three Children, a piece of wood from the cradle of Jesus Christ, some hair from the beard of St. Christopher, and nineteenth.

The inquisition was the way to make those who were not Roman Catholics convert if they did not the easy way. Again, terrible things were used to dissuade, particularly Hebrew believers and true believers in YESHUA, to become Catholics. One of the inventions for this was the rack where one was stretched until either chose to convert or die. Many were burnt at the stake. It is not surprising to understand why there is a gigantic gulf between Hebrew people converting to believing in the MESSIAH. There were many put in a church then the doors locked shut and then set on fire. While the Hebrew people were dying, the so-called Christians were singing "Onward Christian Soldiers" and other hymns. Who would think that this was a loving GOD after hearing these things happening?

Even today some of these Dark/Middle age beliefs are still practiced by the Roman Catholic Church.

(1) ESCAPING the GREAT DECEPTION, Derek Frank and Francoise Frank. Roaring Lion Publications 2014

To understand the extent of these deviations in dogma, doctrine and practices from the Holy Scriptures is to understand the spiritual atmosphere which necessitated the Reformation championed by Martin Luther in 1517.

The Dark Ages or Middle Ages lasted for nearly a thousand years (by Mary Alice Gooch). The Roman Empire went from being the greatest civilization to being over taken by barbarians and godless people. The population went from being relatively comfortable to poor, under someone's foot, and a horrific view of a loving God to Someone who was a tyrant like in the real world. The population merely existed and had no life of their own. Greed was dominant of the kings, princes and land owners. There was seemingly no "light" in the lives of most people of type. Their lives were made harder working for someone else or being taken advantage of by someone who had wealth who wanted more and more

production or money. There were Barbarians, who invaded countries and causing death and destruction of large portions of a town or area. People lived in great fear of having invaders of their towns.

The greatest problem during this time was the Catholic Church has taken over the religious thinking. The monks and priests were the only ones who knew who ELOHIM/FATHER, YESHUA/SON and maybe about RUACH HAKODESH/HOLY SPIRIT was. The people were not able to read the Scriptures or know about a personal relationship with a GOD who loved them. He was a GOD of fear, punishment, and total hopelessness. The Loving ABBA that we know as our FATHER was portrayed as a vengeful, judgmental GOD. There was no hope of spending eternity in heaven. Women were called witches and severely tortured and died in the agonizing ways. All someone would have to do is accuse another woman of some little thing she had done and it was a sure sign of her being a witch. She was then made to endure many horrible devices used to make her repent or die from the torment. Men were dragged to death or torn in half or spent years in a prison cell with little or nothing to eat and suffering. Many of the accusers were a member of the clergy who "could do no wrong." and were in the pocket of the rich land owners.

There has always been a remnant of true believers, but during this time, only small groups of them. Most followed what people were told blindly and believing that what the clergy said was right from GOD. Salvation was worked out by outward things and not by believing in YESHUA's death on the cross and resurrection as the Perfect Sacrifice, setting them free from any consequence of sin. During the Dark Ages/Middle Ages, the Roman Catholic Church was the "only" religious practiced. There was no Salvation in YESHUA, but through works only.

Review Question

1. Please comment on at least 3 of the issues raised in this lesson concerning errors of Roman Catholicism during the period.

Reflection: The Bible says: Let those who think the stand, take heed lest they fall! It took one step (love of the world) for Rome to start the great journey away from Yeshua! What is it we are allowing in our lives today which will ultimately lead many away from Him? Just reflect on this and prayerfully ask the Father to uphold His remnant from the little leaven of even one error!

Chapter 48

The Holy Roman Empire

Consequences of the Union with the World

As stated in a previous lesson, Emperor Constantine the Great was the instrument through who the Christian Church was recognized, tolerated and blessed by the Roman Empire (via the Edict of Milan he co-authored with Emperor Licinius in 311 AD). His patronage was a major factor in transmutation of the larger wing of the Catholic (meaning Universal) Church into what increasingly became the Roman Catholic Church. The season between 306-337 AD when he reigned can be assumed as the period when the faithful remnant Church parted ways with what had increasingly become a tainted, worldly Religious Organization. In 380 AD Emperor Theodosius, I completed the process started by Constantine the Great. He established the Church as the Official Religion of the Roman Empire! The Church and the State were now one in a formal marriage of affections, aspirations and ideologies. The Church was the Religious face of Rome and the Empire was the bedrock of the Church.

This journey to embrace political power by all means had far reaching implications as stated in a previous lesson. Let us remind ourselves of specific scriptures which were flouted in the process of Rome becoming one with the Church. Whenever the Church abandons the Word for the world, the descent into a spiritual caricature is swift and often irreversible!

John 17:9-18 (KJV) *9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. 10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. 11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. 12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.*

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 (KJV) *14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*

1 John 2:15-17 (KJV) *15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the*

pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

James 4:4-5 (KJV) *4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. 5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?*

Once the poisoned chalice of political power was tasted, it became intoxicating. Partly because their insecurity and partly out of desire for pre-eminence, many Popes long after the era of Emperor Theodosius I desired the continuity of the union of Church and State. To this extent, the collapse of the Western Roman Empire in AD 476 created a void they needed to fill. They did not wait for God to do something as history revealed. The account of how Pope Leo crowned Frankish King Charlemagne as Holy Roman Emperor is a study in chicanery. Encyclopedia Britannica offers us a detailed glimpse into how and why the Holy Roman Empire emerged in Europe to recapture the lost glory:

Holy Roman Empire

Holy Roman Empire, German Heiliges Römisches Reich, Latin Sacrum Romanum Imperium, the varying complex of lands in western and central Europe ruled over first by Frankish and then by German kings for 10 centuries (800–1806). (For histories of the territories governed at various times by the empire, see France; Germany; Italy.)”

Origins of the Empire and sources of Imperial Ideas

There was no inherent reason why, after the fall of the Roman Empire in the West in 476 and the establishment there of Germanic kingdoms, there should ever again have been an empire, still less a Roman empire, in western Europe. The reason this took place is to be sought (1) in certain local events in Rome in the years and months immediately preceding Charlemagne’s coronation in 800, and (2) in certain long-standing tendencies that made this particular solution of a difficult situation thinkable. These long-standing tendencies are to be regarded as preconditions rather than causes of the coronation; they do not account for it, but without them it is difficult to imagine how it could have taken place. The first is the persistence, despite the fact that it was no longer a political reality west of Italy, of the idea of the universal and eternal Roman Empire. The importance of this tradition may easily be exaggerated. After the establishment of the Germanic kingdoms, kings such as Clovis in Gaul and Theodoric the Great in Italy were glad to accept Roman titles from the Byzantine emperor, who sought to maintain the formal unity of the Roman Empire by treating them as his vicars and lieutenants; but this was a short-lived expedient. By the 8th century any sense of belonging to the empire, by then confined to eastern Europe, had disappeared in the West.

Religious origins

Far more effective in the minds of the barbarian peoples of the West was the idea of the Imperium Christianum, or “Christian Empire,” which took shape after the conversion of Constantine the Great and the reconciliation between Christianity and the Roman Empire. Not only did the Christian church become a state church, including in its liturgy prayers for the empire and the emperor, but it also

brought the Roman Empire into the framework of Christian eschatology (doctrine of last things), as the last of the world monarchies whose end would mark the inception of the kingdom of God. Through Christian iconography and through the liturgy the church's view of the empire as a vehicle of God's will, for the Christianization of the world, became prevalent. It was expressed with peculiar force in the letters of Charlemagne's adviser Alcuin.

Apart from the persistence of the idea of a Christian Roman Empire, a third precondition for the establishment of an empire in the West was the existence of a candidate of sufficient power and standing in the person of the Frankish king. The Frankish kingdom expanded until it comprised most of western Europe, and it acquired the Lombard kingdom in northern Italy in 774. The importance of the ties forged by Charlemagne's immediate predecessors with the papacy are obvious. Though it is scarcely true that Charlemagne's accession to the empire was simply a consequence of this expansion, his outstanding position was evidently a precondition of his elevation to the imperial throne.

Coronation of Charlemagne as Emperor

By comparison with Adrian, Pope Leo III (795–816) was a man of inferior caliber. Where Adrian had tried to maintain independence by balancing the Byzantine emperor against the Frankish king, Leo from the first showed subservience to the latter. Both in Constantinople and in Rome the situation was unstable. In Constantinople, after troubles reaching back to 790, the empress Irene had her son Constantine VI blinded and deposed in 797 and took his place, the first woman to rule the empire in her own right. Her constitutional position was thus doubtful; Alcuin in the West, in 799, regarded the imperial throne as empty.

Meanwhile, in Rome the hostile nobility exploited the opportunity to attack Leo, who in 799 fled across the Alps to his protector, Charlemagne, at Paderborn. Though unfavorably impressed by the Pope, Charlemagne was persuaded by Alcuin to send him back to Rome with a commission, which adjudged the complaints against him false and arrested and deported his accusers. The situation, however, was still uncertain. In view of the plight of both pope and Byzantine emperor, "the whole salvation of the church of Christ" rested (so Alcuin wrote) in Charlemagne's hands, and in the autumn of 800 he set out for Rome "to restore the state of the church which was greatly disturbed."

On December 23 Leo solemnly purged himself of the charges against him. Two days later, on December 25, a large gathering assembled in St. Peter's, where the Pope was to consecrate Charlemagne's son as king. Suddenly, as Charlemagne rose from prayer, Leo placed a crown on his head and, while the assembled Romans acclaimed him as "Augustus and emperor," the Pope abased himself before Charlemagne, "adoring" him "after the manner of the emperors of old." It seems clear that this coronation was the work of the papacy, not of the Frankish king, who is said to have been surprised and angry at it. The immediate beneficiary of the coronation was the pope, whose position henceforth was secure. Charlemagne was left to face its momentous consequences and, particularly, to secure that recognition from Constantinople without which his title was legally invalid. This, according to the chronicler Theophanes, he sought to do by offering marriage to the empress Irene, hoping thus "to reunite east and west."

If so, a revolution in Constantinople and the deposition of Irene in 802 brought the plan to nothing. In any case, the coronation of Charlemagne was an extralegal, indeed an illegal and revolutionary, proceeding. The pope had no right to make him emperor. Nor did the coronation create a new western by the side of the existing eastern empire. A usurper in the eyes of the Byzantines, Charlemagne had not the least prospect of succeeding to the throne of the Caesars. The only imperial territories on which he laid hands were the duchy of Rome and the former exarchate. Otherwise he remained, as before, king of the Franks and of the Lombard.

In view of the fact that in 806 he made arrangements to divide his territories among his three sons, one may doubt whether Charlemagne's empire would have survived had not the two elder sons died before him, leaving the undivided inheritance in 814 to the third son, Louis I the Pious. Although the immediate context of the imperial coronation of 800 was limited, it had wider connotations. In the first place, the separation between East and West had become an accomplished fact in the political sphere; for, though the intention in 800 was not to divide the empire, this was the practical outcome. In 812, after unsuccessful war and wearisome negotiation, the Byzantine emperor Michael I recognized Charlemagne's imperial title. It was still a personal title, and Charlemagne was recognized merely as emperor, not as emperor of the Romans; in other words, the emperor in Constantinople maintained his claim to be the only true successor to the Roman Caesars.

Furthermore, the recognition was grudgingly given, and later, when Byzantium was stronger and the Carolingians weaker, Michael's successors refused to extend it automatically to Charlemagne's successors. Thus, the second consequence of the act of 800 was a rivalry with Constantinople, which remained an important factor in imperial history at least until 1204. In the third place, Charlemagne's coronation involved him and his successors ever more deeply in the ecumenical pretensions of the papacy. The relationship between the papacy and the Frankish rulers, close for nearly 50 years before 800, was intensified when the Roman see became the first metropolitan church of Charlemagne's dominions. Religious emperors and their ecclesiastical advisers would henceforward see as the main function attaching to their imperial dignity the promotion of Christian unity. Furthermore, the fact that the pope had crowned Charlemagne emperor—rightfully or not—could not but impress. It was the pope who had taken the initiative. Had he not, in fact, constituted Charlemagne emperor?

In Innocent III's time it was to be argued that Pope Leo III had transferred the empire from the Greeks to the Germans and that his successors could transfer it elsewhere if they so wished. This was a later doctrine; but already to Charlemagne the dangers were evident. Hence when, in 813 after his agreement with Michael I, Charlemagne decided to associate his surviving son, Louis, in the exercise of imperial power, he framed his actions accordingly. The ceremony took place not in Rome but in the imperial chapel at Aachen; the pope was not present; the constitutive act was the acclamation of the gathered Frankish nobility; and Louis either received the diadem from his father or took it with his own hands from the altar. The contrast with the Roman ceremony of 800 was deliberate. Henceforward the conflict between the two contrary views or theories of the empire—the papal and the Frankish—was to be a dominant theme.

Empire and Papacy

From the middle of the 11th century the situation began to change. One cause was the rapid progress of European economic recovery, which brought shifts of power detrimental to Germany. More immediately important was the revival of the papacy, which the emperors had done so much to further. After Henry III's death in 1056 the initiative passed into papal hands. It was favored by the long minority—until 1065—of Henry IV (crowned 1084; died 1106), which enabled the papacy to act without fear of intervention from north of the Alps, and by the appearance of allies—particularly the Normans of the Kingdom of Sicily, who for their own purposes supported the papacy against the empire.

As they reached maturity the peoples of Europe turned to the pope as leader of Christendom. Even within the imperial frontiers the emperor's power meant more to the Germans than to the inhabitants of Burgundy or of Italy, for whom it betokened subjection to German rule. Furthermore, only Otto III—and he for less than four years—made Rome the seat of empire; all the rest, from Charlemagne onward, concentrated their efforts north of the Alps. In practice, therefore, the empire was a very imperfect realization of the ideal of an imperium Christianum; and as soon as it was in a position to vindicate its independence, the papacy found many adherents.

Please Note: To dine with the Devil, it is said, one needs a long spoon! While the Roman Catholic Church enjoyed the security of the Empire and its benefice in several ways, it also opened itself to marital abuse. As we saw in a previous paragraph, it was reported that pope Leo III groveled before Charlemagne after crowning him Holy Roman Emperor and regarded him as 'protector'. Worse was to come on the Church. One of them was the 'Investiture controversy'. Let us see how Encyclopaedia Britannica describes that unfortunate saga:

The Investiture Controversy

Under Pope Gregory VII (1073–85) the papal theory of the empire, as formulated in the 9th century, was revived, but on broader and firmer foundations. The result was the conflict, from 1076 until 1122, known as the Investiture Controversy, ostensibly centering on the question of whether lay overlords had the authority to "invest" bishops and abbots within their domains—that is, to appoint them and formally give them the symbols of their office. The real issue, however, was not the investiture of bishoprics and abbeys but the place of the emperor in Christian society and his relations with the papacy. Only the pope, Gregory VII asserted, might use the imperial insignia; he might lawfully depose emperors but should himself be judged by none (these lapidary statements are among the 27 included in the *Dictatus papae* of 1075 and were set down in Gregory's register). Thus, the claim to independence turned rapidly into a claim to superiority. In particular, the sacred character of the emperor was challenged, as was his claim to be responsible directly to God.

Instead, based on the Donation of Constantine (Note: later found to be a forgery) and a papal interpretation of the coronation of 800, it was argued that it was for the pope to convey the imperial dignity and, if he thought fit, to withhold or withdraw it. The Investiture Controversy was ended by compromise in the Concordat of Worms of 1122 between Pope Calixtus II and the emperor Henry V; but Gregory VII's claims were taken up again by popes Alexander III, Innocent III, Innocent IV, and Boniface VIII, in a series of conflicts that shook the empire to its foundations." The situation whereby Emperors,

Kings and Nobles played major roles in affairs of the Church continued in various forms. It was a factor the Roman Catholic Church relied on in the attempts to shut down the Reformation championed by Martin Luther in the 16th century as we shall see in a subsequent lesson. The Father wants to arm us with understanding of how His Word intersects with History so that we can be better Ambassadors of His Kingdom with His Holy Spirit that dwells in us!

Review Question

1. What is your main take away from this chapter?

Chapter 49

Mystery Babylon - Part 1

Root Issues

It is fitting we end this section with an understanding of the scriptural description of the Roman Catholic Church. This is based on the revelation granted John the beloved about AD 95. In effect, nearly 300 years before the Roman Catholic church system emerged in 380/381 AD as a dominant entity in the earth realm, it pleased Elohim to reveal to the true remnant Church, an accurate description of an alternate church system which would confuse people about the way to Him. This alternate church system would offer them a false sense of security based on religion and external works rather than a relationship with Him based on the finished work of Yeshua on the Cross. Elohim was doing what He does best concerning unveiling the future for His Own to be empowered to escape snares of the enemy.

Amos 3:7 (KJV) *7 Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.*

John 8:32 (KJV) *32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

Because of the strategic nature of this topic, we will not rush through but rather do a systematic examination of the mass of truth presented in the Bible concerning the subject matter. Let us acknowledge here there are many authoritative preachers and teachers who have other views of the subject matter. Let us also share the truth that most teachings on eschatology tend to be subjective, rather than objective. What we will do in this teaching is to release what Holy Spirit revealed through the Holy Scriptures rightly divided by His leading.

The Holy Scriptures Tells us of Three Babylons

#.1. Physical Babylon inspired by Nimrod.

It was the city inspired by Nimrod who is described as a mighty hunter before the Lord. Proper examination of that phrase reveals he was a man who hunted after souls of humans to control them away from the Divine purpose so they serve him rather than Elohim. This probably accounts for why he was the first to break loose from the portion of territory assigned to him to conquer other peoples and cities. In other words, Nimrod was the first empire builder in the bible!

Genesis 10:8-10 (KJV) *8 And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. 9 He was a mighty hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. 10 And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.*

In Genesis 11, we see the account of the Tower of Babel.

Genesis 11:1-9 (KJV) *1 And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. 2 And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. 3 And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. 4 And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us*

make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. 5 And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. 6 And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. 7 Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. 8 So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. 9 Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

It is important to note, Religion played a vital role in that project. In its purest form, Religion is any way of life or system of doing things which takes people away from the divine purpose and His Kingdom pattern. Building the Tower of Babel was clearly based on a rebellion against the command of Elohim given in Genesis 1:28 to increase, multiply, and fill the earth in that they reversed it to build upwards to heaven.

Genesis 1:26-28 (KJV) *26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*

The same thing is happening in the end times, when the Church abandons mission and the global outlook of the gospel in Matthew 28:28-30 and Acts 1:8 and people rather build personal religious empires of exalted human preachers who gather crowds around themselves and their 'anointing'. The second thing we note is builders of the Tower of Babel wanted to challenge Elohim and, so to say, poke Him in the eye. He created humans to take care of the earth realm on His behalf as regents. They decided instead of being on the earth realm, they would rather create a pathway to heaven – the Tower – and challenge His authority with their united purpose.

Genesis 2:15 (KJV) *15 And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.*

Psalms 115:16 (KJV) *16 The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men.*

In the same way, Yeshua prayed to the Father not to take His Own out of the earth realm but to preserve them for their assignments within it.

John 17:15-16 (KJV) *15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*

It is in that regard, Yeshua released Holy Spirit to empower saints to occupy the earth realm on His behalf as Ambassadors of the Kingdom until His return.

Luke 19:11-13 (KJV) *11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. 12 He said therefore, A*

certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. 13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

Acts 1:8 (KJV) *8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

The spirit which inspires humans to reverse the order of Elohim and challenge His Omnipotence, Omniscience, and Omnipresence which was unleashed in that incident at Babel; has continued to plague the world till this day. We also see the response of Elohim was to confuse them! Till today, Elohim is in the business of confusing those who come to Him with pre-determined, rebellious agendas.

Psalms 18:25-26 (KJV) *25 With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright; 26 With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward.*

Romans 1:21-22, 28 (KJV) *21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools*

28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

The point is this: When speaking of Mystery Babylon, it is self-deceptive to think Elohim was warning about just a religious organization! We need to understand Elohim was warning about organized falsehood and tendency to build and present for His approval, anything tainted with the leaven of Babylon. 'Protestants', from the days of Martin Luther till today who do not have this broad understanding of Babylon as a system based on principles of rebellion will fall into trap of the enemy! To denounce Rome as many 'Protestants' do and yet do some of the things it does including its priesthood pattern and exaltation of clergy as 'owners' of the people is to walk in deception.

Romans 2:21-23 (KJV) *21 Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? 22 Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? 23 Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?*

#.2. Physical Babylon Nebuchadnezzar Built

The grandeur and splendor of the city provided an occasion for sin of pride in Nebuchadnezzar against Elohim. Pride entered his heart at the beauty and greatness of works of his hands and he boasted openly. Judgement followed and Nebuchadnezzar became as it were a companion of animals for a season of time

Daniel 4:29-33 (KJV) *29 At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. 30 The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? 31 While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. 32 And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. 33 The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven*

from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.

#.3. Spiritual Babylon: Principle of Assimilation

Mixing Kingdom principles and worldly ones to produce a syncretism themed outcome. Babylon was the symbol of two significant atrocities. One was the reality that it was from it the armies of Nebuchadnezzar marched on Jerusalem, took the Covenant people captive, and carried them to itself, just as Prophet Jeremiah had declared. But, Babylon did not treat them as second-class citizens who deserved to be housed in Ghettos from where they would come into the city to work as slaves (the Egyptian model). Rather, Babylon introduced a brand-new form of captivity called Assimilation! In this form, the children of Israel were given Chaldean names, offered their food, allowed to participate in their educational system and rise through the ranks of society to any level possible, including the Presidency!

Daniel 1:1-7 (KJV) *1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. 2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god. 3 And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; 4 Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. 5 And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king. 6 Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: 7 Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names: for he gave unto Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abednego.*

Please take note in this passage the Babylonian empire required faithful cup and Armour bearers of the kings and emperors to be Eunuchs (made celibate) to function effectively! Though seemingly great in terms of 'success'/'progress', assimilation was dangerous in that by making the people to be fully integrated into Babylonian society and culture, the intention was to pollute them and make a mixture out of them! In other words, the spirit of re-configuring the order of Elohim and compromising their identity with a worldly culture was a very Babylonian thing! This principle, now widely accepted as normal and desirable by the 'Mountains movement' of the present dispensation essentially repudiates 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 1 John 2:12-15 and James 4:4-5.

Babylon spoke of corruption and idolatry! Let us not forget it was the smuggling of a Babylonian material by Achan and his cohorts which caused Israel to lose the divine presence and thus were defeated by the tiny City State of Ai.

Joshua 7:21 (KJV) *21 When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.*

The judgement Elohim pronounced on Babylon matched their sin of trying to corrupt His holy people:

Isaiah 13:19-20 (KJV) 19 And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. 20 It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.

In the contemporary era, it is noteworthy that despite an in-exhaustive treasury filled with oil money, the various attempts of Saddam Hussein of Iraq to rebuild Babylon came to nought. In relation to the Kingdom, Babylon represents all the things wrong with Religion: Disobedience, rebellion, mixture and self-will packaged as a way of living and serving Elohim! When He desired Moses to build Him a sanctuary, Elohim pointedly directed the structure should be constructed to the exact specifications unveiled on the Mount:

Exodus 25:8-9 (KJV) 8 And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. 9 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.

To Elohim, obedience is better than sacrifice! To therefore live or do ministry any way one 'thinks', 'feels' or 'wants' is to be part of Mystery Babylon! It is not enough to rail at the Great whore herself when whoredom (worldliness) is the defining feature of a 'Protestant' ministry. Let us learn from the failed mandate of king Saul the son of Cish:

1 Samuel 15:1-3 (KJV) 1 Samuel also said unto Saul, The Lord sent me to anoint thee to be king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the Lord. 2 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. 3 Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass

1 Samuel 15:7-11 (KJV) 7 And Saul smote the Amalekites from Havilah until thou comest to Shur, that is over against Egypt. 8 And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. 9 But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly. 10 Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel, saying, 11 It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the Lord all night

1 Samuel 15:18-23 (KJV) 18 And the Lord sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed. 19 Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord? 20 And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. 21 But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal. 22 And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. 23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

May the Father touch our hearts to be radically inclined in the heart to obey Him and keep the simple, uncomplicated pattern of the Gospel of Yeshua and the Kingdom! May we be diligent to receive His Grace and revelation of any leaven which needs to be identified, rejected, renounced, and rooted out so we can stand pure in heart, mind, attitudes, and service in His Kingdom! He demands no less!

Review Questions

1. Please mention the various types of Babylon in this lesson
2. Please describe the one you consider very significant.

Chapter 50

Mystery Babylon - Part 2

#.3. Mystery Babylon – A specific Religion and the Religious system which leads people away from Elohim

About the year 95 AD, John the beloved was given the Revelation. Part of it dealt with the state of the Church in that era, the warnings and commendations of Yeshua (Revelations 1-3). Part dealt with events which would occur in the earth realm leading to end of the age. Part also revealed how the end would come and components thereof (Return of the Lord; Millennial Reign and Endless eternity).

Revelation 1:19 (KJV) *19 Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;*

Of the various types and symbols in the 22- chapter Book, substantial space was devoted in various passages and chapters to what is described as Mystery Babylon. This entity/system is portrayed as a woman, mother, prostitute/whore who would seduce Kings and Princes of the world and basically control them away from the Divine Purpose. A careful consideration of the various passages reveals an overarching reality: this entity would take hearts of people away from true worship of Elohim and replace it with a substitute unacceptable to Him

Code name for a city of significant prophetic importance

We will examine all the passages and trust Holy Spirit to give us comprehensive understanding of what is clearly labelled a 'Mystery' system or entity. Let us bear in mind that the Roman Empire was ruling the world at this time and had actually banished John to the Isle of Patmos. In the face of a very terrible foe, the disciples of that generation could not have forgotten the words of Yeshua:

Matthew 10:16 (KJV) *16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.*

One way they applied wisdom was to use code names for describing the capital of the empire, the City of Rome and its imperial government. No wonder Peter, when writing to saints, referred to Rome - where he was on missionary assignment - as 'Babylon':

1 Peter 5:13 (KJV) *13 The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son.*

What was showed John was also what was showed to Daniel about 700 years before!

The Lord was showing John how the Roman Empire was going to affect the world, not with force of arms which had already happened but in a new way. Of that way, we find the clue in Daniel Chapter 2 where the Roman Empire was described as the Legs (not Leg) of Iron! Daniel was also showed how the Roman dispensation would mark beginning of the end times and symbolically infuse the next empire or last

generation before Yeshua returns (an inferior one that is weak as Clay) with some of its strong properties (Iron):

Daniel 2:33-36 (KJV) *33 His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. 34 Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. 35 Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. 36 This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king*

Daniel 2:40-43 (KJV) *40 And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. 41 And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. 42 And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. 43 And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.*

In other words, the Revelation given to John was to enable the saints to understand that a system was going to be in the earth realm in which Rome – leading power of the day - would play a dominant part in bringing onto existence. That system would seduce nobles and peoples of nations world-wide away from the pure worship of Elohim. It would remain dominant until Elohim determined that the fullness of time was up to take it out! Rome was to mark the beginning of the end for those who had ears to hear! As 2 Peter 3:8 states, Elohim does not count time the way we do.

To gain deeper understanding of identity of this entity, a Profile of Mystery Babylon is provided in Revelation 17. Elohim does not leave His remnant in suspense when it comes to critical revelation of issues of life and death. However, as Yeshua explained in Matthew 13 when speaking of Parables, there are some revelations which are deliberately shrouded in mystery so that religious minded people and scoffers cannot understanding their import while the elect are given deeper insight because their hearts are ready and open to receive truth. Let us engage in a systematic construction of the profile of Mystery Babylon as Holy Spirit will give us insight:

Revelation 17:1-2 (KJV) *1 And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: 2 With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.*

Commentary:

1. This entity is referred to as the 'Great Whore'. Whore means Prostitute. A prostitute is a woman who uses her body to make money through sexual activities with people she is not in a personal relationship with.

In the Old Testament, Israel was portrayed as a whore/prostitute and unfaithful wife who abandoned Yahweh to committed adultery with Gentile nations. In the New Covenant, the Church is pictured as a

Woman, the Bride of Yeshua. (Ephesians 5:22- 33 and 2 Corinthians 11:2). In other words, John was being shown a vision where a major part of the Church of Yeshua would be seduced out of fidelity to Him to embrace kings of the world and become its recognized religion! In this regard, the apostate church system would be the 'in-thing' of the powers that be in the earth realm. The backslidden Church would make the earth drunk with religiosity that has no solid relationship with Him!

2 Timothy 3:5 (KJV) *5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.*

2. It would sit upon many waters' means it would impact and affect multitudes of peoples of many nationalities world-wide. Today, Christendom with almost 2.5 billion adherents is prevalent religion of most of the peoples of the earth. There is no nation without a 'Christian' population. Of these, Roman Catholicism alone has over 1.2 billion adherents. Unfortunately, a great deal of those who 'go to church' are simply members of an organized Religious system which is exclusive to itself and may not necessarily have a living, on-going relationship with Elohim in Yeshua.

Through types and symbols, John was receiving a Prophecy of the rise of a religious system which would look like it is of Yeshua but intrinsically opposed to Him and His redemptive mission to re-instate the Kingdom Adam and Eve lost. This interpretation is confirmed by James 4:4-5 and 1 John 2:15-17. Several times, the Lord has impressed on our hearts that though Roman Catholicism fits the bill of the types and symbols in the Book of Revelation, it would be a self-inflicted deception to think that it is all about Rome! Accordingly, our understanding needs to be broadened to include ALL religious systems – including various shades of Protestantism – which manifest the DNA of Rome in any form! This is a safe thing to do.

Revelation 17:3 (KJV) *3 So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.*

Commentary: Let us take note of these specific details in verse 3:

3. The woman sat upon a Scarlet Colored Beast. In the immediate, this spoke of how the Church and the Roman Empire of the day would become partners. In the long term towards end of the age, it would cover all systems of Religion (including Protestant and other non-Christian Religions) that combine with governments to offer people a mixture which deceives them to believe they are in favor with Elohim whereas they are not.

Two potential interpretations need to be considered in determining whether it was the woman or the beast that was described as 'full of the names of blasphemy'; having 7 heads and 10 horns.

3.1 The scarlet colored beast: The Roman Empire through their Emperors took on names that were blasphemous. Some Caesars regarded themselves to be gods and sought adoration from their subjects. In trying to stamp out the true gospel of Yeshua and the Kingdom, a popular bait was to ask people to engage in Emperor deification and renunciation of Yeshua, Jesus. Many Christians, including Bishops and Priests, succumbed to the torture and did so, committing blasphemy.

In his epistle to the Romans, Paul also decried situations where people worshipped the creation more than the Creator, Elohim:

Romans 1:18-25 (KJV) *18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; 19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. 20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: 21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, 23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. 24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: 25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.*

The City of Rome itself had 7 heads or hills which surrounded her. 10 horns could refer to the various Kingdoms which would arise as its offshoots to dominate world consciousness until Yeshua returns. On the other hand, the names full of Blasphemy with 7 heads and 10 horns could refer to the Church which was in bed with Rome. This interpretation is supported by these realities: Some of the titles of Roman Catholic Popes are out rightly blasphemous. Here is how Yeshua addressed Yahweh while in His Incarnate state:

John 17:11 (KJV) *11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.*

It smacks of blasphemy for Popes to be addressed as 'Holy Father'

In the Book of Matthew, Yeshua discouraged saints from looking at and calling fellow humans 'Father' for the simple reason that He came to reveal the Ultimate Father to them and did not want any saint to see him or herself as unworthy of a personal relationship:

Matthew 23:9 (KJV) *9 And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.*

Of all titles, the Roman Church would give its priests at Parish level none was as blasphemous as that of Reverend Father! This does not mean there would be no father figures in the Body. From the time of the Alpha Church until Yeshua returns, there will always be people whose assignment is to be father figures of younger saints. However, their biblical role would be to nurture the younger to grow by pointing them consistently and persistently to the Father, just as Paul demonstrated towards Timothy!

4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:

Commentary: Let us take note of these specific details:

Purple and Scarlet are the preferred colors of the woman. To understand significance of these two colors, let us quote from a work by Irving Baxter: "There are two ruling bodies in the Roman Catholic Church: The College of Cardinals and the College of Bishops and Archbishops. These two bodies are

somewhat like the Senate and the House of Representatives here in the US. An article appeared in The Criterion, a Roman Catholic publication, July 1, 1988. The article was entitled, "More than You Want to Know About Cardinals." It stated, "Cardinals wear red, while non-Cardinal Bishops and Archbishops wear purple."

Decked with gold and precious stones and pearls. This speaks of the great wealth accumulated by organized religion. Roman Catholic Church itself, as the chief of all religions is rated as one of the richest entities on earth. The golden cup in the hands of the woman was full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. This may refer to celebration of errors, heresies and apostasies which are done with pomp and pageantry, beguiling unstable minds.

5 And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon The Great, The Mother Of Harlots And Abominations Of The Earth.

The Names given to the woman are very significant. Let us break them down: 'Mystery': it refers to the true identity of the church which is shrouded. In other words, many would connect and be part of it without realizing what they were involved with. Whereas knowledge of Truth sets people free, the darkness of organized ignorance in the Roman Catholic religion makes people perpetually bound in chasing after an elusive pathway to peace with Elohim found in endless rituals and works that weary the flesh. 'Babylon the great': The Roman Catholic system would achieve what Babylon of Old was a mere shadow was of. This has been proved true with over 1.2 billion adherents spread across the world. 'Mother of Harlots': This phrase has two potential applications. The first is that it is engaged in an extensive level of prostitution with the world system on a scale never witnessed before. Speaking of this, the headquarters of the Roman Church, the Holy See is situated in the Vatican which was granted Sovereign status by the Lateran Treaty of 1929. From that day, the tiny piece of real estate – estimated to besquare kilometers became a State within the Italian State. It has diplomatic relations with nations with the Pope as a Head of State with full diplomatic immunity. Paying a courtesy call on the Pope is the dream of multitudes of Heads of State world-wide. A visit by the Pope is also regarded as a privilege by nations of the earth.

'Mother of Harlots' also has another potentially powerful meaning: the DNA of Rome which is false religious concepts which give people a false sense of security would be replicated in several of its children in the Protestant movement! Today, a look at the way Pentecostalism, Evangelicalism, Word of Faith movement, the Mega Church movement and several branches of Protestantism glory in non-issues and make people to feel contented with sin bears this interpretation out. Mother of 'Abominations of the earth'. This speaks of Roman Catholicism as the root of Christendom which makes people members of religious organizations and satisfied with their identification with human leaders even when they do not have vibrant personal relationship with Elohim. Religious activities which do not transform hearts of people from sinner to saint; which do not lead to renewal of minds and enthronement of Yeshua as Sovereign King and where Holy Spirit is not given right of way to lead is regarded as Abomination in the sight of Elohim.

6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.

Commentary:

Drunken with the Blood of Saints and with the Blood of Martyrs: Starting with Yeshua and his 12 disciples, stretching on to the Alpha church period, Rome as an empire was drunk with the blood of the righteous. Emperors Nero to Diocletian were all remarkable for the great persecutions they launched to stamp out the gospel. Unfortunately, the schemes backfired and the Church grew bigger and stronger.

When Rome 'married' the Church, the peace of the graveyard followed. Those who accepted the compromise had no problems. But the remnant who were faithful to Yeshua and lived in holiness became the object of intense persecution and cruel deaths ordered by various Popes, Bishops and Priests. Some did this directly while others simply used the Civic authorities to carry out the torture and execution of true saints. In order not to offend sensibilities of the Church of Rome, Christian leaders are silent on the reality that the past 500 years since the Protestant Reformation has also been one in which many true saints were killed for no other reason than that they believed the Truth and chose not to compromise with Sin and the world.

5.2 'Wondered with great admiration': This does not mean that John admired the ways of the woman. It simply means that John marvelled or wondered at what he saw.

7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. 9 And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.10 And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.11 And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.12 And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

Commentary: Let us break this passage down:

6.1. The woman is a mystery. She is shrouded to the degree that only those to whom the Father grants revelation shall know and understand what she really is. Till today, multitudes – both Roman Catholics, other Christians and followers of various religions have no clue that it represents a system designed to take away from people the need for a personal relationship with Elohim! The reality that it is a church system set up to reject the finished work of the Cross represented by the first fruit of saving grace received freely by Faith is not known by many.

6.2. The Beast that carried her is her husband, the Roman Empire. Rome was at this point described as having 7 heads and 10 horns. There is further description in verse 10 that 5 of the 7 kings had fallen; one

remained on the throne and another was yet to come (to rise at a future date). Heads speak of leadership – various sub rulers who would arise from the same Roman root. Evidently, there were world rulers who were to trace their roots back to the Roman Empire yet to come onto the world scene at the time this prophecy was given.

6.3. The Beast ascended out of the Bottomless pit and goes into perdition! The entire religious system with its rituals and dogma were unleashed from hell to draw many away from the Salvation freely offered by Elohim in Yeshua! Alberto Rivera, an ex-Jesuit priest claimed that a Cardinal Beau told them in the Vatican during their induction into the Order of a great secret: The Roman Catholic Church played a strategic role in creation of Islam. The plan was to use the Arabs and their religion to capture Jerusalem for the Pope and deal with bible believing Christians

6.4. Those who will be trapped in this kind of religious deception and remain there until end of the age are those whose names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life! In other words, such people will accept deception because they embrace perdition.

6.5. Note that in verse 9 it gives us a clue about the Beast on which the woman sits: A City with 7 hills. That is true of Rome, known world-wide as the City of 7 hills!

6.6. The 10 horns in verse 12 speak of future kings who had not yet risen in the days of John but who would all reign for a short tenure (figuratively described as one hour) with the Beast (spirit of Rome).

13 These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

Commentary

7.1. Verse 13 makes it clear that all the future kings rising out of the Roman Empire would give their power and strength to the Beast. It means those offshoots of Rome will dedicate their thrones to the purposes of Satan and the evil system he spawned in the earth realm.

7.2. Verse 14 speaks of what will happen at end of the age with the Battle of Armageddon described more fully in Revelation chapter 19: world governments and religious systems whose roots are in the old Roman Empire will conspire to fight Yeshua and his saints triumphant when they will return from heaven to fulfil Psalms 2 by vanquishing all rebellion in the earth realm. Yeshua and his remnant who were Called, Chosen and Faithful will be victorious, establish and rule the earth realm for a thousand years. This is the restored manifest Kingdom when the earth realm will witness how life would have been like if Adam and Eve had not lost it to the Devil!

15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.16 And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.17 For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the

beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.¹⁸ And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

Commentary:

8.1. Verse 15 reminds us that the apostate Church will rule over multitude of people of various races, ethnicities and language groups. That is how 1.2 billion people are involved in Roman Catholicism alone. Protestants probably account for perhaps as much as 800 million others who are engaged in diverse forms of Religiosity without personal relationship with Elohim. When you add to this the billions of others in various religions whose common denominator is rejection of the Salvation offered in Yeshua, Jesus, the scope of the tragedy becomes more pronounced.

8.2. Verse 16 and 17 reveals at end of the day, the world system represented by the 10 horns will team up to destroy the apostate church system

8.3. Verse 18 re-emphasizes the reality that the Roman Catholic Church rules the world system indirectly.

Let us stand in intercession for souls of people who are trapped unawares or intentionally in religious systems which do not lead to relationship with Elohim! Let us also be diligent to reject all the leaven of Babylon which may want to latch onto our lives or patterns of ministry.

Review Questions

1. Please share at least 3 significant things you learnt from this lesson

Chapter 51

Mystery Babylon – Part 3

The system of religion which is inherently opposed to the divine plan of redemption is evidently a danger to souls of humans as the previous two chapters reveal. When you add to it the reality that Mystery Babylon offers humanity an alternate 'kingdom' (via the security, wealth, and high standing offered by union with governments), the implication is clear: An anti-Christ spirit is at work! A recap of the profile of Mystery Babylon which proves that it is the outcome of union of the Roman Empire and the larger wing of the compromising Church which tired of persecution and martyrdom: The Roman Catholic Church. In Lesson 51, these specific aspects of the profile of Mystery Babylon were outlined:

1. It is a Mystery: Something shrouded. It can only be understood by those appointed to salvation. The second half of its name is Babylon which speaks of a religious system that is inherently opposed to the purpose of Elohim and therefore in rebellion.
2. It is called a woman and a whore/prostitute. The implications are clear: Just as Israel went into whoredom/prostitution when it abandoned the Torah and sought to be like the Gentile nations around her, so is the Church system which strays outside His Word to make herself attractive to and married to the world system.
3. Mystery Babylon sits on a scarlet colored beast. This means it is headquartered in a great City with 7 Hills. This is true of the City of Rome, one of the oldest continuous cities in the world which was, according to legend founded by Romulus in 753 BC. (See Revelation 17:3, 9,18)
4. It is global in reach, incorporating a sea of humanity of all races, tribes, tongues and socio-economic status (Revelation 17:1, 15). As at the time the book of Revelation was written, the Roman Empire presided over affairs of kings and kingdoms throughout the then known world. It was also here that its successor, the Holy Roman Empire was based after crowing of Charlemagne as Holy Roman Emperor by pope Leo. It was also here that its current successor, the European Union was conceived. Rome has been headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church with over 1.2 billion adherents.
5. It has preferred colors: Purple and Red (Scarlet) (Revelation 17:4).
6. It is also called the Mother of Harlots in Revelation 17:5. We saw in Lesson 50 that the DNA of Rome infused the Protestant Movement to the degree that Evangelicals, Pentecostals, Charismatic, Independents, Full Gospel, and Mega Church movement manifest varying strands of Roman Catholic principles and patterns of ministry. It is the presence of this kind of leaven which will make Pastors to screen movies of questionable spirituality inside their sanctuaries or invite congregants to tune into TV stations owned by New Age personalities, just to promote their egos. The long-term effects of potentially exposing them to satanic concepts do not bother such 'owners of the sheep'!

7. A careful consideration of Revelation chapter 18 shows that Mystery Babylon could not have been a physical Kingdom nor a pure Commercial enterprise. Its identity as a Religious entity which embraced and worked with the world system is as clear as crystal. In essence, this entity has been an integral part of Western Civilization!

If what Alberto Rivera, an ex-Jesuit priest said he was told at the Vatican when being inducted into the Order is true, Roman Catholic Church played a significant part in the rise of Islam as an instrument it hoped would recapture Jerusalem from the Jews for the Pope and annihilate Bible believing Christians who refused to fellowship with Rome. Only the Roman Catholic Church fits the profile constructed of Mystery Babylon in the Book of Revelations. Those who propound the concept that it is Islam and Mecca are largely out of sync with the whole counsel of the Holy Scriptures. Apart from a brief period of the Ottoman Empire when Islam ruled parts of Europe and Jerusalem, Islam has been largely an Arab/Oriental Religion which has been seen as opposite to western values.

Like everything created outside the divine purpose of Elohim, Mystery Babylon is dated: Just as it had a start time, it will also have an expiration date. This will be discussed in lesson 51. For this reason, Elohim wants His faithful remnant to 'come out of her'. This speaks not only of not been physical members thereof. It also speaks of intense examination of what we do and teach/preach to ensure that even the tiniest strand of error or falsehood of Babylonian leaven is identified, repented of and rooted out. In lesson 51 we will examine closely, other prophetic scriptures concerning this strange religious organization which looks like it is of Yeshua, Jesus but inherently opposed to Him.

#.1. Mystery Babylon will produce the False Prophet who will validate the Anti-Christ!

Many biblical scholars tend to mix up issues concerning the anti-Christ. The simple truth of the Word is however clear: Two distinct personalities will arise in the earth realm in the last days. One will be a Political leader while the other will be a religious leader. Let us examine both personalities to see how the union of Church and State is relevant to understanding of the mystery of iniquity which will prevail in the last days. Revelation 13:1-13 speaks of the Anti-Christ who would be a Political leader to rise at end of the age. He will be a son of perdition with a lying tongue and cunning spirit. He will orchestrate a false peace in the earth realm which possibly includes solving the Mother of all conflicts: The Israel-Palestinian/Arab crises. When that 'Peace' is negotiated, the remnant must understand it to be a sign that both the rapture of saints (when the Faithful Remnant will be taken out of the way according to 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 and 1 Corinthians 15:50-58) as well as Great Tribulation (when careless saints who lived like the Foolish Virgins; Unbelievers and Israel/Hebrews will suffer untold hardship) are at hand!

1 Thessalonians 5:1-3 (KJV) *1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. 2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. 3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.*

2 Thessalonians 2:3-12 (KJV) *3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 Who opposeth and exalteth*

himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. 5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? 6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. 7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. 8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: 9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

It is this personality who will commit the abomination which makes desolate (2 Thessalonians 2: 4) This is the day he will appear in the Third Temple that is about to be rebuilt in Jerusalem and proclaim himself to be the Elohim of Israel. That is the day the Hebrews and all Israel will come to terms with the reality that the person who had been packaged as their great friend and protector is the person Daniel prophesied about in Daniel 9:27 and who Yeshua warned about in Matthew 24:15. Their rebellion is what will stir the fury of the now unveiled anti-Christ to unleash his fury at them. That is how the Great Tribulation will start.

The union of Church and State will come to its zenith at this time. For the anti-Christ who is a political leader to execute his nefarious assignment, he would have to first be accepted as a 'God-sent' by human beings on earth. This reality necessitates an endorsement from the world acclaimed Religious leader who presides over Mystery Babylon. That leader is referred to as the 'False Prophet'. In other words, while he would be generally perceived as a representative of Yeshua, in reality he would not be. It is the False Prophet who would, for instance, recommend use of mark of the Beast as a way of ensuring all humans are subject to and controlled by the anti-Christ! He would do all these things described in Revelation 13 because the Church (he leads) and the world (led by the anti-Christ) are one and have always been since the time of Emperor Constantine the great and Theodosius 1! This will be the conclusion of the two intertwined destinies!

Revelation 13:11 (KJV) *11 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.*

Commentary: The False Prophet had two horns like a Lamb but spoke as a Dragon! Lamb speaks of the meekness and sacrifice associated with Yeshua. Dragon is the imagery associated with Satan in the book of Revelation chapters 12; 13; 16 and 20. That the leader of Mystery Babylon would wear these two opposite hats speaks of the spirit of deception which had covered the identity of his office throughout the ages.

Revelation 13:12-15 (KJV) *12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. 13 And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, 14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. 15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.*

Commentary: The miracle working power of the leader of Mystery Babylon at end of the age would be spectacular. He would be able to make fire to come out of heaven and make an image (photograph, painting or drawing) of the anti-Christ to have life and speak in plain sight of all humans watching on TV, Cable, Satellite and Social Media. Careless Protestants and non-Christian people of other religions will be attracted by the 'mighty miracles' to the do his bidding: worship image of the Beast! As Yeshua prophesied in Matthew 24: 24 only the very elect will be preserved from his deception.

This is one of the reasons why the Scriptures warned about the Utilitarian gospel whose chief tools are use of pseudo 'miracles, signs and wonders' and ostensibly accurate words of 'prophecy' to deceive many into religious exertions devoid of holy living and lasting relationship with the Father.

Revelation 13:16-18 (KJV) *16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: 17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. 18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.*

This great human religious leader the world would look upon and accept as a personal representative of Yeshua, Jesus and the Kingdom would be the very person who would leverage his assumed 'great moral stature' to lead Christians and humanity to embrace the anti-Christ and submit to his false system of global governance: take Mark of the Beast or his name or number. Talk of a wolf in sheep skin! Those who are deceived into accepting Mark of the Beast, His Name or Number would have secured eternal damnation to themselves!

Revelation 14:6-11 (KJV) *6 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, 7 Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. 8 And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. 9 And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, 10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: 11 And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.*

Those who have ears need to hear and proactively reject all things which are Babylonian – including the tiniest of issues! The time to do so is now, not tomorrow!

#.2. A Day is coming in which Mystery Babylon would be finally judged

The point is this: Everything which has a beginning has an ending! The Lord has been warning His saints to get out of religious systems which are polluted with the leaven of Babylon. The Lord knows that because of the way Babylonian churchianity controls the mind and heart of seekers/worshippers away from His will and kingdom pattern, the only place of safety at end of the age is to get out of her. When

the Seventh Angel sounded, physical destruction of this same Babylon, described as a great City happened:

Revelation 16:17-20 (KJV) *17 And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. 18 And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. 19 And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. 20 And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.*

Let us now zoom in to the next chapter which reveals the ultimate end of Mystery Babylon and destruction of its physical headquarters.

Revelation 18:1-3 (KJV) *1 And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. 2 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. 3 For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.*

Commentary: This is the 'Criminal Indictment' of the Babylonian Religious system as unsealed by the angel on assignment.⁴ 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.⁵ For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.⁶ Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.

Commentary: The Lord will cause the tables to turn against Babylon in due course of time! At the appointed time, it will be the turn of the remnant who suffered greatly at the hands of Mystery Babylon to see her judgement! In other not to be partakers of her judgement, the Lord is asking His True Church to 'come out of her'! As variously noted in this and preceding lessons, it is not just about not been a Roman Catholic! The aspects of DNA of Rome which has been manifesting in various strands of the Protestant Movement since 1517 are not acceptable to Elohim Who wants the True Church of Yeshua to be Pure and uncorrupted. The Priesthood pattern of Babylon (Nimrodic and modified Levitical first epitomized by the Nicolaitanes) must be rejected in all its forms! The tendency to build religious organizations/corporations with stiff hierarchies and set up to promote human founders or make money for them cannot pass the fire of Elohim. The tendency to use marketing gimmicks developed by the world to package and sell the anointing for consumers for a fee are all part of the leaven of Babylon we will discuss in detail in another lesson.

1 Corinthians 5:6-8 (KJV) *6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? 7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

Revelation 18:7 (KJV) *7 How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.*

Commentary: The spirit which drove Babylonian churchianity will be made evident in due season. Nothing is new under the sun. Here is what Yeshua said of the spirit driving the Church at Laodicea almost 1,900 years ago to leave the narrow way:

Revelation 3:15-17 (KJV) *15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. 16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. 17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:*

Revelation 18:8-10 (KJV) *8 Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. 9 And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, 10 Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.*

Commentary: The kings of the earth who were in bed with this evil religious system will bemoan her demise. Death, mourning and famine will precede utter destruction of Mystery Babylon with fire after Elohim judges her.

11 And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: 12 The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, 13 And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. 14 And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. 15 The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, 16 And saying, Alas, alas that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! 17 For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, 18 And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! 19 And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.

Commentary: The merchants of the earth realm also bemoaned the demise of their trading partner, Mystery Babylon represented by the City of 7 hills from which it exercised religious power over the nations. It was a religious power seeped in Commerce, just like the money changers who defiled the Temple in the days of Yeshua.

20 Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

Commentary: The true remnant will be invited to celebrate the demise of Mystery Babylon who tormented and has been responsible for gruesome martyrdom of many for more than 1700 years since Constantine.

21 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. 22 And the voice of harpers, and

musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; 23 And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.

Commentary: The destruction of Mystery Babylon will be conclusive! It will include its physical headquarters where abominations are committed daily in the name of worship and prayers.

24 And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

Commentary: Elohim holds Mystery Babylon responsible for the blood of saints spilled on planet earth since the days of union of Church and State!

Review Questions

1. Please share your 3-main take away from this lesson.
2. What new thing did you learn from the lesson?

Chapter 52

The Protestant Reformation Martin Luther

General Introduction

It is one of the greatest scandals that the average believer does not have a good understanding of Martin Luther, his life and works. In the rush to 'make it' and succeed, many whose spiritual roots are connected to the Protestant Reformation often tend to live as if it does not matter to know where the Church is coming from. When this is combined with the reality that for many, there is not much consideration of where the Church is going to, the tragic emptiness of Utilitarian theologies (in which Elohim exists to provide for needs of His people) is glaring. In this section, we will examine both the life and works of Martin Luther with the detachment of students of history. The beautiful thing about history is it gives us a fuller picture of the past: The good, bad and ugly so we can be better equipped to escape snares of the enemy. Those who do not understand the Past cannot learn from it neither can they be adequately equipped to apprehend present Opportunities nor navigate the Future.

Profile of Martin Luther

The death of John marked the end of what many consider the Apostolic Age. Since then till date of all the personalities whose lives, beliefs, and priorities have impacted what is called Christianity for good and bad, no other approaches the extremely significant lives of two people. The first is Constantine the Great who orchestrated union of the Roman Empire and the larger wing of the Christian Church which eventually made it the Church of Rome. To him can be ascribed the transmutation of the Catholic (Universal) Church to be the Roman Catholic Church.

The second personality is Martin Luther of Germany who essentially challenged some of the excesses of Roman Catholicism, its traditions and dogma that were unspiritual. His efforts led to two broad outcomes:

1. Emergence of the Protestant Reformation generally which has potentially about 1 billion adherents and on a specific level.
2. Foundation of the Lutheran Church which today has about 60-70 million adherents and has been regarded as the Established Church of Germany.
3. The life and ministry of Martin Luther as a reformer illustrate the Biblical truth that one consecrated individual can make a difference!

Ezekiel 22:30 (KJV) *30 And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.*

Environmental Factors preceding birth of Martin Luther

In 380/381 AD, Roman Catholicism had become the official religion of the Roman Empire as a culmination of the work began by Emperor Constantine the Great in AD 313 when he and Emperor Licinius signed the Edict of Milan. By AD 476, the Western Roman Empire collapsed as an entity, sacked by Barbarian Tribes. In AD 800, Frankish king Charlemagne was crowned Emperor of a revived Holy Roman Empire, beginning a long succession of other Emperors including Charles V under whose reign the Protestant Reformation was launched. At that time, Roman Catholicism was basically the official religion of Europe. But several popes had created various doctrines, dogmas, and traditions of men which kept followers in a perpetual state of bondage through performance of endless rituals that never led to an encounter with Jesus or personal relationship with the heavenly Father. To worsen matters, the sale of Indulgences had been elevated into a money-making machinery to finance some of the building projects of the Roman Catholic Church. For this reason, the strange theory was developed that people could buy Indulgence for purpose of obtaining a shorter purification in Purgatory not just for themselves but also for dead relatives and friends. It was in this spiritually dark environment that Martin Luther was born on November 10, 1483.

Because of the great stature of this personality and relevance of his works to this course, we will devote this entire volume to study two profiles of him. One is from a secular perspective posted on the BBC website while the other is from a spiritual perspective posted on the website of Christianity Today. BBC.co.uk has the following to say of Martin Luther, leader of the Protestant Reformation:

“Luther was a German theologian whose writings inspired the Protestant Reformation. Martin Luther was born on 10 November 1483 in Eisleben. His father was a copper miner. Luther studied at the University of Erfurt and in 1505 decided to join a monastic order, becoming an Augustinian friar. He was ordained in 1507, began teaching at the University of Wittenberg and in 1512 was made a doctor of Theology. In 1510, he visited Rome on behalf of many Augustinian monasteries, and was appalled by the corruption he found there.

Luther became increasingly angry about the clergy selling 'indulgences' - promised remission from punishments for sin, either for someone still living or for one who had died and was believed to be in purgatory. On 31 October 1517, he published his '95 Theses', attacking papal abuses and the sale of indulgences.

Luther had come to believe that Christians are saved through faith and not through their own efforts. This turned him against many of the major teachings of the Catholic Church. In 1519 -1520, he wrote a series of pamphlets developing his ideas - 'On Christian Liberty', 'On the Freedom of a Christian Man', 'To the Christian Nobility' and 'On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church'. Thanks to the printing press, Luther's '95 Theses' and his other writings spread quickly through Europe.

In January 1521, the Pope Leo X excommunicated Luther. He was then summoned to appear at the Diet of Worms, an assembly of the Holy Roman Empire. He refused to recant and Emperor Charles V declared him an outlaw and a heretic. Luther went into hiding at Wartburg Castle. In 1522, he returned to Wittenberg and in 1525 married Katharina von Bora, a former nun, with whom he had six children.

Luther then became involved in the controversy surrounding the Peasants War (1524 - 1526), the leaders of which had used Luther's arguments to justify their revolt. He rejected their demands and upheld the right of the authorities to suppress the revolt, which lost him many supporters.

In 1534, Luther published a complete translation of the bible into German, underlining his belief that people should be able to read it in their own language. The translation contributed significantly to the spread and development of the German language.

Luther's influence spread across northern and eastern Europe and his fame made Wittenberg an intellectual centre. In his final years, he wrote polemics against the Jews, the papacy and the Anabaptists, a radical wing of the reforming movement. Luther died on 18 February 1546 in Eisleben (Martin Luther – by Christianity Today online).

"At last meditating day and night, by the mercy of God, I began to understand that the righteousness of God is that through which the righteous live by a gift of God, namely by faith. Here I felt as if I were entirely born again and had entered paradise itself through the gates that had been flung open."

In the sixteenth century, the world was divided about Martin Luther. One Catholic thought Martin Luther was a "demon in the appearance of a man." Another who first questioned Luther's theology later declared, "He alone is right!"

In our day, nearly 500 years hence, the verdict is nearly unanimous to the good. Both Catholics and Protestants affirm he was not only right about a great deal, but he changed the course of Western history for the better.

Thunderstorm conversion

Martin was born at Eisleben (about 120 miles southwest of modern Berlin) to Margaret and Hans Luder (as it was locally pronounced). He was raised in Mansfeld, where his father worked at the local copper mines. Hans sent Martin to Latin school and then, when Martin was only 13 years old, to the University of Erfurt to study law. There Martin earned both his baccalaureate and master's degrees in the shortest time allowed by university statutes. He proved so adept at public debates that he earned the nickname "The Philosopher." Then in 1505 his life took a dramatic turn. As the 21-year-old Luther fought his way through a severe thunderstorm on the road to Erfurt, a bolt of lightning struck the ground near him. "Help me, St. Anne!" Luther screamed. "I will become a monk!" The scrupulous Luther fulfilled his vow: he gave away all his possessions and entered the monastic life.

Spiritual breakthrough

Luther was extraordinarily successful as a monk. He plunged into prayer, fasting, and ascetic practices—going without sleep, enduring bone-chilling cold without a blanket, and flagellating himself. As he later commented, "If anyone could have earned heaven by the life of a monk, it was I." Though he sought by these means to love God fully, he found no consolation. He was increasingly terrified of the wrath of God: "When it is touched by this passing inundation of the eternal, the soul feels and drinks nothing but

eternal punishment." During his early years, whenever Luther read what would become the famous "Reformation text"—Romans 1:17—his eyes were drawn not to the word faith, but to the word righteous. Who, after all, could "live by faith" but those who were already righteous? The text was clear on the matter: "the righteous shall live by faith." Luther remarked, "I hated that word, 'the righteousness of God,' by which I had been taught according to the custom and use of all teachers ... [that] God is righteous and punishes the unrighteous sinner." The young Luther could not live by faith because he was not righteous—and he knew it.

Meanwhile, he was ordered to take his doctorate in the Bible and become a professor at Wittenberg University. During lectures on the Psalms (in 1513 and 1514) and a study of the Book of Romans, he began to see a way through his dilemma. "At last meditating day and night, by the mercy of God, I ... began to understand that the righteousness of God is that through which the righteous live by a gift of God, namely by faith... Here I felt as if I were entirely born again and had entered paradise itself through the gates that had been flung open." On the heels of this new understanding came others. To Luther the church was no longer the institution defined by apostolic succession; instead it was the community of those who had been given faith. Salvation came not by the sacraments as such but by faith. The idea that human beings had a spark of goodness (enough to seek out God) was not a foundation of theology but was taught only by "fools." Humility was no longer a virtue that earned grace but a necessary response to the gift of grace. Faith no longer consisted of assenting to the church's teachings but of trusting the promises of God and the merits of Christ. It wasn't long before the revolution in Luther's heart and mind played itself out in all of Europe.

"Here I stand"

It started on All Saints' Eve, 1517, when Luther publicly objected to the way preacher Johann Tetzel was selling indulgences. These were documents prepared by the church and bought by individuals either for themselves or on behalf of the dead that would release them from punishment due to their sins. As Tetzel preached, "Once the coin into the coffer clings, a soul from purgatory heavenward springs!" Luther questioned the church's trafficking in indulgences and called for a public debate of 95 theses he had written. Instead, his 95 Theses spread across Germany as a call to reform, and the issue quickly became not indulgences but the authority of the church: Did the pope have the right to issue indulgences? Events quickly accelerated. At a public debate in Leipzig in 1519, when Luther declared that "a simple layman armed with the Scriptures" was superior to both pope and councils without them, he was threatened with excommunication.

Luther replied to the threat with his three most important treatises: The Address to the Christian Nobility, The Babylonian Captivity of the Church, and On the Freedom of a Christian. In the first, he argued that all Christians were priests, and he urged rulers to take up the cause of church reform. In the second, he reduced the seven sacraments to two (baptism and the Lord's Supper). In the third, he told Christians they were free from the law (especially church laws) but bound in love to their neighbors. In 1521, he was called to an assembly at Worms, Germany, to appear before Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor. Luther arrived prepared for another debate; he quickly discovered it was a trial at which he was asked to recant his views. Luther replied, "Unless I can be instructed and convinced with evidence

from the Holy Scriptures or with open, clear, and distinct grounds of reasoning ... then I cannot and will not recant, because it is neither safe nor wise to act against conscience." Then he added, "Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me! Amen." By the time an imperial edict calling Luther "a convicted heretic" was issued, he had escaped to Wartburg Castle, where he hid for ten months.

Accomplishments of a sick man

In early spring of 1522, he was able to return to Wittenberg to lead, with the help of men like Philip Melancthon, the fledgling reform movement. Over the next years, Luther entered more disputes, many of which divided friends and enemies. When unrest resulted in the Peasants' War of 1524–1525, he condemned the peasants and exhorted the princes to crush the revolt. He married a runaway nun, Katharina von Bora, which scandalized many. (For Luther, the shock was waking up in the morning with "pigtales on the pillow next to me.") He mocked fellow reformers, especially Swiss reformer Ulrich Zwingli, and used vulgar language in doing so. In fact, the older he became, the more cantankerous he was. In his later years, he said some nasty things about, among others, Jews and popes and theological enemies, with words that are not fit to print.

Nonetheless, his lasting accomplishments also mounted: the translation of the Bible into German (which remains a literary and biblical hallmark); the writing of the hymn "A Mighty Fortress is Our God"; and publishing his Larger and Smaller Catechism, which have guided not just Lutherans but many others since. His later years were spent often in both illness and furious activity (in 1531, though he was sick for six months and suffered from exhaustion, he preached 180 sermons, wrote 15 tracts, worked on his Old Testament translation, and took many trips). But in 1546, he finally wore out.

Luther's legacy is immense and cannot be adequately summarized. Every Protestant Reformer—like Calvin, Zwingli, Knox, and Cranmer—and every Protestant stream—Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, and Anabaptist—were inspired by Luther in one way or another. On a larger canvas, his reform unleashed forces that ended the Middle Ages and ushered in the modern era. It has been said that in most libraries, books by and about Martin Luther occupy more shelves than those concerned with any other figure except Jesus of Nazareth. Though difficult to verify, one can understand why it is likely to be true.

Review Questions

1. Please share 5 things about Martin Luther you consider most remarkable in these two profiles.

Chapter 53

Background to the Ninety-Five Thesis

Explanatory Notes to the Ninety-Five Theses

The document now titled as the Ninety-Five Theses that Martin Luther posted at the door of All Saints Church on October 31, 1517 is of great significance to the entire Protestant Reformation. For this reason, it is profitable to examine the issues necessitating his thoughts and words. That is why we will rely on some materials from other sources to capture the spiritual mood of the era and some of the actions taken by this remarkable historical figure. Let us start with this material on the website of History.com

“The Ninety-Five Theses or Disputation on the Power of Indulgences (Latin: *Disputatio pro declaratione virtutis indulgentiarum*) are a list of propositions for an academic disputation written in 1517 by Martin Luther, professor of moral theology at the University of Wittenberg, Germany, that started the Protestant Reformation, a schism in the Catholic Church which profoundly changed Europe. They advance Luther's positions against what he saw as abusive practices by preachers selling plenary indulgences, which were certificates believed to reduce the temporal punishment for sins committed by the purchasers themselves or their loved ones in purgatory. In the Theses, Luther claimed that the repentance required by Christ for sins to be forgiven involves inner spiritual repentance rather than merely external sacramental confession. He argued that indulgences led Christians to avoid true repentance and sorrow for sin, believing that they can forgo it by purchasing an indulgence. They also, according to Luther, discourage Christians from giving to the poor and performing other acts of mercy, believing that indulgence certificates were more spiritually valuable.

Though Luther claimed his positions on indulgences accorded with those of the pope, the Theses challenge a fourteenth-century papal bull stating the pope could use the treasury of merit and the good deeds of past saints to forgive temporal punishment for sins. The Theses are framed as propositions to be argued in debate rather than necessarily representing Luther's opinions, but Luther later clarified his views in the Explanations of the Disputation Concerning the Value of Indulgences.

Luther sent the Theses enclosed with a letter to Albert of Brandenburg, the Archbishop of Mainz, on 31 October 1517, a date now considered the start of the Protestant Reformation and commemorated annually as Reformation Day. Luther may have also posted the Theses on the door of All Saints' Church and other churches in Wittenberg in accordance with University custom on 31 October or in mid-November. The Theses were quickly reprinted, translated, and distributed throughout Germany and Europe. They initiated a pamphlet war with indulgence preacher Johann Tetzel, which spread Luther's fame even further.

Luther's ecclesiastical superiors had him tried for heresy, which culminated in his excommunication in 1521. Though the Theses were the start of the Protestant Reformation, Luther did not consider indulgences to be as important as other theological matters which would divide the church, such as

justification by faith and the bondage of the will. His breakthrough on these issues would come later, and he did not see the writing of the Theses as the point at which his beliefs diverged from those of Rome.”

As we sought for deeper insight into the underlying issues surrounding the Reformation, we also found that Wiki-source, an associated online compendium to Wikipedia had an excellent document which deserves close study. It was a scholarly work which explained the background to the Ninety-Five Theses. The authors were part of the team which apparently translated the Ninety-Five Theses. We reproduce their work in full here. The credits are duly made at end of the presentation. These scholarly works of history, as we will find later validate the reality that the Reformation of 1517, though a great event, did not completely fulfil the purpose of Elohim.

"A Disputation on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences" is the full title of the document commonly called "The Ninety-Five Theses." The form of the document was determined by the academic practice of the Middle Ages. In all the Mediaeval Universities, the "disputation" was a well-established institution. It was a debate, conducted according to accepted rules, on any subject which the chief disputant might elect, and no student's education was thought to be complete until he had shown his ability to defend himself in discussions of this kind. It was customary to set forth the subject which was to be discussed, in a series of "theses," which were statements of opinion tentatively advanced as the basis of argument. The author, or some other person whom he might designate, announced himself ready to defend these statements against all comers, and invited all who might wish to debate with him to a part in the discussion. Such an academic document, one out of many hundreds, exhaling the atmosphere of the Mediaeval University, is the Disputation, which by its historical importance has earned the name "The XCV Theses."

The Theses were published on the Eve of All Saints (Oct. 31), 1517. They were not intended for any other public than that of the University, and Luther did not even have them printed at first, though copies were forwarded to the Archbishop of Mainz, and to Luther's own diocesan, the Bishop of Brandenburg. The manner of their publication too was academic. They were simply posted on the door of the Church of All Saints - called the "Castle-church," to distinguish it from its neighbor, the "Town-church" - not because more people would see them there than elsewhere, but because that church-door was the customary place for posting such announcements, the predecessor of the "black-board" in the modern German University. It was not night, but mid-day when the Theses were nailed up, and the Eve of All Saints was chosen, not that the crowds who would frequent the next day's festival might read them, for they were written in Latin, but because it was the customary day for the posting of theses. Moreover, the Feast of All Saints was the time when the precious relics, which earned the man who "adored" them, long years of indulgence, were exhibited to worshipers, and the approach of this high feast-day put the thought of indulgences uppermost in the minds of everybody in Wittenberg, including the author of the Theses.

But neither the Theses nor the results which followed them could be confined to Wittenberg. Contrary to Luther's expectation and to his great surprise, they circulated all through Germany with a rapidity that was startling. Within two months, before the end of 1517, three editions of the Latin text had been

printed, one at Wittenberg, one at Niirnberg, and one as far away as Basel, and copies of the Theses had been sent to Rome. Numerous editions, both Latin and German, quickly followed. Luther's cotemporaries saw in the publication of the Theses "the beginning of the Reformation," and the judgment of modern times has confirmed their verdict, but the Protestant of to-day, and especially the Protestant layman, is almost certain to be surprised, possibly deeply disappointed, at their contents. They are not "a trumpet-blast of reform"; that title must be reserved for the great works of 1520. The word "faith," destined to become the watchword of the Reformation, does not once occur in them; the validity of the Sacrament of Penance is not disputed; the right of the pope to forgive sins, especially in "reserved cases," is not denied; even the virtue of indulgences is admitted, within limits, and the question at issue is simply "What is that virtue?"

To read the Theses, therefore, with a fair degree of comprehension we must know something of the time that produced them, and we must bear two facts continually in mind. We must remember that at this time Luther was a devoted son of the Church and servant of the pope, perhaps not quite the "right frantic and raving papist" he afterwards called himself, but as yet entirely without suspicion of the extent to which he had inwardly diverged from the teachings of Roman theology. We must also remember that the Theses were no attempt at a searching examination of the whole structure and content of Roman teaching, but were directed against what Luther conceived to be merely abuses which had sprung up around a single group of doctrines centering in the Sacrament of Penance. He sincerely thought that the teaching of the Theses was in full agreement with the best traditions of the Church, and his surprise that they should have caused so much excitement is undoubtedly genuine and not feigned. He shows himself both hurt and astonished that he should be assailed as a heretic and schismatic, and "called by six hundred other names of ignominy." On the other hand, we are compelled to admit that from the outset Luther's opponents had grasped far more completely than he himself the true significance of his "purely academic protest."

2. Penance and Indulgence. The purpose of the disputation which Luther proposed to hold was to clear up the subject of the virtue of "indulgences," and the indulgences were the most striking and characteristic feature of the religious life of the Church in the last three Centuries of the Middle Ages. We meet them everywhere—indulgences for the adoration of relics, indulgences for worship at certain shrines, indulgences for pilgrimages here or there, indulgences for contributions to this or that special object of charity. Luther roundly charges the indulgence-vendors with teaching the people that the indulgences are a means to the remission of sins. What are these indulgences?

Their history is connected, on the one hand, with the history of the Sacrament of Penance, on the other with the history of the development of papal power. The Sacrament of Penance developed out of the administration of Church discipline. In the earliest days of the Church, the Christian who fell into sin was punished by exclusion from the communion of the Church. This excommunication was not, however, permanent, and the sinner could be restored to the privileges of Church-fellowship after he had confessed his sin, professed penitence, and performed certain penitential acts, chief among which were alms-giving, fasting and prayer, and, somewhat later, pilgrimage. These acts of penitence came to have the name of "satisfactions," and were a condition precedent to the reception of absolution. They varied in duration and severity, according to the enormity of the offence, and for the guidance of those who

administered the discipline of the Church, sets of rules were formulated by which the "satisfactions" or "penances" were imposed. These codes are the "Penitential Canons." The first step in the development of the indulgences may be found in the practice which gradually arose, of remitting some part of the enjoined "penances" on consideration of the performance of certain acts which could be regarded as meritorious.

The indulgences received a new form, however, and became a part of the regular Church administration, when the popes discovered the possibilities which lay in this institution for the advancement of their own power and the furtherance of their own interests. This discovery seems to date from the time of the Crusades. The crusading-indulgences, granted at first only to those who actually went to the Holy War, subsequently to those also who contributed to the expense of the expedition, were virtually the acceptance of this work as a substitute for any penance which the Church might otherwise require. As zeal for the Crusades began to wane, the indulgences were used more and more freely to stimulate lagging interest; their number was greatly increased, and those who purchased the indulgences with money far outnumbered those who actually took the Cross. Failing in their purpose as an incentive to enlistment in the crusading armies, they showed their value as a source of income, and from the beginning of the XIV Century the sale of indulgences became a regular business.

About the same time a new kind of indulgence arose to take the place of the now somewhat antiquated crusading-indulgence. This was the Jubilee-indulgence, and had its origin in the Jubilee of 1300. By the Bull *Antiquorum Habet Fide*, Boniface VIII granted to all who would visit the shrines of the Apostles in Rome during the year 1300 and during each succeeding centennial year, a plenary indulgence. Little by little it became the custom to increase the number of these Jubilee-indulgences. Once in a hundred years was not often enough for Christians to have a chance for plenary forgiveness, and at last, unwilling to deprive of the privileges of the Jubilee those who were kept away from Rome, the popes came to grant the same plenary indulgence to all who would make certain contributions to the papal treasury.

Meanwhile the Sacrament of Penance had become an integral part of the Roman sacramental system, and had replaced the earlier penitential discipline as the means by which the Church granted Christians forgiveness for sins committed after baptism. The scholastic theologians had busied themselves with the theory of this Sacrament. They distinguished between its "material," its "form" and its "effect." The "form" of the Sacrament was the absolution; its "effect," the forgiveness of sins; its "material," three acts of the penitent: "confession," "contrition," and "satisfaction." "Confession" must be by word of mouth, and must include all the sins which the sinner could remember to have committed; "contrition" must be sincere sorrow of the heart, and must include the purpose henceforth to avoid sin; "satisfaction" must be made by works prescribed by the priest who heard confession. In the administration of the Sacrament, however, the absolution preceded "satisfaction" instead of following it, as it had done in the discipline of the early Church. To justify this apparent inconsistency, the Doctors further distinguished between the "guilt" and the "penalty" of sin.

Sins were classified as "mortal" and "venial." Mortal sins for which the offender had not received absolution were punished eternally, while venial sins were those which merited only some smaller penalty; but when a mortal sin was confessed and absolution granted, the guilt of the sin was done

away, and with it the eternal penalty. And yet the absolution did not open the gate of heaven, though it closed the door of hell; the eternal penalty was not to be exacted, but there was a temporal penalty to be paid. The "satisfaction" was the temporal penalty, and if satisfaction was in arrears at death, the arrearage must be paid in purgatory, a place of punishment for mortal sins confessed and repented, but "unsatisfied," and for venial sins, which were not serious enough to bring eternal condemnation. The penalties of purgatory were "temporal," viz., they stopped somewhere this side of eternity, and their duration could be measured in days and years, though the number of the years might mount high into the thousands and tens of thousands.

It was at this point that the practice of indulgences united with the theory of the Sacrament of Penance. The indulgences had to do with the "satisfaction." They might be "partial," remitting only a portion of the penalties, measured by days or years of purgatory; or they might be "plenary," remitting all penalties due in this world or the next. In theory, however, no indulgence could remit the guilt or the eternal penalty of sin, and the purchaser of an indulgence was not only expected to confess and be absolved, but he was also supposed to be *corde contritus*, i. e., "truly penitent."

A rigid insistence on the fulfilment of these conditions would have greatly restricted the value of the indulgences as a means of gain, for the right to hear confession and grant absolution belonged to the parish-priests. Consequently, it became the custom to endow the indulgence-venders with extraordinary powers. They were given the authority to hear confession and grant absolution wherever they might be, and to absolve even from the sins which were normally "reserved" for the absolution of the higher Church authorities.

The demand for contrition was somewhat more difficult to meet. But here too there was a way out. Complete contrition included love to God as its motive, and the truly contrite man was not always easy to find; but some of the scholastic Doctors had discovered a substitute for contrition in what they called "attrition," viz., incomplete contrition, which might have fear for a motive, and which the Sacrament of Penance could transform into contrition. When, therefore, a man was afraid of hell or of purgatory, he could make his confession to the indulgence-seller or his agent, receive from him the absolution which gave his imperfect repentance the value of true contrition, released him from the guilt of sin, and changed its eternal penalty to a temporal penalty, then he could purchase the plenary indulgence, which remitted the temporal penalty, and so in one transaction, in which all the demands of the Church were formally met, he could become sure of heaven. Thus, the indulgence robbed the Sacrament of Penance of its ethical content.

Furthermore, indulgences were made available for souls already in purgatory. This kind of indulgence seems to have been granted for the first time in 1476. It had long been held that the prayers of the living availed to shorten the pains of the departed, and the institution of masses for the dead was of long standing; but it was not without some difficulty that the Popes succeeded in establishing their claim to power over purgatory. Their power over the souls of the living was not disputed. The "Power of the Keys" had been given to Peter and transmitted to his successors; the "Treasury of the Church," i. e., the merits of Christ and of the Saints, was believed to be at their disposal, and it was this treasury which

they employed in the granting of indulgences; but it seemed reasonable to suppose that their jurisdiction ended with death.

Accordingly, Pope Sixtus IV, in 1477, declared that the power of the Pope over purgatory, while genuine, was exercised only *per modum suffragii*, "by way of intercession." The distinction was thought dogmatically important, but to the layman, who looked more to results than to methods, the difference between intercession and jurisdiction was trifling. To him the important thing was that the Pope, whether by jurisdiction or intercession, could release the soul of a departed Christian from the penalties of purgatory. It is needless to say that these indulgences for the dead were eagerly purchased. In filial love and natural affection, the indulgence-vender had powerful allies.

3. The Indulgence of 1515. The XCV Theses were called forth by the preaching of the "Jubilee Indulgence" of 1510, which was not placed on sale in central Germany until 1515. The financial needs of the papacy were never greater than in the last years of the XV. and the first years of the XVI Century, and they were further increased by the resolve of Julius II. to erect a new church of St. Peter, which should surpass in magnificence all the churches of the world. The indulgence of 1510 was an extraordinary financial measure, the proceeds of which were to pay for the erection of the new Basilica, but when Julius died in 1513, the church was not completed, and the money had not been raised.

The double task was bequeathed to his successor, Leo X. On the 31st of March 1515, Leo proclaimed a plenary indulgence for the Archbishoprics of Magdeburg and Mainz, and appointed Albrecht, of Brandenburg, who was the incumbent of both sees and of the bishopric of Halberstadt as well, Commissioner for the sale of this indulgence. By a secret agreement, of which Luther was, of course, entirely ignorant, one-half of the proceeds was to be paid to the Fuggers of Augsburg on account of moneys advanced to the Archbishop for the payment of the fees to Rome, and of the sums demanded in consideration of a dispensation allowing him to occupy three sees at the same time; the other half of the proceeds was to go to the papal treasury to be applied to the building of the new church. The period during which the indulgence was to be on sale was eight years.

The actual work of organizing the "indulgence-campaign" was put into the hands of John Tetzel, whose large experience in the selling of indulgences fitted him excellently for the post of Sub-commissioner. The indulgence-sellers acted under the commission of the Archbishop and the directions of Tetzel, who took personal charge of the enterprise. The preachers went from city to city, and during the time that they were preaching the indulgence in any given place, all other preaching was required to cease. They held out the usual inducements to prospective buyers. The plenary nature of the indulgence was made especially prominent, and the people were eloquently exhorted that the purchase of indulgence-letters was better than all good works, that they were an insurance against the pains of hell and of purgatory, that they availed for all satisfactions, even in the case of the most heinous sins that could be conceived. "Confessional letters" were one of the forms of this indulgence. They gave their possessor permission to choose his own confessor, and entitled him to plenary remission once in his life, to absolution from sins normally reserved, etc. The indulgences for the dead were zealously proclaimed, and the duty of purchasing for departed souls release from the pains of purgatory was most urgently enjoined. So, great

was the power of the indulgence to alleviate the pains of purgatory, that the souls of the departed were said to pass into heaven the instant that the coins of the indulgence-buyer jingled in the money-box.

4. Luther's Protest. The Theses were Luther's protest against the manner in which this indulgence was preached, and against the false conception of the efficacy of indulgences which the people obtained from such preaching. They were not his first protest, however. In a sermon, preached July 27th, 1516, he had issued a warning against the false idea that a man who had bought an indulgence was sure of salvation, and had declared the assertion that souls could be bought out of purgatory to be "a piece of temerity." His warnings were repeated in other sermons, preached October 31st, 1516, and February 24th, 1517. The burden of these warnings is always the same: the indulgences lead men astray; they incite to fear of God's penalties and not to fear of sin; they encourage false hopes of salvation, and make light of the true condition of forgiveness, viz., sincere and genuine repentance.

These warnings are repeated in the Theses. The preaching of indulgences has concealed the true nature of repentance; the first thing to consider is what "our Lord and Master Jesus Christ means," when He says, "Repent." Without denying the pope's right to the power of the keys, Luther wishes to come into the clear about the extent of the pope's jurisdiction, which does not reach as far as purgatory. He believes that the pope has the right to remit "penalties," but these penalties are of the same sort as those which were imposed in the early Church as a condition precedent to the absolution; they are ecclesiastical penalties merely, and do not extend beyond the grave; the true penalty of sin is hatred of self, which continues until entrance into the kingdom of heaven.

The Theses are formulated with continual reference to the statements of the indulgence-preachers, and of the Instruction to the Commissaries issued under the name of the Archbishop of Mainz. For this reason, there is little logical sequence in the arrangement of the Theses, and none of the attempts to discover a plan or scheme underlying them has been successful. In a general way, it may be said that for the positive views of Luther on the subjects discussed, Theses 30–37 and 42–52 are the most vital, while Theses 92–95 are sufficient evidence of the motive which led Luther to make his protest.

5. Conclusion. The editors of this Translation present herewith a new translation of the Theses, together with three letters, which will help the reader to understand the mind of Luther at the time of their composition and his motive in preparing them. The first of these letters is that which was sent, with a copy of the Theses, to Albrecht of Mainz. The second and third are addressed respectively to Staupitz and Leo X., and were written to accompany the "Resolutions," an exhaustive explanation and defense of the Theses, published in 1518, after the controversy had become bitter.

6. Literature. – (a) Sources. The source material for the history of indulgences is naturally widely scattered. The most convenient collection is found in Koehler, *Dokumente zum Ablassstreit*, Tübingen, 1900. For the indulgences against which Luther protested, see, beside the Editions of Luther's Works, Kapp, *Schauplatz des Tetzelschen Ablass-Krams*, Leipzig, 1720; *Sammlung einiger zum päpstlichen Ablass gehörigen Schriften*, Leipzig, 1721; *Kleine Nachlese zur Erläuterung der Reformationsgeschichte*, Leipzig, 1730 and 1733; also Loescher, *Vollständige Reformationsacta*, I, Leipzig, 1720. (b) Secondary Works. Beside the general works in Church History and History of Doctrine, see the Lives of Luther, in German especially those of Köstlin-Kawerau, Kolde, Berger and Hausrath; in English those of Beard,

Jacobs, Lindsay, Smith and McGiffert; also Boehmer, Luther im Lichte der neueren Forschung, 2d ed., Leipzig, 1910.

On the indulgences in their relation to the Sacrament of Penance, H. C. Lea, History of Confession and Indulgence, especially Vol. III, Philadelphia, 1896; Brieger, Das Wesen des Ablasses am Ausgang des Mittelalters, Leipzig, 1897, and Article Indulgenzen in PRE.3 IX, pp. 76 ff. (Eng. in Schaff-Herzog v., pp. 485-88); Gottlob, Kreuzablass und Almosenablass, Stuttgart, 1906 (especially valuable for the origin of indulgences).

On the indulgences and the XCV Theses, Koestlin, Luther's Theologie, Leipzig, 1883 (Eng. Trans, by Hay, The Theology of Luther, Philadelphia, 1897); Bratke, Luther's XCV Thesen und ihre dogmengeschichtlichen Voraussetzungen, Göttingen, 1884; Dieckhoff, Der Ablassstreit dogmengeschichtlich dargestellt, Gotha, 1886; Lindsay, History of the Reformation, I, New York, 1906; Tschachert, Entstehung der lutherischen und reformierten Kirchenlehre, Göttingen, 1910.

On the financial aspects of the indulgence-traffic, Schulte, Die Fugger in Rom, 2 vols., Leipzig, 1904.

CHARLES M. JACOBS Allentown, Pa."

Review Questions

1. Kindly share three things you received from this background to the Ninety-Five Theses

Chapter 54

The Ninety-Five Thesis and Covering Letter

The Ninety-Five Thesis and covering Letter to Albrecht of Mainz

In this chapter, we will examine the Ninety-Five Thesis of Martin Luther which was nailed to the door of All Saints Church in Wittenberg. As documents go, this was, in essence both a direct repudiation of the obnoxious practice of sale of indulgences to absolve the living and dead from the penalty of their sins as well as an indirect challenge to the authority of the Pope as Supreme Pontiff whose words were law. By this time, Luther was a professing Roman Catholic Priest who was simply trying to correct what he thought were wrong practices and doctrines which brought reproach to the name of the Lord and His Church.

With passage of time, this document assumed a life of its own and is generally regarded as the moral equivalent of throwing down the gauntlet by Martin Luther. It seems however he was not quite aware of the extent to which it would spark off what later became a schism or breakaway project from Roman Catholicism: The Protestant Reformation. The document was originally written in Latin in the manner of academic debates of that era when learned people invited any who had an opinion to come forward to present them. Let us take note that the Ninety-Five Theses do not follow any logical sequence. He just marshalled out issues as they came to mind. Let us remember this scripture as we proceed to discuss the chapter:

Proverbs 22:28 (KJV) *28 Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.*

Let us read through a translated version posted on the website of Luther.de.

DISPUTATION OF DOCTOR MARTIN LUTHER ON THE POWER AND EFFICACY OF INDULGENCES

OCTOBER 31, 1517

Out of love for the truth and from desire to elucidate it, the Reverend Father Martin Luther, Master of Arts and Sacred Theology, and ordinary lecturer therein at Wittenberg, intends to defend the following statements and to dispute on them in that place. Therefore, he asks that those who cannot be present and dispute with him orally shall do so in their absence by letter. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

1. When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, ``Repent'' (Mt 4:17), he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance.
2. This word cannot be understood as referring to the sacrament of penance, that is, confession and satisfaction, as administered by the clergy.
3. Yet it does not mean solely inner repentance; such inner repentance is worthless unless it produces various outward mortification of the flesh.

4. The penalty of sin remains as long as the hatred of self (that is, true inner repentance), namely till our entrance into the kingdom of heaven.
5. The pope neither desires nor can remit any penalties except those imposed by his own authority or that of the canons.
6. The pope cannot remit any guilt, except by declaring and showing that it has been remitted by God; or, to be sure, by remitting guilt in cases reserved to his judgment. If his right to grant remission in these cases were disregarded, the guilt would certainly remain unforgiven.
7. God remits guilt to no one unless at the same time he humbles him in all things and makes him submissive to the vicar, the priest.
8. The penitential canons are imposed only on the living, and, according to the canons themselves, nothing should be imposed on the dying.
9. Therefore, the Holy Spirit through the pope is kind to us insofar as the pope in his decrees always makes exception of the article of death and of necessity.
10. Those priests act ignorantly and wickedly who, in the case of the dying, reserve canonical penalties for purgatory.
11. Those tares of changing the canonical penalty to the penalty of purgatory were evidently sown while the bishops slept (Mt 13:25).
12. In former times canonical penalties were imposed, not after, but before absolution, as tests of true contrition.
13. The dying are freed by death from all penalties, are already dead as far as the canon laws are concerned, and have a right to be released from them.
14. Imperfect piety or love on the part of the dying person necessarily brings with it great fear; and the smaller the love, the greater the fear.
15. This fear or horror is sufficient in itself, to say nothing of other things, to constitute the penalty of purgatory, since it is very near to the horror of despair.
16. Hell, purgatory, and heaven seem to differ the same as despair, fear, and assurance of salvation.
17. It seems as though for the souls in purgatory fear should necessarily decrease and love increase.
18. Furthermore, it does not seem proved, either by reason or by Scripture, that souls in purgatory are outside the state of merit, that is, unable to grow in love.
19. Nor does it seem proved that souls in purgatory, at least not all of them, are certain and assured of their own salvation, even if we ourselves may be entirely certain of it.
20. Therefore, the pope, when he uses the words "plenary remission of all penalties," does not actually mean "all penalties," but only those imposed by himself.
21. Thus, those indulgence preachers are in error who say that a man is absolved from every penalty and saved by papal indulgences.
22. As a matter of fact, the pope remits to souls in purgatory no penalty which, according to canon law, they should have paid in this life.
23. If remission of all penalties whatsoever could be granted to anyone at all, certainly it would be granted only to the most perfect, that is, to very few.
24. For this reason, most people are necessarily deceived by that indiscriminate and high-sounding promise of release from penalty.

25. That power which the pope has in general over purgatory corresponds to the power which any bishop or curate has in a particular way in his own diocese and parish.
26. The pope does very well when he grants remission to souls in purgatory, not by the power of the keys, which he does not have, but by way of intercession for them.
27. They preach only human doctrines who say that as soon as the money clinks into the money chest, the soul flies out of purgatory.
8. It is certain that when money clinks in the money chest, greed and avarice can be increased; but when the church intercedes, the result is in the hands of God alone.
29. Who knows whether all souls in purgatory wish to be redeemed, since we have exceptions in St. Severinus and St. Paschal, as related in a legend.
30. No one is sure of the integrity of his own contrition, much less of having received plenary remission.
31. The man who actually buys indulgences is as rare as he who is really penitent; indeed, he is exceedingly rare.
32. Those who believe that they can be certain of their salvation because they have indulgence letters will be eternally damned, together with their teachers.
33. Men must especially be on guard against those who say that the pope's pardons are that inestimable gift of God by which man is reconciled to him.
34. For the graces of indulgences are concerned only with the penalties of sacramental satisfaction established by man.
35. They who teach that contrition is not necessary on the part of those who intend to buy souls out of purgatory or to buy confessional privileges preach unchristian doctrine.
36. Any truly repentant Christian has a right to full remission of penalty and guilt, even without indulgence letters.
37. Any true Christian, whether living or dead, participates in all the blessings of Christ and the church; and this is granted him by God, even without indulgence letters.
38. Nevertheless, papal remission and blessing are by no means to be disregarded, for they are, as I have said (Thesis 6), the proclamation of the divine remission.
39. It is very difficult, even for the most learned theologians, at one and the same time to commend to the people the bounty of indulgences and the need of true contrition.
40. A Christian who is truly contrite seeks and loves to pay penalties for his sins; the bounty of indulgences, however, relaxes penalties and causes men to hate them -- at least it furnishes occasion for hating them.
41. Papal indulgences must be preached with caution, lest people erroneously think that they are preferable to other good works of love.
42. Christians are to be taught that the pope does not intend that the buying of indulgences should in any way be compared with works of mercy.
43. Christians are to be taught that he who gives to the poor or lends to the needy does a better deed than he who buys indulgences.
44. Because love grows by works of love, man thereby becomes better. Man does not, however, become better by means of indulgences but is merely freed from penalties.

45. Christians are to be taught that he who sees a needy man and passes him by, yet gives his money for indulgences, does not buy papal indulgences but God's wrath.
46. Christians are to be taught that, unless they have more than they need, they must reserve enough for their family needs and by no means squander it on indulgences.
47. Christians are to be taught that the buying of indulgences is a matter of free choice, not commanded.
48. Christians are to be taught that the pope, in granting indulgences, needs and thus desires their devout prayer more than their money.
49. Christians are to be taught that papal indulgences are useful only if they do not put their trust in them, but very harmful if they lose their fear of God because of them.
50. Christians are to be taught that if the pope knew the exactions of the indulgence preachers, he would rather that the basilica of St. Peter were burned to ashes than built up with the skin, flesh, and bones of his sheep.
51. Christians are to be taught that the pope would and should wish to give of his own money, even though he had to sell the basilica of St. Peter, to many of those from whom certain hawkers of indulgences cajole money.
52. It is vain to trust in salvation by indulgence letters, even though the indulgence commissary, or even the pope, were to offer his soul as security.
53. They are the enemies of Christ and the pope who forbid altogether the preaching of the Word of God in some churches in order that indulgences may be preached in others.
54. Injury is done to the Word of God when, in the same sermon, an equal or larger amount of time is devoted to indulgences than to the Word.
55. It is certainly the pope's sentiment that if indulgences, which are a very insignificant thing, are celebrated with one bell, one procession, and one ceremony, then the gospel, which is the very greatest thing, should be preached with a hundred bells, a hundred processions, a hundred ceremonies.
56. The true treasures of the church, out of which the pope distributes indulgences, are not sufficiently discussed or known among the people of Christ.
57. That indulgences are not temporal treasures is certainly clear, for many indulgence sellers do not distribute them freely but only gather them.
58. Nor are they the merits of Christ and the saints, for, even without the pope, the latter always work grace for the inner man, and the cross, death, and hell for the outer man.
59. St. Lawrence said that the poor of the church were the treasures of the church, but he spoke according to the usage of the word in his own time.
60. Without want of consideration we say that the keys of the church, given by the merits of Christ, are that treasure.
61. For the pope's power is of itself sufficient for the remission of penalties and cases reserved by himself.
62. The true treasure of the church is the most holy gospel of the glory and grace of God.
63. But this treasure is naturally most odious, for it makes the first to be last (Mt. 20:16).
64. On the other hand, the treasure of indulgences is naturally most acceptable, for it makes the last to be first.

65. Therefore, the treasures of the gospel are nets with which one formerly fished for men of wealth.
66. The treasures of indulgences are nets with which one now fishes for the wealth of men.
67. The indulgences which the demagogues acclaim as the greatest graces are actually understood to be such only insofar as they promote gain.
68. They are nevertheless in truth the most insignificant graces when compared with the grace of God and the piety of the cross.
69. Bishops and curates are bound to admit the commissaries of papal indulgences with all reverence.
70. But they are much more bound to strain their eyes and ears lest these men preach their own dreams instead of what the pope has commissioned.
71. Let him who speaks against the truth concerning papal indulgences be anathema and accursed.
72. But let him who guards against the lust and license of the indulgence preachers be blessed.
73. Just as the pope justly thunders against those who by any means whatever contrive harm to the sale of indulgences.
74. Much more does he intend to thunder against those who use indulgences as a pretext to contrive harm to holy love and truth.
75. To consider papal indulgences so great that they could absolve a man even if he had done the impossible and had violated the mother of God is madness.
76. We say on the contrary that papal indulgences cannot remove the very least of venial sins as far as guilt is concerned.
77. To say that even St. Peter if he were now pope, could not grant greater graces is blasphemy against St. Peter and the pope.
78. We say on the contrary that even the present pope, or any pope whatsoever, has greater graces at his disposal, that is, the gospel, spiritual powers, gifts of healing, etc., as it is written. (1 Co 12:28)
79. To say that the cross emblazoned with the papal coat of arms, and set up by the indulgence preachers is equal in worth to the cross of Christ is blasphemy.
80. The bishops, curates, and theologians who permit such talk to be spread among the people will have to answer for this.
81. This unbridled preaching of indulgences makes it difficult even for learned men to rescue the reverence which is due the pope from slander or from the shrewd questions of the laity.
82. Such as: "Why does not the pope empty purgatory for the sake of holy love and the dire need of the souls that are there if he redeems an infinite number of souls for the sake of miserable money with which to build a church?" The former reason would be most just; the latter is most trivial.
83. Again, "Why are funeral and anniversary masses for the dead continued and why does he not return or permit the withdrawal of the endowments founded for them, since it is wrong to pray for the redeemed?"
84. Again, "What is this new piety of God and the pope that for a consideration of money they permit a man who is impious and their enemy to buy out of purgatory the pious soul of a friend of God and do not rather, because of the need of that pious and beloved soul, free it for pure love's sake?"
85. Again, "Why are the penitential canons, long since abrogated and dead in actual fact and through disuse, now satisfied by the granting of indulgences as though they were still alive and in force?"

86. Again, "Why does not the pope, whose wealth is today greater than the wealth of the richest Crassus, build this one basilica of St. Peter with his own money rather than with the money of poor believers?"
87. Again, "What does the pope remit or grant to those who by perfect contrition already have a right to full remission and blessings?"
88. Again, "What greater blessing could come to the church than if the pope were to bestow these remissions and blessings on every believer a hundred times a day, as he now does but once?"
89. "Since the pope seeks the salvation of souls rather than money by his indulgences, why does he suspend the indulgences and pardons previously granted when they have equal efficacy?"
90. To repress these very sharp arguments of the laity by force alone, and not to resolve them by giving reasons, is to expose the church and the pope to the ridicule of their enemies and to make Christians unhappy.
91. If, therefore, indulgences were preached according to the spirit and intention of the pope, all these doubts would be readily resolved. Indeed, they would not exist.
92. Away, then, with all those prophets who say to the people of Christ, "Peace, peace," and there is no peace! (Jer. 6:14)
93. Blessed be all those prophets who say to the people of Christ, "Cross, cross," and there is no cross!
94. Christians should be exhorted to be diligent in following Christ, their Head, through penalties, death and hell.
95. And thus, be confident of entering into heaven through many tribulations rather than through the false security of peace (Acts 14:22). (c) KDG Wittenberg, 1997

The Covering Letter

In the integrity of his heart, Martin Luther sent a copy of the Ninety-Five Thesis to his superior, Archbishop Albrecht of Mainz with a covering letter. There is ample evidence from the tone of the letter that Luther was simply seeking to address the issue of misuse of Indulgences and how he felt it misrepresented the Roman Catholic Church and pope Leo X who issued them. Unfortunately, the Archbishop did not have the moral inclination to see what Luther was protesting against.

LETTER TO THE ARCHBISHOP ALBRECHT OF MAINZ
OCTOBER 31, 1517

To the Most Reverend Father in Christ and Most Illustrious Lord, Albrecht of Magdeburg and Mainz, Archbishop and Primate of the Church, Margrave of Brandenburg, etc., his own lord and pastor in Christ, worthy of reverence and fear, and most gracious.

JESUS The grace of God be with you in all its fullness and power! Spare me, Most Reverend Father in Christ and Most Illustrious Prince, that I, the dregs of humanity, have so much boldness that I have dared to think of a letter to the height of your Sublimity. The Lord Jesus is my witness that, conscious of my smallness and baseness, I have long deferred what I am now shameless enough to do, - moved thereto most of all by the duty of fidelity which I acknowledge that I owe to your most Reverend Fatherhood in Christ. Meanwhile, therefore, may your Highness deign to

cast an eye upon one speck of dust, and for the sake of your pontifical clemency to heed my prayer.

Papal indulgences for the building of St. Peter's are circulating under your most distinguished name, and as regards them, I do not bring accusation against the outcries of the preachers, which I have not heard, so much as I grieve over the wholly false impressions which the people have conceived from them; to wit,—the unhappy souls believe that if they have purchased letters of indulgence they are sure of their salvation; again, that so soon as they cast their contributions into the money-box, souls fly out of purgatory; furthermore, that these graces [i. e., the graces conferred in the indulgences] are so great that there is no sin too great to be absolved, even, as they say — though the thing is impossible—if one had violated the Mother of God; again, that a man is free, through these indulgences, from all penalty and guilt.

O God, most good! Thus, souls committed to your care, good Father, are taught to their death, and the strict account, which you must render for all such, grows and increases. For this reason, I have no longer been able to keep quiet about this matter, for it is by no gift of a bishop that man becomes sure of salvation, since he gains this certainty not even by the "inpoured grace" of God, but the Apostle bids us always "work out our own salvation in fear and trembling," and Peter says, "the righteous scarcely shall be saved." Finally, so narrow is the way that leads to life, that the Lord, through the prophets Amos and Zechariah, calls those who shall be saved "brands plucked from the burning," and everywhere declares the difficulty of salvation.

Why, then, do the preachers of pardons, by these false fables and promises, make the people careless and fearless? Whereas indulgences confer on us no good gift, either for salvation or for sanctity, but only take away the external penalty, which it was formerly the custom to impose according to the canons.

Finally, works of piety and love are infinitely better than indulgences, and yet these are not preached with such ceremony or such zeal; nay, for the sake of preaching the indulgences they are kept quiet, though it is the first and the sole duty of all bishops that the people should learn the Gospel and the love of Christ, for Christ never taught that indulgences should be preached. How great then is the horror, how great the peril of a bishop, if he permits the Gospel to be kept quiet, and nothing but the noise of indulgences to be spread among his people! Will not Christ say to them, "straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel"

In addition to this. Most Reverend Father in the Lord, it is said in the Instruction to the Commissaries which is issued under your name. Most Reverend Father (doubtless without your knowledge and consent), that one of the chief graces of indulgence is that inestimable gift of God by which man is reconciled to God, and all the penalties of purgatory are destroyed. Again, it is said that contrition is not necessary in those who purchase souls [out of purgatory] or buy confessionalia.

But what can I do, good Primate and Most Illustrious Prince, except pray your Most Reverend Fatherhood by the Lord Jesus Christ that you would deign to look [on this matter] with the eye

of fatherly care, and do away entirely with that treatise and impose upon the preachers of pardons another form of preaching; lest, perchance, one may some time arise, who will publish writings in which he will confute both them and that treatise, to the shame of your Most Illustrious Sublimity. I shrink very much from thinking that this will be done, and yet I fear that it will come to pass, unless there is some speedy remedy.

These faithful offices of my insignificance I beg that your Most Illustrious Grace may deign to accept in the spirit of a Prince and a Bishop, i. e., with the greatest clemency, as I offer them out of a faithful heart, altogether devoted to you, Most Reverend Father, since I too am a part of your flock.

May the Lord Jesus have your Most Reverend Fatherhood eternally in His keeping. Amen.

From Wittenberg on the Vigil of All Saints, MDXVII.

If it please the Most Reverend Father he may see these my Disputations, and learn how doubtful a thing is the opinion of indulgences which those men spread as though it were most certain.

To the Most Reverend Father,

Brother Martin Luther.

These two documents are the very bedrock of what later became the Protestant Movement! It reflects the disdain for historical facts that Christians whose roots are in Protestantism do not have access to these documents which is part of their spiritual heritage. For Completing the Unfinished Reformation, it is fundamental that we dispassionately examine all the relevant documents and historical facts of that era.

Review Questions

1. Please name any 10 of the Ninety-Five Theses you consider most critical to emergence of the Protestant Reformation. (You can copy and paste if you wish)
2. What strikes you as most significant in this document written 500 years ago?
3. Name one thing which struck you about Luther's letter to Archbishop Albrecht?

Chapter 55

Intention of and Reactions to the Ninety-Five Thesis

Let us for a moment cast our minds back into time and visualize what Europe looked like 500 years ago. The Pope was a powerful figure both in the Church and society. He had the power to do and undo including exert strong influence over the Emperor and nobles. In those days, a man like Archbishop Albrecht of Mainz was powerful beyond measure. Those who sold Indulgences on behalf of the Church like Johann Tetzel were very wealthy and vicious, guarding their source of unlimited revenue as fiercely as possible. As he himself made clear, Martin Luther was not deliberately trying to destroy or fight Roman Catholicism because he was very much sold out to it as his religion. He even pledged allegiance to Archbishop Albrecht as the contents of his respectful letter (which some deem as both bold and groveling at the same time) revealed.

It is the good pleasure of our heavenly Father to equip us with a comprehensive understanding of the events of 1517 which sparked the Protestant Reformation and the way He used Martin Luther to deal with the spirit of Babylon which locked up the spiritual destiny of multitudes in Europe and world-wide. In so doing, the Father wishes to bless us with not just revelation from His Word by Holy Spirit but also teach us historical facts which will arm us with the capacity to successfully state the case for the true gospel of Yeshua and the Kingdom to all manner of people: The educated and not so educated; the polished and not so polished; the high and low and indeed any who cross our path. That was the way Elohim prepared Paul the apostle for his awesome and very productive ministry.

Before we dwell on the subject matter of this chapter, let us read one more document: A copy of the letter Martin Luther sent to pope Leo X proclaiming his innocence of all the charges brought by his accusers. It is evident from the tone and contents that Luther framed his protest in terms of highlighting the wrong practice of selling indulgences and the bad reputation it brought to the Roman Catholic Church of which he remained a part. Again, the letter is a classic in both boldness and respectfulness to the point that may even seem he was almost venerating the Pope!

LETTER TO POPE LEO X, ACCOMPANYING
THE "RESOLUTIONS" TO THE XCV THESES
1518

To the Most Blessed Father,
LEO X.

Martin Luther, Augustinian Friar,
wisheth everlasting welfare.

I have heard evil reports about myself, most blessed Father,
by which I know that certain friends have put my name in very
bad odor with you and yours, saying that I have attempted to
belittle the power of the keys and of the Supreme Pontiff.

Therefore, I am accused of heresy, apostasy, and perfidy, and

am called by six hundred other names of ignominy. My ears shudder and my eyes are astounded. But the one thing in which I put my confidence remains unshaken -- my clear and quiet conscience. Moreover, what I hear is nothing new. With such like decorations I have been adorned in my own country by those same honorable and truthful men, i.e., by the men whose own conscience convicts them of wrongdoing, and who are trying to put their own monstrous doings off on me, and to glorify their own shame by bringing shame to me. But you will deign, blessed Father, to hear the true case from me, though I am but an uncouth child.

It is not long ago that the preaching of the Jubilee indulgences was begun in our country, and matters went so far that the preachers of indulgences, thinking that the protection of your name made anything permissible, ventured openly to teach the most impious and heretical doctrines, which threatened to make the power of the Church a scandal and a laughing-stock, as if the decretals *De abusionibus quaestorum* did not apply to them.

Not content with spreading this poison of theirs by word of mouth, they published tracts and scattered them among the people. In these books -- to say nothing of the insatiable and unheard of avarice of which almost every letter in them vilely smells -- they laid down those same impious and heretical doctrines, and laid them down in such wise that confessors were bound by their oath to be faithful and insistent in urging them upon the people. I speak the truth, and none of them can hide himself from the heat thereof. The tracts are extant and they cannot disown them. These teachings were so successfully carried on, and the people, with their false hopes, were sucked so dry that, as the Prophet says, "they plucked their flesh from off their bones"; but they themselves meanwhile were fed most pleasantly on the fat of the land. There was just one means which they used to quiet opposition, to wit, the protection of your name, the threat of burning at the stake, and the disgrace of the name "heretic." It is incredible how ready they are to threaten, even, at times, when they perceive that it is only their own mere silly opinions which are contradicted. As though this were to quiet opposition, and not rather to arouse schisms and seditions by

sheer tyranny!

None the less, however, stories about the avarice of the priests were bruited in the taverns, and evil was spoken of the power of the keys and of the Supreme Pontiff, and as evidence of this, I could cite the common talk of this whole land. I truly confess that I was on fire with zeal for Christ, as I thought, or with the heat of youth, if you prefer to have it so; and yet I saw that it was not in place for me to make any decrees or to do anything in these matters. Therefore I privately admonished some of the prelates of the Church. By some of them I was kindly received, to others I seemed ridiculous, to still others something worse; for the terror of your name and the threat of Church censures prevailed. At last, since I could do nothing else, it seemed good that I should offer at least a gentle resistance to them, i.e., question and discuss their teachings. Therefore I published a set of theses, inviting only the more learned to dispute with me if they wished; as should be evident, even to my adversaries, from the Preface to the Disputation.

Lo, this is the fire with which they complain that all the world is now ablaze! Perhaps it is because they are indignant that I, who by your own apostolic authority am a Master of Theology, have the right to conduct public disputations, according to the custom of all the Universities and of the whole Church, not only about indulgences, but also about God's power and remission and mercy, which are incomparably greater subjects. I am not much moved, however, by the fact that they envy me the privilege granted me by the power of your Holiness, since I am unwillingly compelled to yield to them in things of far greater moment, viz., when they mix the dreams of Aristotle with theological matters, and conduct nonsensical disputations about the majesty of God, beyond and against the privilege granted them.

It is a miracle to me by what fate it has come about that this single Disputation of mine should, more than any other, of mine or of any of the teachers, have gone out into very nearly the whole land. It was made public at our University and for our University only, and it was made public in such wise that I cannot believe it has become known to all men. For it is a set of theses, not doctrines or dogmas, and they are put,

according to custom, in an obscure and enigmatic way. Otherwise, if I had been able to foresee what was coming, I should have taken care, for my part, that they would be easier to understand.

Now what shall I do? I cannot recant them; and yet I see that marvelous enmity is inflamed against me because of their dissemination. It is unwillingly that I incur the public and perilous and various judgment of men, especially since I am unlearned, dull of brain, empty of scholarship; and that too in this brilliant age of ours, which by its achievements in letters and learning can force even Cicero into the corner, though he was no base follower of the public light. But necessity compels me to be the goose that squawks among the swans.

And so, to soften my enemies and to fulfil the desires of many, I herewith send forth these trifling explanations of my Disputation; I send them forth in order, too, that I may be more safe under the defense of your name and the shadow of your protection. In them all may see, who will, how purely and simply I have sought after and cherished the power of the Church and reverence for the keys; and, at the same time, how unjustly and falsely my adversaries have befouled me with so many names. For if I had been such a one as they wish to make me out, and if I had not, on the contrary, done everything correctly, according to my academic privilege, the Most Illustrious Prince Frederick, Duke of Saxony, Imperial Elector, etc., would never have tolerated such a pest in his University, for he most dearly loves the Catholic and Apostolic truth, nor could I have been tolerated by the keen and learned men of our University. But what has been done, I do because those most courteous men do not fear openly to involve both the Prince and the University in the same disgrace with myself.

Wherefore, most blessed Father, I cast myself at the feet of your Holiness, with all that I have and all that I am. Quicken, kill, call, recall, approve, reprove, as you will. In your voice I shall recognize the voice of Christ directing you and speaking in you. If I have deserved death, I shall not refuse to die. For the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof. He is blessed forever. Amen.

May He have you too forever in His keeping. Amen.

ANNO MDXVIII.

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Because there have been detailed works already done on the subject matter of his intentions as well as reactions to the Ninety-Five Theses, we will need to examine some of them. Let us cite this article from Wikipedia for this chapter:

“Luther’s Intent”

The Theses are written as propositions to be argued in a formal academic disputation, though there is no evidence that such an event ever took place. In the heading of the Theses, Luther invited interested scholars from other cities to participate. Holding such a debate was a privilege Luther held as a doctor, and it was not an unusual form of academic inquiry. Luther prepared twenty sets of theses for disputation at Wittenberg between 1516 and 1521. Andreas Karlstadt had written a set of such theses in April 1517, and these were more radical in theological terms than Luther's. He posted them on the door of All Saints' Church, as Luther was alleged to have done with the Ninety-Five Theses. Karlstadt posted his theses at a time when the relics of the church were placed on display, and this may have been considered a provocative gesture. Similarly, Luther posted the Ninety-Five Theses on the eve of All Saints' Day, the most important day of the year for the display of relics at All Saints' Church.

Luther's theses were intended to begin a debate among academics, not a popular revolution, but there are indications that he saw his action as prophetic and significant. Around this time, he began using the name "Luther" and sometimes "Eleutherius", Greek for "free", rather than "Luder". This seems to refer to his being free from the scholastic theology which he had argued against earlier that year. Luther later claimed not to have desired the Theses to be widely distributed. Elizabeth Eisenstein has argued that his claimed surprise at their success may have involved self-deception and Hans Hillerbrand has claimed that Luther was certainly intending to instigate a large controversy. At times, Luther seems to use the academic nature of the Theses as a cover to allow him to attack established beliefs while being able to deny that he intended to attack church teaching. Since writing a set of theses for a disputation does not necessarily commit the author to those views, Luther could deny that he held the most incendiary ideas in the Theses.

Distribution and Publication

On 31 October 1517, Luther sent a letter to Archbishop of Mainz, Albert of Brandenburg, under whose authority the indulgences were being sold. In the letter, Luther addresses the archbishop out of a loyal desire to alert him to the pastoral problems created by the indulgence sermons. He assumes that Albert

is unaware of what is being preached under his authority, and speaks out of concern that the people are being led away from the gospel, and that the indulgence preaching may bring shame to Albert's name. He does not condemn indulgences or the current doctrine regarding them, nor even the sermons which had been preached themselves, as he had not seen them firsthand. Instead he states his concern regarding the misunderstandings of the people about indulgences which have been fostered by the preaching, such as the belief that any sin could be forgiven by indulgences or that the guilt as well as the punishment for sin could be forgiven by an indulgence. In a postscript, Luther wrote that Albert could find some theses on the matter enclosed with his letter, so that he could see the uncertainty surrounding the doctrine of indulgences in contrast to the preachers who spoke so confidently of the benefits of indulgences.

It was customary when proposing a disputation to have the theses printed by the university press and publicly posted. No copies of a Wittenberg printing of the Ninety-Five Theses have survived, but this is not surprising as Luther was not famous and the importance of the document was not recognized. In Wittenberg, the university statutes demand that theses be posted on every church door in the city, but Philip Melanchthon, who first mentioned the posting of the theses, only mentioned the door of All Saints' Church. Melanchthon also claimed that Luther posted the Theses on 31 October, but this conflicts with several of Luther's statements about the course of events, and Luther always claimed that he brought his objections through proper channels rather than inciting a public controversy. It is possible that while Luther later saw the 31 October letter to Albert as the beginning of the Reformation, he did not post the Theses to the church door until mid-November, but he may not have posted them on the door at all. Regardless, the Theses were well-known among the Wittenberg intellectual elite soon after Luther sent them to Albert.

The Theses were copied and distributed to interested parties soon after Luther sent the letter to Archbishop Albert. The Latin Theses were printed in a four-page pamphlet in Basel, and as placards in Leipzig and Nuremberg. In all, several hundred copies of the Latin Theses were printed in Germany in 1517. Kaspar Nützel (de) in Nuremberg translated them into German later that year, and copies of this translation were sent to several interested parties across Germany, but it was not necessarily printed.

Reaction

Albert seems to have received Luther's letter with the Theses around the end of November. He requested the opinion of theologians at the University of Mainz and conferred with his advisers. His advisers recommended he have Luther prohibited from preaching against indulgences in accordance with the indulgence bull. Albert requested such action from the Roman Curia. In Rome, Luther was immediately perceived as a threat. In February 1518, Pope Leo asked the head of the Augustinian Hermits, Luther's religious order, to convince him to stop spreading his ideas about indulgences. Sylvester Mazzolini was also appointed to write an opinion which would be used in the trial against him. Mazzolini wrote *A Dialogue against Martin Luther's Presumptuous Theses concerning the Power of Pope*, which focused on Luther's questioning of the pope's authority rather than his complaints about indulgence preaching. Luther received a summons to Rome in August 1518. He responded with *Explanations of the Disputation Concerning the Value of Indulgences*, in which he attempted to clear

himself of the charge that he was attacking the pope. As he set down his views more extensively, Luther seems to have recognized that the implications of his beliefs set him further from official teaching than he initially knew. He later said he may not have begun the controversy had he known where it would lead. The Explanations have been called Luther's first Reformation work.

Reaction

Johann Tetzel responded to the Theses by calling for Luther to be burnt for heresy and having theologian Konrad Wimpina write 106 theses against Luther's work. Tetzel defended these in a disputation before the University of Frankfurt on the Oder in January 1518. 800 copies of the printed disputation were sent to be sold in Wittenberg, but students of the University seized them from the bookseller and burned them. Luther became increasingly fearful that the situation was out of hand and that he would be in danger. To placate his opponents, he published a Sermon on Indulgences and Grace, which did not challenge the pope's authority. This pamphlet, written in German, was very short and easy for lay people to understand. Luther's first widely successful work, it was reprinted twenty times. Tetzel responded with a point-by-point refutation, citing heavily from the Bible and important theologians. His pamphlet was not nearly as popular as Luther's. Luther's reply to Tetzel's pamphlet, on the other hand, was another publishing success for Luther.

Another prominent opponent of the Theses was Johann Eck, Luther's friend and a theologian at the University of Ingolstadt. Eck wrote a refutation, intended for the Bishop of Eichstätt, entitled the Obelisks. This was in reference to the obelisks used to mark heretical passages in texts in the Middle Ages. It was a harsh and unexpected personal attack, charging Luther with heresy and stupidity. Luther responded privately with the Asterisks, titled after the asterisk marks then used to highlight important texts. Luther's response was angry and he expressed the opinion that Eck did not understand the matter on which he wrote. The dispute between Luther and Eck would become public in the 1519 Leipzig Debate.

Luther was summoned by authority of the pope to defend himself against charges of heresy before Thomas Cajetan at Augsburg in October 1518. Cajetan did not allow Luther to argue with him over his alleged heresies, but he did identify two points of controversy. The first was against the fifty-eighth thesis, which stated that the pope could not use the treasury of merit to forgive temporal punishment of sin. This contradicted the papal bull *Unigenitus* promulgated by Clement VI in 1343. The second point was whether one could be assured that they had been forgiven when their sin had been absolved by a priest. Luther's Explanations on thesis seven asserted that one could base on God's promise, but Cajetan argued that the humble Christian should never presume to be certain of their standing before God. Luther refused to recant and requested that the case be reviewed by university theologians. This request was denied, so Luther appealed to the pope before leaving Augsburg. Luther was finally excommunicated in 1521 after he burned the papal bull threatening him to recant or face excommunication.

Legacy

The indulgence controversy set off by the Theses was the beginning of the Protestant Reformation, a schism in the Catholic Church which initiated profound and lasting social and political change in Europe. Luther later stated that the issue of indulgences was insignificant relative to controversies he would enter later, such as his debate with Erasmus over the bondage of the will, nor did he see the controversy as important to his intellectual breakthrough regarding the gospel. Luther later wrote that at the time of the Theses he remained a "papist", and he did not seem to think the Theses represented a break with established Catholic doctrine. But it was out of the indulgences controversy that the movement which would be called the Reformation began, and the controversy propelled Luther to the leadership position he would hold in that movement. The Theses also made evident that Luther believed the church was not preaching properly and that this put the laity in serious danger. Further, the Theses contradicted the decree of Pope Clement VI, that indulgences are the treasury of the church. This disregard for papal authority presaged later conflicts.

31 October 1517, the day Luther sent the Theses to Albert, was commemorated as the beginning of the Reformation as early as 1527, when Luther and his friends raised a glass of beer to commemorate the "trampling out of indulgences". The posting of the Theses was established in the historiography of the Reformation as the beginning of the movement by Philip Melancthon in his 1548 *Historia de vita et actis Lutheri*. During the 1617 Reformation Jubilee, the centenary of 31 October was celebrated by a procession to the Wittenberg Church where Luther was believed to have posted the Theses. An engraving was made showing Luther writing the Theses on the door of the church with a gigantic quill. The quill penetrates the head of a lion symbolizing Pope Leo X. In 1668, 31 October was made Reformation Day, an annual holiday in Electoral Saxony, which spread to other Lutheran lands.

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Review Questions

1. What is it in the letter of Martin Luther to Pope Leo X which you consider most significant.
2. Do you agree/disagree with the thought that Luther's intention in writing the 95 Thesis was not to break away from the Roman Catholic Church but to reform it? Please give reason

Chapter 56

Other Reformers and Sub-movements

Luther and Other Reformers

Before we proceed to discuss outcomes of the Reformation, it is only fair we acknowledge the reality that there were other vessels who contributed to the 'Protest' against Rome. Significantly, it must be noted the reformers were few! This may be because of three inter-related factors:

- i. The hold of Rome over Medieval Europe was extremely strong
- ii. Few people had access to the Holy Scriptures. With biblical illiteracy, there was no way any one knew more than what the priests and the Church as an institution said.
- iii. From a spiritual point of view, it may also be that the fullness of time had not yet come.

Our sources for the brief profiles are the web pages of Luther.de and biographyonline.com with additional supporting materials from website of the Lutheran Church of Resurrection in Yardley, Pennsylvania, lcr.yardley.org. Let us start with this frank exposition in Luther.de

Luther's Role in Religious Discussions and his Relationship to Reformers in Other Movements

Luther's moderate approach, his attitude towards the insurgent peasants, and his compromises with sovereigns caused him to be accused by all sides. On the other hand, Luther was constantly under pressure to defend the Reformation politically and theologically against the Roman Catholic faction. Many of his ex-supporters did not want to help bear the burden of this thin line Luther was walking. Already in 1524-26 Luther had fought with the Dutch humanist Erasmus von Rotterdam which caused lots of stress to the reformation and ended in a split among humanists who had previously welcomed Luther's reforms. The difference of opinion between Luther and Karlstadt or between Luther and the Swiss reformer Zwingli about the role of communion in the worship service led to the Marburg Religious Discussions of 1529, where only one partial agreement was reached. Luther and Melancthon were critically opposed to the Baptist movement; however, when the Baptist's empire in Münster was overthrown in 1534-1535, the two condemned the treatment of the Baptist. In 1537, a clash ensued between Luther and Johann Agricola, one of Luther's supporters in Wittenberg who ended up leaving Wittenberg in 1540. (c) KDG Wittenberg 1997.

Brief Biographies of some Protestant Reformers

This section focuses on personalities and sub-Movements within the Reformation Movement, Our source for this section is the web page: biographyonline.net/people/famous/p... with supporting materials from lcr.yardley.org and materials from Biographyonline.com which have this Citation: Pettinger, Tejvan. "Famous people of the Reformation", Oxford, www.biographyonline.net, 11th Feb. 2013. Wikipedia and BBC.co.uk provide additional insight.

Some of the most influential people in the Protestant Reformation

The Protestant Reformation refers to the period in the 15th Century, when some Christians broke away from the Roman Catholic church, beginning new Protestant movements. These new religious movements tended to stress the importance of the Bible and believed Salvation could be gained directly from God and not through the intermediary of a Priest. Pre-Reformation reformers (these are personalities who opposed some of the aspects of Roman Catholic Doctrines and liturgies before Martin Luther appeared on the scene).

Meister Eckhart (1260-1327) a Germany mystic, theologian, and philosopher. Eckhart was not directly related to the Reformation. However, his radical sermons which spoke of man's direct contact with the Divine were influential in later shaping Martin Luther's thinking. Eckhart was tried for heresy for his unconventional philosophy.

John Wycliffe (1330-1384) translated some of first versions of Bible into English. Wycliffe was an early critic of the Papacy and clerical power. He placed greater emphasis on scripture advocating Bible centered Christianity. His followers were known as Lollards and were precursors to Martin Luther.

Jan Hus (1369-1415) Hus was a Czech theologian who propagated the radical reforms of Wycliffe and was a key figure in the later Protestant reformation. Hus criticized many aspects of Church teachings and he was burnt at the stake for heresy. However, his teachings and martyrdom spread through Czech lands creating a strong reformation movement.

Johannes Gutenberg (1400-1468) Gutenberg was the inventor of movable type printing in Europe. This started a printing revolution; which enabled the spread of printed works across Europe. Also, produced the 'Gutenberg Bible'. This invention was critical in enabling the spread of the printed works of the Protestant reformation.

Contemporaries of Martin Luther

Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536) Erasmus was a Catholic priest and noted scholar. He was a significant figure of the Renaissance and preached religious tolerance. Although he remained a Catholic all his life, he wanted to see the Church reform and his ideas proved influential in the Reformation and the development of Protestantism.

Huldrych Zwingli (1484-1531) A principal figure in the Reformation in Switzerland and Europe. Zwingli proposed many reforms to the Catholic Church, based on the primacy of the Bible and influenced by his Renaissance learning and the works of Erasmus.

John Calvin (1509-1564) French Protestant reformer. Calvin broke from the Roman Catholic Church in 1530. He wrote influential Christian works, which supported the Protestant reformation. He also introduced a new liturgy and form of church government. His theological teachings formed a basis of Reformed, Congregational, and Presbyterian churches.

Lcr.yardley.org adds this further insight into the man John Calvin and his theology: "John Calvin, a major figure of Reformed Theology. Reformed theology, whose greatest representative is John Calvin, joined

the Lutherans in teaching the three solas of Protestantism: Sola Fide (Faith alone) means that we are never justified by works. Sola Gratia (Grace alone) means we can never do anything to merit God's acceptance. And Sola Scriptura (Scripture alone) means that no beliefs are necessary to accept unless they are in the Bible.

At the center of Calvin's theology is "adoption," which means God elects to make some people his children by the grace of Christ. What is new in Calvin's doctrine of predestination is that believers can and should know they are among the elect, predestined for salvation, so they can be certain even in this life they are already saved for eternity. While Calvin taught that God predestines some people for damnation as well as salvation; later Calvinists incorporated this doctrine of "double predestination" into a system of eternal divine decrees. The Synod of Dordt (1618 - 1619) formulated the classic doctrines of Five-Point Calvinism, traditionally symbolized by the acronym TULIP.

This word stood for the concepts of: Total depravity, Unconditional election, Limited atonement, Irresistible grace, and Perseverance of the saints. Total depravity is a doctrine shared with Lutherans, while unconditional election and irresistible grace are shared with Augustine. The Calvinist doctrine of perseverance of the saints, however, stems from Calvin's radical innovation in the doctrine of predestination, teaching that believers can know they are eternally saved because they will persevere to the end in faith. The doctrine of limited atonement is the most controversial of the five. It is found nowhere outside of Calvinism, and even some Calvinists disagree with it. To perhaps better appreciate the diversity of the Reformation here are a few words about the Synod of Dordt. It was convened by Dutch Reformed pastors and theologians to formalize reformed thought. But, much like the council of Nicea it was also convened to reject Arminianism.

Arminianism. This is a Protestant theology in the Reformed tradition (named for Jacob Arminius) which assigned a larger role to free will in salvation. While rejected by the Calvinists and Dutch Reformed movement, it became widespread among both Anglicans and Baptists and was wholeheartedly adopted by John Wesley and the Methodists. As noted before, Lutherans and Reformed theologians disagreed about the presence of Christ's body in the Eucharist or Lord's Supper; Lutherans arguing for the doctrine of real presence and the Reformed insisting that the body of Christ was not physically enclosed in the bread. Calvin attempted to close this gap, but could never accept the Lutheran insistence that even unbelievers receive Christ's body in the Supper. In terms of theology, Luther and Calvin were often in disagreement, but Calvin's theology was a major impetus in the development of the Protestant forensic doctrine of justification. What this means is that God declares sinners righteous when they believe. Think of the line from the hymn Amazing Grace, "How blessed did that grace appear the hour I first believed" and you can better grasp the concept. For all Protestant theologians, the foundation of all the benefits received by faith is union with Christ."

Jacobus Arminius[a] (October 10, 1560 - October 19, 1609), the Latinized name of the Dutch theologian Jakob Hermanszoon from the Protestant Reformation period, served from 1603 as professor in theology at the University of Leiden. He wrote many books and treatises on theology, and his views became the basis of Arminianism and the Dutch Remonstrant movement. Following his death, his challenge to the

Reformed standard, the Belgic Confession, provoked ample discussion at the Synod of Dort, which crafted the five points of Calvinism in response to Arminius's teaching (Credit: Wikipedia).

Other offspring of the Reformation

The early Anabaptists

Lcr.yardley.org notes: "The Anabaptists, meaning "re-baptizers," broke from the Reformed tradition in Switzerland when they could see no grounds for infant baptism in scripture. For the Anabaptists, baptism was only for adult believers, a mark of their commitment to living a radically new life in Christian community. Some Anabaptists were persecuted as dangerous radicals- some of them were. They took over the Dutch city of Münster by force. But after they were slaughtered, the movement took a pacifist turn lead by Menno Simons, after whom the Mennonites are named. Other strands of the radical reformation included the Rationalist Socinians, who rejected the doctrine of the Trinity, and spiritualists such as Sebastian Franck who denied any need for an institutional church. Other mainline Protestant denominations which sprang from the Anabaptist line are the Baptists, Amish and Mennonites as previously mentioned."

English Reformation

The Reformation was largely a fringe movement except in Germany and selected cities of Europe such as Geneva and the smaller nations. This situation was to dramatically change when the English got into the fray in a very strange twist of history: desire of King Henry VIII to re-marry when his wife Catherine of Aragon was unable to bear him a male heir. Because she was related to the influential couple in the Catholic world, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain who were highly favored in Rome and because of Catholic doctrine, the Pope refused to grant annulment of their marriage. The reaction of King Henry VIII based on advice from his counsellors changed the course of history. He defied the pope and 'nationalized all of its assets (spiritual and economic) to create the Church of England of which he was the final authority. In essence, Church and State, were forged into a permanent union. That is how the Church of England became an 'Established' entity with key Bishops automatically members of the House of Lords in Parliament. A Book of Common Prayer was compiled as a national heritage for all (Salvation did not matter in the theology that ensued).

Let us see what biographyonline.com says of some of the key personalities in that saga:

Henry VIII (1491 - 1547) King from 1509 to 1547. Henry VIII split the Church of England from Rome, leading to the rise of Protestantism in England. He dissolved the monasteries and reduced the power of the church.

Anne Boleyn (1501- 1536) 2nd wife to Henry VIII. Anne Boleyn was influential in forcing Henry VIII to break with Rome and set up the Church of England. Anne Boleyn was former Mistress-in-waiting to Queen Catherine. She was crowned Queen in 1533, but after failing to produce a male heir, Boleyn was executed in 1536.

Thomas Cromwell (1485 - 1540) Right hand man of King Henry VIII. Cromwell pushed for Henry to break with Rome and set up the Church of England. Cromwell also led the dissolution of the monasteries and attack on the old religious traditions of the Catholic faith.

Thomas Cranmer (1489 - 1556) Archbishop of Canterbury during reign of Henry VIII, Edward VI and Mary I. Cranmer was a key figure in the English Reformation, reducing the influence of the Holy See and writing an English Common Book of Prayer

Queen Elizabeth I (1533 - 1603) Queen from (1558 to 1603). She reverted England back to Protestantism after the brief reign of her Catholic sister Mary. Despite great tensions, she largely avoided the descent into religious strife. She also led her country to a famous defeat of the (Catholic) Spanish Armada when England looked vulnerable to invasion.

Apart from John Wycliffe and Johannes Gutenberg, another Publisher who played a critical role in the Reformation was:

William Tyndale (1494 - 1536) was one of the first persons to print the Bible in English. He worked on translating the Bible into English even when it was deemed to be an illegal act. He was executed for blasphemy after years of avoiding capture. His English Bible was ironically then taken up by Henry VIII after he broke from the Roman Catholic Church.

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lcr.yardley.org has details of other off-springs of Anglicanism: The Puritans, Baptists, and Quakers who played key roles in spread of the gospel and colonization of America:

Puritans

Anglican theology, which is the theology of the English Reformation, retains some Catholic sacramental and ceremonial practices (The Book of Common Prayer) but is based on a largely Reformed theological foundation (confessional document 39 Articles). For this reason, it is often called the *via media* or middle way between Catholicism and Protestantism. The Puritans began as Anglicans who desired a more thoroughly Reformed church, divested of the “popish ceremonies” and devoted more seriously to biblical preaching and effective church discipline. They disagreed about church government, most opposed the Episcopal government of the Church of England, and a majority advocated Presbyterianism, but there were also influential Congregationalists, including those who founded the New England colonies.

Wikipedia adds that “The Puritans were a group of English Reformed Protestants in the 16th and 17th centuries who sought to “purify” the Church of England from its “Catholic” practices, maintaining that the Church of England was only partially reformed.”. They played a major role in the birth of America

because the Pilgrim Fathers set off from England to America in search of liberty from the stifling religious atmosphere where the Crown played a key role in regulating religion. Here is how history.com states it:

“Puritanism was a religious reform movement that arose within the Church of England in the late sixteenth century. Under siege from church and crown, it sent an offshoot in the third and fourth decades of the seventeenth century to the northern English colonies in the New World—a migration that laid the foundation for the religious, intellectual, and social order of New England. Puritanism, however, was not only a historically specific phenomenon coincident with the founding of New England; it was also a way of being in the world—a style of response to lived experience—that has reverberated through American life ever since.”

Baptists

The first Baptists were Puritan Separatists early in the 17th century, who rejected infant baptism because they believed the church was a covenanted community. Key issues for Baptists include whether any kind of baptism outside a Baptist church is valid; whether those who are not members of the covenanted community should be admitted to communion; whether there is such a thing as a non-Baptist church and, if not, whether it is possible if there ever was a time that the Baptist church did not exist.

The official website of the Baptist Union in United Kingdom provides this interesting insight into this movement which has also played a key role in development of America:

“In this Baptist family everybody is equal, for everybody has a part to play in the service of God. There is no hierarchy of bishops or priests exercising authority over their members. Equality of status, however, does not mean that all have the same role. Each local Baptist church appoints its own leaders, or ministers, to have particular responsibility for preaching, teaching, and pastoral care. Working alongside these ministers are also deacons, who together with the minister(s) form the leadership team of the local Baptist church. Baptists are grass-roots people, with a particular emphasis on the local church. These local churches are self-governing and self-supporting, ranging in size from twenty or so members to many hundreds. Although each Baptist church is an independent entity, Baptists nonetheless have always believed in associating with one another - and so the churches come together in regional, national, and international spheres to promote and support the fellowship of Baptists everywhere.

The Quakers

Later in the 17th century, the Quakers developed a theology and church practice based on turning to the inner light of the Spirit as the true source of revelation. Like the Baptists, their rejection of the claims of the state church led to their persecution and their advocacy of freedom of religion for all.

Founded in England as a protest of the established Anglican Church, the belief system of the Quakers is best appreciated with this piece of information from Wikipedia about its founder, George Fox. Among his ideas were:

- Rituals can be safely ignored, as long as one experiences a true spiritual conversion.
- The qualification for ministry is given by the Holy Spirit, not by ecclesiastical study. This implies that anyone has the right to minister, assuming the Spirit guides them, including women and children.
- God "dwelleth in the hearts of his obedient people": religious experience is not confined to a church building. Indeed, Fox refused to apply the word "church" to a building, using instead the name "steeple-house", a usage maintained by many Quakers today. Fox would just as soon worship in fields and orchards, believing that God's presence could be felt anywhere.
- Though Fox used the Bible to support his views, Fox reasoned that, because God was within the faithful, believers could follow their own inner guide rather than rely on a strict reading of Scripture or the word of clerics.
- Fox also made no clear distinction between Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

He was so put off by how Religion had been confined to 'Church buildings' that the formal title of his movement is the Society of Friends or the Religious Society of Friends. One of its members, William Penn is regarded as founder of the City of Philadelphia and owner of the territory now known as State of Pennsylvania and the areas of lower Delaware (they were given to him by the English Crown to settle debts owed to his father, Admiral Penn). He is the unsung grandfather of the United States of America.

Review Questions

1. Please share what you understood from the lives and works of any two other reformers.

Chapter 57

Outcomes of the Reformation Part 1 Positives Successes

At this point in our study, we need to step back and allow Holy Spirit to cast a strong beam of light on 500 years of history since 1517 to appreciate the impact of the Protestant Reformation sparked by the Ninety-Five Theses posted on the door of All Saints Church at Wittenberg by Martin Luther. We will consider fruits of the Reformation considered as successful or positive outcomes.

Spiritual

The very first port of call in this exercise is the spiritual arena. Picture Europe 500 years ago. It was a land covered with gross darkness which came through two main sources: Idolatry of unconverted people groups or the overbearing presence of the Roman Catholic Church. With its ecclesiastical system, the pyramid of authority led all the way to Rome where the pope sat as Supreme Pontiff with the power to do and undo. Most of the popes used and abused their powers to preside over a 'conquered' people who lived as vassals to the church. Fear of the pope, Archbishop, Bishop, and Parish priest rather than Elohim was the beginning of wisdom for both nobles and commoners. The oppression was palpable. The methods of extracting money from the people were exacting as the abuse of Indulgences for fund-raising revealed.

Amid this gross darkness, Elohim was up to something which appeared local at first but was to later burst loose on the world scene: Reveal Himself and His Salvation by Grace to a handful of humans with the capacity to be vessels through which He would open the eyes of multitudes and pull down the grip of mystery Babylon. Without being exhaustive, let us capture some of the most outstanding fruits of the Protestant Reformation which was flagged off on that fateful day, October 31, 1517.

Monopoly of Roman Catholicism was Broken Forever

The way Martin Luther and other Reformers boldly challenged the errors, heresies, and apostasies of the doctrines/dogmas and traditions of men, which made up the belief system and some aspects of the liturgies of Roman Catholicism in their days, created a massive new reality in Europe. That reality was the monopoly of Roman Catholicism as sole (and official) religion of the continent was permanently broken. Starting with the people of Germany and stretching on to Switzerland, other nations and eventually Britain, it became obvious people could access Elohim and gain the satisfaction of doing so outside of the confines of the Roman Church.

Sole Authority of the Papacy Way Broken

In the same way, the former perception and understanding that the pope was the sole vicar of Jesus and ultimate authority over all matters of faith were broken. Nowhere was this dramatically demonstrated with exponential results than in England. When King Henry VIII pulled the nation out of Roman Catholicism, he denied the pope one of his prized Jewels! The king went on to 'nationalize' the church to create Church of England, confiscated its assets and closed Roman Catholic Monasteries and Abbeys.

Salvation by Grace through Faith Became Mainstreamed Again

With the formal advent of Roman Catholicism between 311 to 381 AD the Church had successfully re-defined the Gospel of Yeshua and the Kingdom into a set of beliefs out of sync with the New Covenant scriptures. In the same way, rituals to be performed ceaselessly within Church buildings had effectively snuffed out any prospect of a personal relationship with Elohim by church goers. It was religion at its worst! The remnant who were preserved by Grace was a tiny minority who met in homes and nondescript places to avoid detection and persecution. In the public space, Rome reigned supreme alone over the people. In the article by Robert Wilde titled 'A Beginner's Guide to the Protestant Reformation' published on the website of thoughtco.com, this powerful background to the Reformation is presented:

"In the early 16th century western and central Europe followed the Latin Church headed by the Pope. While religion permeated the lives of everyone in Europe – even if the poor focused on religion as a way to improve day to day issues and the rich on improving the afterlife – there was widespread dissatisfaction with many aspects of the church: At its bloated bureaucracy, perceived arrogance, avarice and abuses of power. There was also widespread agreement that the church needed to be reformed, to restore it to a purer and more accurate form. While the church was certainly vulnerable to change, there was little agreement on what should be done.

A massively fragmented reform movement, with attempts from the Pope at the top to priests at the bottom, was ongoing, but attacks tended to focus on only one aspect at a time, not the whole church and the local nature led only to local success.

Perhaps the main bar to change was the belief that the church still offered the only route to salvation. What was needed for mass change was a theologian/argument which could convince a mass of both people and priests they did not need the established church to save them, allowing reform to run unchecked by previous loyalties. Martin Luther presented just such a challenge."

When Martin Luther was illuminated to understand all his exertions to find peace with Elohim were works of flesh, unacceptable to him, the words of Romans 1:17 set off a set of light bulbs whose end was that Salvation is only possible as a gift of Grace through Faith in the completed work of Yeshua, Jesus on the Cross

Romans 1:17 (KJV) *17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*

With time, he and various reformers were to be liberated from religion and religiosity by such other scriptures like this:

Ephesians 2:4-8 (KJV) *4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

Hebrews 10:38 (KJV) *38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*

In other words, Salvation by Grace through Faith in Yeshua, Jesus which was believed and practiced by only a tiny remnant suddenly became a truth known by and accepted by many more people in the public space without fear of persecution by Rome! The Remnant found a home and acceptance in the mainstream of life.

Birth and Growth of the Protestant Movement

Though largely localized to Wittenberg at first, the events of 1517 were the beginning of a spiritual cultural shift later branded as the Protestant Movement or Protestantism. It spread across Germany and due to the acute persecution Martin Luther faced, became a known fact throughout the Roman Catholic world. By involving the Emperor, the protest of Martin Luther became known across the Roman Empire. In his article *A Beginners guide to the Protestant Reformation*, Robert Wilde provides this snapshot of outcomes of the Reformation:

Brief Summary of Reformation Changes:

“Souls were saved without the cycle of penitence and confession (which was now sinful), but by faith, learning and the grace of God. Scripture was the sole authority, to be taught in the vernacular (the local languages of the poor). A new church structure: A community of believers, focused around a preacher, needing no central hierarchy. The two sacraments mentioned in the scriptures were kept, albeit altered but the other five were downgraded.

In short, the elaborate, costly, organized church with often absent priests was replaced by austere prayer, worship, and local preaching, striking a chord with lay people and theologians like.”

With time, other local/City or national Protest movements arose across Europe. General estimates of the number of Protestants world-wide range from 800 million (by Wikipedia) to about 1 Billion souls worldwide. Unfortunately, this includes all ‘non-Catholic’ Churches which have some form of belief in Jesus but do not embrace Salvation by Grace through Faith (including Jehovah Witnesses; Mormons, and Anglicans). From a quantity perspective, this has been truly an exponential growth. In the same way, there are several nations which are predominantly Protestant rather than Roman Catholic worldwide.

Social, Political and Economic Outcomes

1. Personal Liberty was unleashed and Education was liberalized

During the Medieval Times, Europe under the suzerainty of Roman Catholic church was marked by superstition, mass ignorance, and epidemics which decimated the population from time to time. During those days, people were programmed to accept every word of authority as true; very few people, mainly children of nobles had access to higher education with most universities owned by the Roman Catholic Church. Scientific thoughts were repressed. Coming out of this darkness was a new wave of light that was the Renaissance. It was marked by inquisitiveness, scientific inquiry, holding authorities to account and desire for personal liberty. Here is how History.com presented the Protestant Reformation within the context of the Renaissance:

“The Protestant Reformation was the 16th-century religious, political, intellectual and cultural upheaval that splintered Catholic Europe, setting in place the structures and beliefs that would define the continent in the modern era. In northern and central Europe, reformers like Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Henry VIII challenged papal authority and questioned the Catholic Church’s ability to define Christian practice. They argued for a religious and political redistribution of power into the hands of Bible- and pamphlet-reading pastors and princes. The disruption triggered wars, persecutions, and the so-called Counter-Reformation, the Catholic Church’s delayed but forceful response to the Protestants.”

Knowing the power of education, various Protestant reformers invested heavily in both secular and spiritual educational institutions. The result was well-educated people and ministers of the gospel in cities and nations with strong Protestant roots. In his assessment of the effect of the Reformation on the policy and social systems of Europe, Robert Wilde had this to say in his article we previously quoted:

“REFORMED CHURCHES FORM:

The reformation movement was adopted by lay people and powers, merging with their political and social aspirations to produce sweeping changes on everything from the personal level – people converting – to the highest reaches of government, where towns, provinces and whole kingdoms officially and centrally introduced the new church, even barring the old across.

Government action was needed as the reformed churches had no central authority to disband the old church and install the new order. The process was haphazard – with much regional variation – and carried out over decades.

Historians still debate the reasons why people, and the governments who reacted to their wishes, took up the ‘Protestant’ cause (as the reformers became known), but a combination is likely, involving seizing land and power from the old church, genuine belief in the new message, ‘flattery’ by lay people at being involved in religious debate for the first time and in their language, deflecting dissent onto the church and freedom from old church restrictions.

The Reformation did not occur bloodlessly. There was a military conflict in the Empire before a settlement allowing old church and Protestant worship was passed, while France was riven by the ‘Wars of Religion’, killing tens of thousands. Even in England, where a Protestant church was established, both sides were persecuted as the old church Queen Mary ruled in between Protestant monarchs.”

2. Role in creating a healthy work ethic which under-girded the Industrial Revolution and advancement in all spheres of endeavor

With better education and personal access to Elohim, the peoples of protestant communities, cities, and nations had their creative minds unleashed. The results were:

- Better standards of life
- Greater desire for self-actualization
- Better work ethic. For most Protestants, work was a sacred duty to both Elohim as well as a means to be responsible for the family.

- Better productivity in the work place. Even till today, citizens of Catholic nations of Europe work less than those in Protestant nations
- Overall, the economy fared better in Protestant nations than in Roman Catholic ones. By the time of the Industrial Revolution, this liberated attitude attuned them to reap the massive opportunities offered by the invention of machines.
- Solidarity. Because they were persecuted, Protestants exercised solidarity with each other. Here is how History.com records this reality when applied to Geneva, the Protestant theocracy of the era:

“Calvin’s Geneva became a hotbed for Protestant exiles, and his doctrines quickly spread to Scotland, France, Transylvania and the Low Countries, where Dutch Calvinism became a religious and economic force for the next 400 years.”

3. The legacy of the Reformation. Speaking of the legacy, let us consider this brief summary by History.com:

“But the Reformation’s positive repercussions can be seen in the intellectual and cultural flourishing it inspired on all sides of the schism—in the strengthened universities of Europe, the Lutheran church music of J.S. Bach, the baroque altarpieces of Pieter Paul Rubens and even the capitalism of Dutch Calvinist merchants.”

4. Roman Catholic Counter Reformation

Ironically, the Protestant Reformation also had a positive effect on the Roman Catholic Church. After more than one millennium in which it exercised absolute power, it dawned on the popes and the other leaders, that pretending nothing was wrong would be self-destructive. Partly to stem the massive outflow of people in search of spiritual awakening, the Roman Catholic Church launched the Counter Reformation. Again, let us recourse to History.com for a snapshot of this ingenious attempt to truncate the Protestant spirit:

“The Catholic Church was slow to respond systematically to the theological and publicity innovations of Luther and the other reformers. The Council of Trent, which met off and on from 1545 through 1563, articulated the Church’s answer to the problems that triggered the Reformation and to the reformers themselves.

The Catholic Church of the Counter-Reformation era grew more spiritual, more literate and more educated. New religious orders, notably the Jesuits, combined rigorous spirituality with a globally minded intellectualism, while mystics such as Teresa of Avila injected new passion into the older orders. Inquisitions, both in Spain and in Rome, were reorganized to fight the threat of Protestant heresy.”

5. Fresh Renewals. While mainstream Protestant movements spiritually atrophied with time, Holy Spirit never ceased to visit the Church. The results were often manifested through fresh insights into the Holy Scriptures; hearts ablaze for Elohim; spirits empowerment of Holy Spirit and a new zeal for fulfilling the Great Commission. Some prominent among such visitations are:

- Evangelicalism

- Pentecostalism- After several waves of revival in England and America, the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, California in 1906 became the unquestionable foundation for fresh visitations of Holy Spirit. It is particularly significant because it was the first time that the mantle of leading a move of Elohim rested on a son of Ham, William Seymour. Unfortunately, racism reared its ugly head and the brethren split along racial lines into:

Church of God in Christ - for 'Blacks'

Assemblies of God Church - for 'Whites'

- Charismatic movement
- Word of Faith Movement
- Mass Evangelism with Healing, Miracles, Signs, and Wonders
- The Holiness Movement
- The Prosperity Movement
- Prophetic Movement
- Fivefold Restoration Movement
- The Full Gospel Movement
- Pseudo-Kingdom Movement – (those who believe the Kingdom is greater than King Yeshua. They advocate that saints should preach the Kingdom, not Yeshua!)
- The Mega Church Movement

Review Questions

1. Please summarize any 3 of the successes of the Protestant Reformation you consider most outstanding.
2. Please write an essay of up to 3-5 pages maximum on item #.9 Fresh Renewals (1-12) describing the various moves of Elohim.

Chapter 58

Outcomes Part 2 Negatives Part 1

The positive effects of the Reformation are well known and publicly celebrated. Unfortunately, the Church has been strangely unwillingly to forensically examine 500 years of the Protestant Reformation to discover its failings. Without identifying failings of that massive paradigm shift, heirs of the Protestant Movement have lived like Ostrich with heads to the sand! The result is mistakes of the past have been routinely repeated again and again. In a sense, this scripture is a prophetic challenge to the Church which emerged out of the events of 1517:

Deuteronomy 1:6 (KJV) *6 The Lord our God spake unto us in Horeb, saying, Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount:*

With the Lord speaking expressly through various vessels that the return of King Yeshua is near, the time has come for the Protestant Movement to consider the Mirror of both the Word and History to locate the spots, wrinkles/traditions of humans and other negative features of its various theologies, liturgies and practices/traditions. When such honest assessments are made at prompting of Holy Spirit, the Church will be ready for its Groom. That is why the Lord is unleashing the power of the Word:

Ephesians 5:25-27 (KJV) *25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

Clear Negative Outcomes, which represent failings of the Reformation include these:

#.1. The Protestant Reformation of 1517 did not deal with the Root cause of the need to come out of Mystery Babylon.

One would have expected a Reformer like Martin Luther who branded the Roman Catholic Church as Mystery Babylon to opt for a separate existence of the movement he led from the government of his day. After all, our Lord had clearly advocated in John 17 that His Church would be in the world but not of it. In the Book of Revelation, the Lord had clearly warned His Church about the danger posed by Mystery Babylon and advocated a 'coming out' of her:

Revelation 18:1-5 (KJV) *1 And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. 2 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. 3 For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. 4 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. 5 For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.*

Ultimately, the Reformation was not a fundamental repudiation of Christian Religion as practiced over a thousand years by Rome. It was rather an attempt to change some issues that Martin Luther found repugnant in the Roman Catholic Church. In essence, the axe was not laid at the root but rather, branches were lobbed off while the main tree remained! Right from the inception of the Reformation and all through the first and second waves, the spirit of Babylon had access to creep in and eventually dominate the Church. This was manifested in two broad ways. Those who desire to limit the description of Mystery Babylon to only the Roman Catholic Church need to consider the reality that in describing that entity, there is a prophetic hint that it would bear offspring!

Revelation 17:1-6 (KJV) *1 And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: 2 With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. 3 So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. 4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: 5 And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon The Great, The Mother Of Harlots And Abominations Of The Earth. 6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.*

The phrase 'Mother of Harlots' clearly means that this apostate religious system which deceives people to co-mingle with the world would have its roots in the 'Mother Church'! Let us examine some telltale signs of this spiritual malaise.

i. Political patronage of the Nobles

Right from the beginning, in fleeing the long tentacles of Rome, Martin Luther sought protection from Frederick the Elector of Saxony. His patronage was cited in the letter of Luther to Archbishop Albrecht of Mainz. That patron status continued for a long time.

2. Protestantism became established: union of Church and State

Various nobles and nations who despised the avarice and oppressiveness of the Roman Catholic Church veered the other way to embrace and make the Protestant Churches their 'established' or State Church. By such marriage of Church and State, the spirit of the world took the upper hand over time while the Church validated all human frailties of those in authority.

Germany. Eventually, what Luther established as a protest against Rome – Lutheranism became the official religion of Germany. Because of the wide acceptance of Lutheranism as by nobles and commoners of the Germans, the Treaty of Augsburg of 1555 guaranteed to both Roman Catholics and Germans that they could worship freely as they chose.

The sum total of what we hear by Holy Spirit in the Word is that practically speaking, Martin Luther successfully took the Church out of the hands of her former husband, Rome only to wed her with a new husband, Germany!

Geneva, Switzerland. John Calvin established an autocratic theocracy in Geneva, making it the 'holy City' of Europe. Regarded by many as the New Jerusalem, it was to be his appointed laboratory to prove that when Christians are in authority, righteousness would prevail. Unfortunately, the Theocratic government of ruling priests he established did not guarantee long lasting righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. This state of affairs will be manifested in the earth realm during the millennial reign of Yeshua, Jesus. From this resource: jaesblogspot.blogspot.co.uk is this insightful perspective of Calvin's Geneva:

"He then turned the city of Geneva into such strict and lawful atmosphere, that it was renamed as "City of God". Even though Calvinism suggests an excellent teaching of trusting God and following the rules, it truly shows uncomfortable, dictator-like atmosphere. Therefore, to me, not only this religion is visualized as a "jail" located in Washington D.C., but also it represents a negative way of reformation.

England. As noted in an earlier chapter, King Henry VIII was not driven by the need for religious purity when he left the Roman Catholic Church. It was the refusal of the pope to grant him divorce which led him to nationalize Roman Catholic Church assets in England. The new Protestant religion he created: Church of England/Anglicanism became the 'Established Church of his realm. It has been so ever since with Salvation by Grace an exception, rather than the norm in many parishes.

This tendency of seeking the union of Church and State subsists till today in various forms. Whereas the Pilgrim Fathers sought to escape the stifling effects of the State on the practice of their faith, their offspring did not demur to desire union of Church and State during the Constitutional Conventions which gave rise to the United States of America. Despite clear language of the Constitution which declares America as a nonreligious State, many Church leaders hold onto any straw of reference to biblical passages to insist that America is a Christian nation.

#.2. Anti-Semitism

Another major Negative outcome of the Protestant Reformation of Martin Luther was the spirit of anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism is the spiritual and social sin of hating the Jews as a people group because of who they are. Various people are inspired to hate the Jews/Hebrews for various reasons. For some, the root is jealousy over their distinguished accomplishments in Banking, the Media, Medicine, education, the Professions and in real estate. For adherents of the various religions on earth, that hatred is predicated on their election as a chosen people of Elohim through His covenant with Abraham

Genesis 12:1-3 (KJV) *1 Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

In Genesis 17 Elohim established this special Covenant with Abraham and his seed by the rite of Circumcision of all males.

Let us review this material from the luther.de website concerning the later years of Martin Luther. The Lord has preserved records of this controversial part of his illustrious life for the remnant of the end time to know that it is easy to stumble when we try to use the logic of the human minds to comprehend

spiritual things. It is ironic that the Book of Romans was the key part of the Holy Scriptures from where illumination of Truth came to Martin Luther that we are justified by Faith and made righteous in the sight of Elohim by His Grace, not our works Romans 1:17.

Unfortunately, this great expositor of the Holy Scriptures did not diligently study and understand Romans chapters 9, 10, 11 which dealt with the temporary falling away of the Hebrews/Jews as the very basis of which a door of opportunity was opened for the Gentiles – including him - to come into the Kingdom! Let us consider this insight gleaned from the website of luther.de
“Luther's Last Years of Life (1540-46)

Luther's relationship to people with different beliefs, especially the Jews, deteriorated drastically during these years. His 1523 work *Jesus was born a Jew* showed a conciliatory attitude; however, in later years the aging reformer sentenced all who did not want to convert to his beliefs. The strongly anti-Semitic work *Jews and their Lies* (1543) came out during this period.

Luther continued to lead the Reformation in its fight against its enemies even in the last years of his life. With his 1545 work *Against the Papacy at Rome Founded by the Devil!* he performed his last blow against the Roman Church.”

Not all are convinced that Luther hated the Jews of his day. In an article in *Christianity Today* titled ‘Was Martin Luther Anti-Semitic’, Eric W. Gritsch writes:

“Set fire to their synagogues or schools,” Martin Luther recommended in *On the Jews and Their Lies*. Jewish houses should “be razed and destroyed,” and Jewish “prayer books and Talmudic writings, in which such idolatry, lies, cursing, and blasphemy are taught, [should] be taken from them.” In addition, “their rabbis [should] be forbidden to teach on pain of loss of life and limb.” Still, this wasn’t enough.

Luther also urged that “safe-conduct on the highways be abolished completely for the Jews,” and that “all cash and treasure of silver and gold be taken from them.” What Jews could do was to have “a flail, an ax, a hoe, a spade” put into their hands so “young, strong Jews and Jewesses” could “earn their bread by the sweat of their brow.”

These fierce comments have puzzled and embarrassed Christians who otherwise admire the Reformer. And they have led to charges that Luther was “one of the ‘church fathers’ of anti-Semitism.” More seriously, Luther’s attacks have been seen as paving the way for Hitler.

Was Luther anti-Semitic? How should we understand his words?

“Receive Jews Cordially”

In 1523, Luther accused Catholics of being unfair to Jews and treating them “as if they were dogs,” thus making it difficult for Jews to convert. “I would request and advise that one deal gently with them [the Jews],” he wrote. “If we really want to help them, we must be guided in our dealings with them not by papal law but by the law of Christian love. We must receive them cordially, and permit them to trade and work with us, hear our Christian teaching,” Culled from *Christianity Today*

We have no idea whether this exhortation came from the heart or was rather a means to gain their trust for the gospel to be preached.

Two major attempts to destroy Jews illustrate how the vileness of Antisemitism can prompt savage actions against them. Note that the first was during the Roman Catholic era (about 411 years before the Protestant Reformation while the second was in 1941-45 about 424 years later.

A. Horrors of the 'Bloody Crusades'

About 411 years before the Protestant Reformation, the Roman Catholic Church manifested its anti-Semitic roots when Pope Urban II inaugurated the Crusades in 1096 to seize Jerusalem from Muslims. Very few foresaw the extreme manifestation of wickedness against Jews that was to follow. Chabad.org documents two particularly gory chapters of that ugly patch of 'Christian history worthy of consideration and representational repentance:

"The First Crusade started out from France in 1095. To remain in the good graces of the Crusaders, French Jews supplied funds and food for the journey. However, when some of the Crusaders reached Germany, their mood changed drastically. Among many Crusaders the feeling grew rapidly that before they attacked the heathens in far-off Palestine, there were infidels much closer to home with whom they should contend.

In May 1096, in a period of four weeks, frenzied bands of Crusaders struck the Jewish communities of Speyer, Worms, Mainz, and Cologne. The Jews were offered the option of conversion to Christianity or death; the vast majority chose the path of Kiddush HaShem, sanctification of G-d's name. Rather than submit to forced conversion, in many cases, Jews killed their wives and children, and then themselves. In the words of one of the Kinnot recited on Tisha B'Av: "Who can see it and not cry/As the child is slaughtered, the father recites the Shema/ Has such been seen or heard before?" Estimates of the toll taken on the Jewish communities range from 3,000 to 10,000 deaths." Undaunted, unstoppable, the Crusaders conquered Eretz Israel, reaching Jerusalem in 1099. Once there, they gathered all the Jews of Jerusalem into the central synagogue and set it afire. Other Jews, who had climbed to the roof of Al-Aksa mosque on the Temple Mount, were caught and beheaded. The Crusader leader, Godfrey of Bouillon, wrote to the Pope, "If you want to know what has been done with the enemy found in Jerusalem...our people had their vile blood up to the knees of their horses." After this victory, the Crusaders retained control of Jerusalem for close to 100 years." The Crusades set a dangerous precedent -- the rise of organized, popular, anti-Jewish uprisings. Although both the Pope and the local authorities were generally opposed to the Crusaders' excesses in Germany, these leaders' hostility to Jews caused them to remain apathetic to Jewish suffering, thus they generally did not intervene. After the First Crusade, instances of mob persecution occurred regularly. Therefore, the Crusades can be seen as the source for much of subsequent Christian persecution. In keeping with the traditional Jewish viewpoint, that the beginning of a tragedy is noted, the events of the Crusades are commemorated."

Worse was to come – just a few hundred years down the line of history.

B. The Holocaust and anti-Semitism across Europe are legacies of that evil seed!

Words are powerful and can be interpreted negatively by those with lesser qualities. Because Martin Luther did not understand the temporariness of stumbling of Jews/Hebrews and the redemptive role assigned to Gentiles as instruments of reconciling them to Elohim, he sowed an evil seed which was to

sprout with deadly consequences. About 424 years after the Reformation and after generations of hatred of Jews in Germany and Europe, the unthinkable happened when Adolf Hitler set out to physically implement an ultimate solution: The Holocaust. By the time the dust settled, over 6 million Jews had been brutally murdered by the Nazis. The DNA of Rome was flowing through veins of its Protestant offspring.

Over the years since then, from Spain to France, England and indeed across most of Europe, prosperous Jews of various generations have suffered internal displacement, exile, and confiscation of their hard-earned properties and financial assets for the crime of being Jews! We need to remember that the Roman Catholic Church practiced a replacement theology through which it was inclined to position itself as inheritor of all the blessings of Abraham as the 'new Israel of God'. The emergent Protestant Church inherited that DNA of Rome and cultured it even more profoundly! Hebraic names of Elohim were eliminated from the psyche of Christians as well as their roots in the covenant with Abraham.

Consequences of anti-Semitism and the delayed restitution

These and other reasons are why the average Christian of today has no burden for salvation of Jews/Hebrews; most have allowed anti-Semitism to affect their attitude to the State of Israel with many Christians in Europe inclined to support Palestinians and their points of view. The fact that Yeshua was Incarnated in a Jewish Body; that all but one of His 12 Disciples were Jews; that the Alpha Church was largely Jewish for the first Century and that Jews preached and expanded the gospel worldwide from the Day of Pentecost in line with the Acts 1:8 mandate of the Great Commission has been lost on Protestants as it was on Roman Catholics. The idea that the Gentile dominated Christian Church has inherited all the promises of Elohim to the nation of Israel and the Hebraic/Jewish people is truly mind boggling in its heretical bent. Even more startling is the reality that Christians living in the End Times do not deem it needful to understand how unbiblical these views are. For this reason, the representational repentance which is needful to be done for the Sin of Anti-Semitism has tarried. It is a vital obligation that the Remnant owe the Hebraic peoples and nation of Israel to publicly repent of these hurtful doctrines of men which run counter to the full revelation of mind of Elohim expressed in Romans chapters 9, 10 and 11.

#.3. The Reformation was spiritually deficient: lacking understanding of full gospel of the Kingdom

One of the most spectacular successes of the Protestant Reformation was re-discovery of the doctrine and practice of Salvation by Grace through Faith in Yeshua, Jesus. As Yeshua told Nicodemus, Salvation by Grace which leads to the New Birth experience grants humans access to the Kingdom:

John 3:3-7 (KJV) *3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. 8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: 15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

While Yeshua came to pour out His Blood as Atonement for all sinners, those who believe in Him and receive remission of sins become members of the family of Elohim, His sons in the earth realm

John 1:12 (KJV) *12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

Hebrews 2:10 (KJV) *10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*

They become citizens of the Kingdom by submitting to the Sovereign rule of Yeshua Who guides them by His Holy Spirit

Romans 8:14 (KJV) *14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*

With the Kingdom in their hearts, they are organically connected with all saints of all races, gender, classes, and ages both in the contemporary times, the past, and future as the Kingdom nation bound in love and unity

John 13:34-35 (KJV) *34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

John 17:21 (KJV) *21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*

Such Kingdom citizens live in the now for their King, occupying their assigned allotments of influence with gifts and callings vested in them by Yeshua until the day He comes to set up the manifest Kingdom. When He returns, they rule and reign with Him as priests and kings Revelations 1:6; Revelation 5:10; Revelation 20:

Yeshua came to preach this Kingdom message! It was the subject of His first sermon

Matthew 4:17, 23 (KJV) *17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. 23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.*

It was also the subject of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5, 6 & 7); it was the core of the parables. The miracles, signs, and wonders He performed were all in demonstration of the power of the Kingdom. When Pontius Pilate examined Yeshua, He was bold to assert that His Kingdom is not of this world!

John 18:36 (KJV) *36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.*

Neither Martin Luther, John Calvin, Ulrich nor any of the Reformers apparently received the proper and full revelation of the Kingdom nor did they have any in-depth teachings on them. This was a mortal flaw which opened the door for Christian Religion/Denominationalism or Churchianity to arise as chief fruit of the Protestant Reformation! It also laid the foundation for one of the greatest deceptions of all times:

the pseudo-kingdom movement to arise in the 21st Century. Whenever truth is hidden or undeclared, room is made for error to arise!

Review Questions

1. Please summarize each of the three failures/negative outcomes of the Protestant Reformation to the best of your ability. Be brief in each case.

Chapter 59

Negative Outcomes of the Protestant Reformation Part 2

Let us continue to examine the negative outcomes of the Reformation. In so doing, let us be gracious to acknowledge that all the reformers of the 16th century and their successors were obviously sincere in seeking to purge Christianity of some of the negative baggage of Roman Catholicism. In their zeal to effect change, however, they may have stumbled in ways that were not obvious to them or which they were convicted of and duly repented.

For this reason, we cannot pass judgment on their intentions or relationships with Elohim. Let us receive therefore from both revelation of Holy Spirit as well as well documented historical realities some more negative outcomes of the Protestant Reformation which represent failings that should not be repeated in this season when the return of the Lord is imminent.

#.4. There was cherry picking of Scriptures involved in various Reformation movements rather than a wholesale return to The Word

It appears that as each reformer received illumination on specific truths in the Holy Scriptures, they tended to emphasize such with every ounce of strength in them. While this is certainly laudable, a real danger cropped up when they were silent on other equally important doctrines. After over a millennium during which Rome took out the Scriptures from the consciousness of church goers, Christianity needed a completely new direction. There was a need return to the Whole of Scriptures, not part so that Christians will be certain of their personal relationship with Elohim.

2 Timothy 3:14-17 (KJV) *14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; 15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

Caveat: None of us in this generation is qualified to judge any of the great vessels used by Elohim during the reformation era. However, the Holy Scriptures also enjoin us to examine actions and fruits to discern what to reject from what we need to take on board. That is the safe way to walk on the Narrow Path to eternity!

#.5. Protestantism made room for personal interpretation of the Holy Scriptures. The human mind with its capacity for reasoning went into overdrive, creating doctrines that were imbalanced and not based on the rightful division of the Word.

Looking back at the Reformation and the centuries which followed, we can discern clearly that ample room was made for personal interpretation of the Holy Scriptures. This ran contrary to the Word itself.

2 Peter 1:20 (KJV) *20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.*

Specific truths of the Holy Scriptures are part of an organic whole. When any truth is discovered, believed and pursued exclusive of the whole, it can lead people astray.

Examples and explanations

i. Predestination is in the Bible as these scriptures reveal

Romans 8:28-30 (KJV) *28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

Ephesians 1:4-6 (KJV) *4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*

At the same time, the matchless love of the Father for ALL sinners, not some is also very much part of the whole scriptures as these scriptures reveal

John 3:16-19 (KJV) *16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil*

Mystery of the will

In the same Holy Scriptures, there is a very strong advancement of the Truth that humans were created with the will through which they make decisions for which they are to be held to account. This started right from the days of Adam when he and Eve disobeyed a clear instruction of Elohim, ignored His warning of the consequences and exercised their will away from His

Genesis 2:16-17 (KJV) *16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

In Genesis chapter 3 we see how their disobedience led to strong consequences which linger till the end of the age. Throughout the Holy Scriptures, the picture is vividly painted that humans have the responsibility to receive and walk in the Grace to obey Elohim. Those who do otherwise risk censure, spiritual separation and if they remain in sin, eternal separation from Him in hell!

Calvinism results when this balanced consideration of the whole counsel of Scripture regarding Grace is ignored.

ii. Eternal Security/Hyper-Grace. In the same way, security of the redeemed is guaranteed by Elohim to the degree that neither Satan nor demons nor humans can pluck them out of Yeshua's hands.

John 10:27-29 (KJV) *27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*

This is because theirs is a life hidden in Him

Colossians 3:1-3 (KJV) *1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*

What it means when a saint sins

However, when a saint, yields to Satan's seductions it is the will that is surrendered to the enemy. Those who obey Satan rather than Elohim have got themselves a new Master: Satan. They have willingly surrendered to his Lordship and cannot claim to be under Grace. Grace empowers saints to live righteously, not to disobey Elohim and live in Sin!

Romans 6:1-2, 11-16 (KJV) *1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. 12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. 15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. 16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

For that reason, willful sin is just like an act of Treason in the Kingdom, punishable by eternal separation for those who remain therein until the date of death.

Hebrews 6:4-8 (KJV) *4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, 5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, 6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. 7 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: 8 But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.*

Hebrews 10:26-31 (KJV) *26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

Knowing the frailty of human nature, the same Elohim Who seeks holy living from saints at all times, has provided the remedy called REPENTANCE when they stumble in thought, word or deed!

1 John 1:5-10 (KJV) *5 you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.v6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:v7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.v8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.v9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.v10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*

1 John 2:1-2 (KJV) *1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

In other words, while saints have been redeemed from the hand of the enemy, they have a duty to lay hold of the Grace of Elohim to continue in the Faith grounded and settled, obedient to His word!

Colossians 1:21-23 (KJV) *21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled 22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: 23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;*

1 John 2:3-6 (KJV) *3 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. 4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. 6 He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*

Teaching Eternal Security based on one part of the Holy Scriptures while ignoring the whole picture is a dangerous cherry picking of the Word. Those who sin intentionally with no remorse or conviction because they believed in eternal security or hyper-grace and those who die in their sins because they believed those two doctrines are ultimately responsible for missing the essence of Grace. Those who taught them error will have part of the blame when Judgement Day comes.

#.6. Sectarianism and Denominationalism defined fruits of the Reformation.

Most reformers were highly charismatic personalities with gift of eloquence. This drew people to them, not necessarily to the Father and His Word. People were invited to encounter personal interpretations of selective scriptures rather than the entire counsel of Elohim and Yeshua, Jesus Himself. The outcome was denominationalism as people congregated around specific revelations and personalities

1 Corinthians 3:1-5, 22-23 (KJV) *1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. 2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. 3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? 4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? 5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?*

21 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are your's; 22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your's; 23 And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

Denominations have since then become the greatest weapon of Satan to frustrate fulfillment of the prayers of Yeshua to His Father for unity.

John 17:20-22 (KJV) *20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:*

Denominations divide and decimate strength of the Church! Till today, the average saint thinks of the Church and Kingdom in terms of their denominations/sects. In reality, only a few saints truly embrace the truth that saints of all races, ages, gender, location, congregations are all part of the one single, indivisible Body of Yeshua and His Kingdom nation in the earth realm

Ephesians 4:1-5 (KJV) *1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

1 Peter 2:9-10 (KJV) *9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*

#.7. The virus of Rebellion and personal ownership of Religious entities was released like a genie out of the bottle.

That first protest of Martin Luther against Rome led to creation of a new religious organization named after him: Lutheran Church/Lutheranism. This was an evil seed of epic proportions that has infected various branches of Protestantism! Till today, saints are divided according to how they relate to reformers who are long dead: Lutherans/Lutheranism; Calvinism/Calvinists; Arminianists, etc In the same way, saints use their spiritual experiences, rather than Yeshua and His Kingdom to define their identities: Baptists; Evangelicals; Pentecostals; Charismatics or even by being overly besotted by labels of their congregations to the point that they do not see the bigger, wider Body.

Today, majority of saints live without consciousness that it is not proper to bear the label of humans or religious organizations; that our core Identity is in Yeshua and in the Kingdom assignment committed to our trust. Today also, many saints are not able to walk in the reality of what Kingdom ministry is: the expression (or manifestation) of the gifts and callings Yeshua planted in us by Holy Spirit. In other words, Elohim is not asking us to build religious corporations we need to lead as evidence that we are in ministry. He has rather given us spheres of influence within which Holy Spirit wants to use our beings to show up and touch the lives of saints and sinners alike. In this Kingdom paradigm, all saints occupy their allotments by just impacting saint and sinners within their loops of influence as well as their communities as His Salt and Light! Luke 19:11-27; Matthew 5:13-16

When this paradigm of Kingdom ministry is understood and practiced, saints will stop making their plans of what to 'own' in terms of fellow saints, financial and material assets. We will rather allow our entire beings to be on the altar of sacrifice for He Who Owns us to use as it pleases Him

#.8. The Reformers did not discover and walk in manifestation of the Fivefold.

The Alpha Church had been instructed through revelations granted Paul that to keep ensure maturity of the Church and empower the brethren to live as an organic, rather than organizational whole, Yeshua gave His awesome authority to Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers

Ephesians 4:11-16 (KJV) *11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

It should be recalled that knowing that the presence of the Fivefold was a threat to the emergence of Mystery Babylon, the emergent Roman Catholic Church deleted the five offices and in its place embraced Nicolaitane tendencies which culminated in the pyramidal episcopacy with the Pope at apex, the Archbishops, Bishops and Parish Priest at the bottom. When the Protestant Movement burst onto the world scene, one would have expected it to realize how fundamental restoration of the Fivefold should be. Unfortunately, neither Martin Luther nor the other reformers of the 16th and 17th centuries dealt with this matter. The result was that believers of those days were tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine preached by powerful speakers.

#.9: The Priesthood of all saints while nominally acknowledged, did not truly materialize because the structure to make it real was not put in place.

The reality that Yeshua came to inaugurate the Royal Priesthood after the Order of Melchizedek so eloquently stated in the Book of Hebrews was largely ignored. Saints were not systematically taught the gifts of Holy Spirit Romans 12: 1-8; 1 Corinthians chapters 11 and 12; Ephesians 4: 11-16; 1 Peter 4:10-11 remained largely shrouded in mystery until much later with the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements. Understanding and practice of spiritual gifts has never been mainstreamed until today!"

#.10. Holy Spirit was not given space to lead and guide the Church nor was His Power sought as should have been.

Apart from a handful who were immersed in Holy Spirit and the Word, most of the accomplishments of many Reformers depended largely on their intellectual prowess, towering personalities, eloquence, and ability to use words. This situation was only partially redressed in pockets of revival in different parts of the world in the 19th and 20th centuries but never on a mass basis. To do Church without Presence and Power of Holy Spirit is a state of spiritual darkness! No wonder that as the Teacher promised by Yeshua was on the sidelines, the natural mind with its limitations went to work.

1 Corinthians 2:14 (KJV) *14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

#11. The Protestant Movement Retained the Roman Catholic Theatre Paradigm of Ministry which cultures ABC Christianity.

People flocked to meeting rooms to hear popular preachers of the day. With time, the individual preachers and their ideas became the focus rather than Yeshua and the Kingdom. The church was about Attendance, Buildings and of course the quantum of Cash generated to keep the system going.

Review Questions

1. Please discuss any 4 of negative outcomes of the Protestant Reformation which ministered most to you.
2. Why is it unhealthy to bear labels of spiritual identity of living or dead humans and religious organizations?

Chapter 60

Negative Outcomes of the Protestant Reformation Part 3

Let us continue to be prostrate before Elohim, seeking His face so that He will reveal to us all things which have combined to disfigure the Church of Yeshua and make it lose focus, rather blending with the world and been in cahoots with it. Let us give Him right of way to reveal so that as we repent, He may use us to redeem the situation:

Psalms 139:23-24 (KJV) *23 Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: 24 And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

Proverbs 28:13 (KJV) *13 He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*

#.12. The Faith which the Reformation re-discovered was defective in that it negated Love and Unity of the Faith, the twin signs that the World will use to know what is of and from Yeshua, Jesus, and the Kingdom!

The uniform testimony of History about the relationship of both the major Reformers and their followers is that it was less than desirable. It was one marked by competition, strife for pre-eminence and negativity! A Gospel devoid of love is a deficient one as the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians says because it breeds works of the flesh and emits a foul odor, rather than the sweet aroma of Yeshua!

Galatians 5:6-9, 13-16 (KJV) *6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love 7 Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? 8 This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. 9 A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.*

13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. 14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. 16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

Our Lord and King, Yeshua Himself pronounced Love and Unity as two qualities which enable the world to recognize His Church as the Kingdom agency in the earth realm:

John 13:34-35 (KJV) *34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

John 17:20-23 (KJV) *20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*

With each reformer clinging to the received revelations/illumination of scriptures and promoting same as the whole, the Body of Yeshua splintered and was unable to achieve the quality and quantity of synergy which would have caused many more to see the beauty of the Church and embrace the gospel.

In effect, the various half-gospels that people clung to made them members of denominations without consciousness of the unity of the Faith. What a tragic failure!

#.13. Nationalistic religious Ideologies, strict boundaries created a scenario of ‘us versus them’ which has plagued Christianity till today started.

What was shared in point 12 above and some others created a situation where different people groups and nationalities received and clung to the Protestant teachings and reformers they were affiliated to. The basis of racism and ethnic chauvinism now rampant in the Christian Community worldwide was laid by this tendency.

#.14. By not emphasizing the Kingdom but rather the creation of autonomous, nationalistic churches, the foundation was laid for what can today be termed as Churchianity.

This is competitive rather than the complementary preaching of the gospel. It created an environment for people to be comfortable with their church labels, relating only with those that are in their denominations and worse still, close their hearts and minds to other revelations they were not taught. Half knowledge can be dangerous and nowhere is this more deadly than in the things of the Kingdom! Ignorance became systemically entrenched!

Hosea 4:6 (KJV) *6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.*

#.15. The Great Commission was compromised with leaven of ‘Churchianity’

This sad state of affairs went on to play a major role in the deconstruction of the Great Commission. Various churches from Europe sent forth missionaries whose primary aim was to sell their Church brands and theologies rather than preach Jesus and the Kingdom. That virus created denominations fiercely opposed to each other in Africa, Asia, North and South America and rest of the world.

Matthew 24:14 (KJV) *14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*

In effect, what was preached across the world by missionaries from Europe was not the Gospel of the Kingdom but the gospel of Christian religion!

#.16. Ultimately, the Protestant Reformation went the way of Roman Catholicism by various compromises which corrupted good intent.

At the root of the error was a very simple truth: The Reformers missed an essential point: they were essentially engaged in a protest against aspects of Roman Catholicism they found obnoxious. In so doing, they tacitly acknowledged that the Roman Catholic Church was indeed the Church that Yeshua, Jesus birthed and left on earth but had been infested with doctrines and practices which corrupted it for which they had come to reform and purge.

Unfortunately, the reality is that Roman Catholicism was not the Church that Yeshua birthed on the Day of Pentecost whose Mandate and Kingdom pattern of life, ministry and priesthood are well documented in the 27 Books of the New Covenant! The Alpha Church was pure of the leaven of Babylon and has

always had a remnant of its offspring ever since. Roman Catholicism was a creation of Church leaders (who could not bear the sacrifices required to maintain their faith in a hostile environment) and embraced their tormentors (Roman Empire) to create a worldly Church of the State. This is the root and basis of Christendom as a creation of humans to blend the backslidden wing of the Alpha Church with the Empire.

What needed to be done was a whole sale rejection of the mixture which Rome represented.

Matthew 3:8-10 (KJV) *8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: 9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. 10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.*

#.17. The Fruit is Evidence! The Religious Right of the Western World epitomize the failings of the Reformation.

The leaven that the union of Church and state represented (Rome) went on to infect the emergent Protestant Movement which also embraced State patronage. As noted before, this was the case from the days of Martin Luther. In Geneva, John Calvin enforced with an iron fist, a merger of church and state. Even till date, State patronage is the heart desire of many Christian Religious leaders! It was written that a little leaven leavens the lump!

1 Corinthians 5:6 (KJV) *6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?*

1 Corinthians 5:7 (KJV) *7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us*

Blind to what it wants and relying on the mixture of Spirituality, Politics, Ideology, Economics and Social Sciences, the Religious right, rely on the arm of the flesh to fight the Left/Liberals. In the process so much hate, hypocrisy, and outright lies are deployed – all in the Name of God – to advance Conservative causes. In the same way, those in the Religious Left have veered into secular humanism to the degree that preaching the true, pure gospel has taken a back seat to issues of social justice, climate change and embrace of lifestyles which are inherently opposed to Holiness. Therefore, the Religious Left/Liberals also hunts for union with Governments so that it can ride on their back to affect its dream of utopia on earth.

Review Questions

1. Please summarize 3 Negative outcomes of the reformation you consider significant.

Chapter 61

Negative Outcomes of the Reformation – Part 4 Blood Guiltiness

Part B of Negative Outcomes of the Reformation: Social/Political Effects

Blood Guiltiness: Ungodly wars/reliance on arm of flesh to enforce Holiness

Protestants tend to paint the past in bright colors to the degree that one is tempted to conclude that everything about it was just plain righteous indignation against Mystery Babylon! For this reason, most discussions of the Reformation tend to stop at the positive spiritual impact. These two approaches are unhelpful. We need to humble ourselves and posture before the Lord to receive an expanded understanding of what happened during that period of the strategic shift in history. The strange thing about History is that it brings everything to light concerning the past. The Gold Standard of the Kingdom is the Word and authority of the King. In several teachings, Yeshua made it clear that those who are of Him are required to be peaceful, pursue peace and absolutely forbidden from being vengeful or violent. When persecuted, their response is to be that of joy to be accounted worthy of identification with Him:

Matthew 5:5, 9-12 (KJV) *5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*

9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. 10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Matthew 5:20-26 (KJV) *20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. 21 Ye have heard that it was said of them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: 22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. 23 Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; 24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. 25 Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. 26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.*

38 Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: 39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. 40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. 41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain...

43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. 44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; 45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? 47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye

more than others? do not even the publicans so? 48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

He made it clear to Pilate that His Kingdom was not of this world

In this regard, the Lord used Paul the apostle to warn saints against trying to achieve spiritual objectives with fleshly means:

John 18:36 (KJV) *36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.*

Ephesians 6:10-12 (KJV) *10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

Hebrews 12:24 (KJV) *24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.*

From our study today, we will see that Blood guiltiness (complicity in the shedding of Blood) was very much a part of the Protestant heritage! We need to recognize, acknowledge and humble ourselves before the Lord to engage in representational repentance of this evil which ran counter to some of the very basic principles of the Kingdom as enunciated by Yeshua, Jesus. As we know from the Holy Scriptures, Blood is life. When life is terminated abruptly through war or wickedness, the spilled blood speaks, demanding justice or vengeance. Those who acknowledge that victims did not need to die the way they did bring in the ministry of the Blood of Yeshua, Jesus which speaks Mercy and Peace.

Let this caveat be expressed: It was not necessarily intentional that Protestants sought to enforce holiness in society or the work place through the arm of the flesh. There may have been good intentions when certain doctrines were first preached. However, the ultimate test of all things in the Kingdom is the fruit of actions they generate.

Let us read from encyclopedia.com a secular account of the Peasants War in Germany during the Reformation period and later consider how the Reformers were complicit in a situation which led to the premature brutal termination of lives of over 100, 000 people.

“Peasants War

A rebellion that lasted from 1524 to 1525 in German-speaking domains of the Holy Roman Empire. The revolt originated in opposition to the heavy burdens of taxes and duties on the German serfs, who had no legal rights and no opportunity to improve their lot. These conditions had sparked conflict in the fifteenth century, but these uprisings remained local and contained. A more widespread rebellion was finally sparked in the 1520s by the movement for reform in the Catholic Church, and the social and political upheavals that the Protestant Reformation caused. With the authority of church prelates challenged by Martin Luther and others, the peasants saw their cause supported by the Protestant emphasis on individual faith. Empowered in their religious views, and pressed by crop failures that threatened starvation, they saw an opportunity to overthrow the feudal system, in which they were bound to the estates of the nobles and forced to give up the produce of the fields in which they worked.

The revolt began in the summer of 1524 in the county of Stühlingen, in the region of Upper Swabia near the border of Germany and Switzerland. It spread quickly in southern and western Germany, and as far as Switzerland and Austria. In the spring of 1525, there were five large bands of peasants roaming the countryside, burning homes of nobles and princes, and bringing townspeople over to their side. The peasants sought relief from heavy taxes, an end to serfdom, fair trials, and an end to the taxes they owed on the death of a member of their families. They set down these demands in a document known as the Twelve Articles. The rebels seized the town of Heilbronn, where they formed a Parliament, as well as Würzburg, the seat of a Catholic bishop.

In Thuringia, the rebels were led by Thomas Muntzer, a fiery Protestant leader.

Poor townspeople and urban artisans joined the rebellion, which also won the support of Huldrych Zwingli, a prominent Protestant leader, but was opposed by Martin Luther. In the meantime, an army of the Swabian League gathered and marched north into Franconia, in central Germany, defeating the peasants in battle at Frankenhausen and Königshofen. About one hundred thousand combatants and civilians were killed before the fighting died down in late 1525, while the armies of the opposition carried out deadly reprisals for the next two years. Small local rebellions continued into the next year in Austria, but the defeat of the peasants in Germany brought a complete repudiation of their demands for a more just economic system. The discontent of the peasants would continue through the sixteenth and early seventeenth century, adding to the bitter conflicts between Protestant and Catholic territories that would finally erupt into the Thirty Years' War in the early 1600s."

It is interesting that the Peasants tried to use the works of Martin Luther as theological basis of their revolt. His reaction to the extent of their rebellion was however heavy handed. Here is how Wikipedia.com describes the reaction of the leader of the Protestant Reformation:

"Luther remained largely ignorant of the extent to which the unrest permeated the peasantry until he embarked on a tour of Thuringia with Philipp Melanchthon. It was at this time that he was able to observe firsthand the severity of the situation, peasants doing "the devil's work". He attempted to prevent further violence by preaching against it but recognized that this had little if any impact.

In May 1525, he wrote *Against the Rioting Peasants*, a title which would be harshened by printers in other cities without Luther's approval. In this publication, he upbraided the peasants on three charges: that they had violated oaths of loyalty, which makes them subject to secular punishment; they had committed crimes that went against their faith; and that their crimes were committed using Christ's name which was blasphemy:

The peasants have taken upon themselves the burden of three terrible sins against God and man; by this, they have merited death in body and soul... they have sworn to be true and faithful, submissive and obedient, to their rulers... now deliberately and violently breaking this oath... they are starting a rebellion, and are violently robbing and plundering monasteries and castles which are not theirs... they have doubly deserved death in body and soul as highwaymen and murderers... they cloak this terrible and horrible sin with the gospel... thus they become the worst blasphemers of God and slanderers of his holy name"

Luther goes so far as to justify the actions of the Princes against the peasants, even when it involves acts of violence. He feels that they can be punished by the lords on the basis that they have “become faithless, perjured, disobedient, rebellious, murderers, robbers, and blasphemers, whom even a heathen ruler has the right and authority to punish”. He even venerates those who fight against the peasants, stating that “anyone who is killed fighting on the side of the rulers may be a true martyr in the eyes of God”.

He closes with a sort of disclaimer, “if anyone thinks this too harsh, let him remember that rebellion is intolerable and that the destruction of the world is to be expected every hour”. One of the reasons why Luther urged that the secular authorities crush the peasant rebellion was because of St. Paul's teaching of the doctrine of Divine Right of Kings in his epistle to the Romans 13:1–7, which says that all the authorities are appointed by God, and should not, therefore, be resisted.

Encyclopedia.com provides another very insightful account of another major military conflict in which Protestant leaders and the movement was very implicated: The Thirty Years War “THIRTY YEARS' WAR (1618–1648).

THIRTY YEARS' WAR (1618–1648). The Thirty Years' War was one of the greatest and longest armed contests of the early modern period. Some historians have argued that it was a series of separate wars that happened to overlap in time and space rather than one coherent sequence of military campaigns in which a clearly defined set of issues was at stake throughout. If one looks at the Thirty Years' War in a European context, there is some truth in this argument. However, in central Europe, in particular, in the Holy Roman Empire, the military and political events of the thirty years between the defenestration of Prague in May 1618 and the signing of the Westphalian peace treaties in October 1648 formed one continuous conflict and were in fact already perceived as such by most contemporaries.

THE CAUSES OF THE WAR

For the outbreak of the war the deepening crisis of the Holy Roman Empire was of crucial importance. The crisis had a constitutional and political as well as a religious dimension. The Emperor's prerogatives had never been clearly defined; a ruler who knew how to exploit his considerable informal powers of patronage could enjoy a great deal of authority, but a weak monarch could easily be reduced to a mere figurehead. This was very much Rudolf II's (ruled 1576–1612) fate during the last decade of his reign. The aging emperor, who was increasingly mentally unstable, was distrusted by both Catholics and Protestants. Moreover, he had managed to antagonize his own family.

The power vacuum created by the collapse of his authority enabled ambitious princes such as Maximilian I, the duke of Bavaria, or Frederick V, the elector palatine, to pursue their own agenda. Their attempts to exploit the simmering religious conflict in Germany, which found its expression in the foundation of the Protestant Union, led by the Palatinate, in 1608 and the Catholic League (Liga), led by Bavaria, in 1609, were bound to undermine peace and stability. Germany had in the past been largely spared the horrors of religious warfare, thanks to the Religious Peace of Augsburg (1555).

However, many problems had been left unresolved in 1555, such as the status of the ecclesiastical principalities that were ruled by Protestant prince-bishops, and of ecclesiastical property confiscated

and secularized after 1555. The status of the Calvinists, who almost all Catholics and many Lutherans wanted to exclude from the benefits of the peace settlement as heretics, was also controversial. Initially the Imperial Chamber Court (Reichskammergericht) —one of the two highest law courts in Germany— had managed to settle disputes between the religious antagonists, but from the 1580s onward it became increasingly paralyzed, and the Imperial Diet (Reichstag) equally failed to provide a forum for compromise. The confessionalization of politics, culture, and society in the later sixteenth century had in fact created a climate of all-pervasive distrust that made such a compromise almost impossible. The enthusiastic adherents of both Counter-Reformation Catholicism and the eschatological worldview that most Calvinists and some Lutherans subscribed to saw the outbreak of armed conflict in the long run as both inevitable and even to some extent desirable.

However, whereas such mental attitudes were an important ingredient in the generally belligerent atmosphere that formed a crucial precondition for the outbreak of hostilities, their more immediate cause was the confrontation between the Emperor and the Estates of Bohemia and its neighboring principalities, in particular, Moravia and Upper Austria. Whereas Emperor Matthias (ruled 1612–1619) and his advisers wanted to recover the ground that had been lost by the Catholic Church and the ruling dynasty alike in the preceding years of domestic crisis, the Protestant opposition emphasized the elective character of the monarchy in Bohemia and its subjection to the control of the Estates. They vigorously defended the privileges of the Protestant Church that had been confirmed and extended during the last years of Rudolf II's reign.

Reacting to the relentless Counter-Reformation offensive, which had, by a combination of missionary activity, generous imperial patronage for converts, and brute force already been successful in Styria, Carinthia, and elsewhere, they decided to kill the emperor's governors in Prague in the spring of 1618 by throwing them out of the windows of the imperial palace during a meeting of the Estates.

The governors miraculously survived this defenestration, but the armed conflict had now become unavoidable. Soon both sides tried to find allies both in Germany and in Europe. In Spain, the fall of the Duke of Lerma as royal favorite in 1618 marked the victory of those factions at court that favored a more assertive and warlike policy in central Europe, whereas at the same time in the Netherlands the adherents of rigid Calvinism and of an aggressively anti-Spanish policy gained the upper hand in 1618–1619 during and after the Synod of Dort (Dordrecht). Thus, a renewal of the twelve-year truce between Spain and the Netherlands that had been signed in 1609 became unlikely at the very moment when the Bohemian Estates rose against the Habsburgs. A war in Bohemia and Germany was therefore bound to become part of a wider European conflict sooner or later.

In another insightful article on encyclopedia.com, we see another case where Protestant leaders set the Words of Yeshua aside to enforce their concepts of the Kingdom on earth: A Theocracy established by force of arms:

“Münster Prophets.

Wherever the Anabaptists taught the new doctrines, harsh, repressive measures arose to discourage them. One exception was the northern German town of Münster, but the establishment of an Anabaptist state there in 1534 was to have far-reaching implications for the subsequent history of the

movement. The so-called Revolution of the Prophets that occurred in Münster helped condemn Anabaptism to continue widespread unpopularity. In 1533, the Reformation had just been officially established in the town, when one of the city's preachers, Bernard Rothmann, convinced the council to take in persecuted Anabaptists from the neighboring Netherlands. During 1533, the numbers of Anabaptists at Münster swelled and this encouraged the spread of the religion among the local population. By February 1534, the Anabaptist party seized control of local government and advised those who were not in agreement with their religious views to leave. Over the next few months, a dictatorship of the Anabaptists emerged, eventually led by one Dutch immigrant, John of Leyden, who tried to establish a godly community through force. The new Münster government was a theocracy, run by the town's religious leaders that carefully controlled every dimension of the town's life. They abolished both private property and the circulation of money within the city because neither of those things had played a role in the ancient church. Leyden also demanded compulsory polygamy from his subjects and he justified the practice because of its use among the Old Testament patriarchs.

The intensive regulation that Leyden introduced in Münster was soon unpopular among many in the town, and a reign of terror, complete with horrifying public executions, became necessary to keep the populace in line. While all this was transpiring within the town's walls, a confederation of princes from the surrounding region had joined with the local Catholic bishop of Münster to lay siege to the town. As this siege lengthened, conditions within the city's walls worsened. The Münster Anabaptists desperately pegged their hopes on the arrival of reinforcements from the Netherlands, but although thousands of Dutch Anabaptists marched on Münster, the military forces in the vicinity crushed them. In June 1535, months after the siege of the town had begun, Münster was retaken and many of its Anabaptists slaughtered. John of Leyden and his associates were tried, displayed in cages for several months, and finally tortured and publicly executed in January 1536. Harsh reprisals against the movement followed the suppression of the Revolution of the Münster Prophets, and persecution of Anabaptists remained the rule almost everywhere in sixteenth-century Europe.

Pockets of Anabaptists survived, particularly in the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Moravia, but these groups settled down into a life of quiet pacifism. Nowhere were the dramatic events of Münster to be repeated. It was not until the eighteenth century, and the expansion of the British colonies in North America, that Anabaptism was truly able to prosper. In Pennsylvania, the radical wing of the Reformation found a home that was more congenial than Europe. And in the nineteenth century many of the descendants of the sixteenth-century radical reformers, including Anabaptist offshoots like the Mennonites and the Amish, spread into the American Midwest and the Canadian plains.

Let us continue to read from encyclopedia.com

Visible Saints.

Some found Calvin's emphasis on God's majesty and predestination distasteful because it denied all free will and any human participation in the process of salvation. At the same time, Calvin's devoted followers found reassurance in these same teachings. Calvin always assured his followers that they could be relatively certain of their election if they were leading good Christian lives, and Calvinists stressed that good works were the visible signs God produced in His saints. Works thus testified to election. But

this doctrine of election also bolstered many Calvinists as they defied the authority of the state when its laws and actions contradicted the teachings of the scriptures. Over time, the notion of election spilled over into other areas of Calvinist life. In seventeenth-century Calvinist communities in England, Scotland, the Netherlands, and North America, many followers of the religion saw worldly success, especially in the world of commerce, as a sign of God's favor. In this way, the Calvinist notion of election contributed to that complex set of ideas and behaviors that have often been referred to as "the Protestant Work Ethic."

Scriptures.

Calvin's attitude toward the scriptures also explains some of the differences that developed between Calvinism and Lutheranism. Luther had taught that the primary purpose of the Bible was to reveal God's gift of salvation by faith, and thus those parts of scripture that treated faith were more important than those that did not. By contrast, Calvin's attitude toward the Bible was more complex and closer to Zwingli's. He believed that the scriptures were a record of two covenants or promises God had established with humankind throughout history: law and grace. The church had a duty to ensure the establishment of biblical laws in society; at Geneva, the town's pastors closely supervised the morality of citizens.

Each week a Consistory met to hear cases of immorality among the town's inhabitants. The consistory included all nine of Geneva's pastors and twelve elders chosen from the town council and had the power to excommunicate, expel, and even sentence citizens to death for violating the town's strict moral code. As Calvinism spread beyond Geneva, the consistory was sometimes an appealing feature to local civic leaders and princes as a way to control the morality of their subjects. The consistory could be used as a way to establish greater discipline among citizens. Other monarchs, though, feared the sharing of church and state powers within the consistory as a challenge to their power.

Let us also consider another article in encyclopedia.com which explains why Protestants were often inclined to violent tendencies:

Violence.

Violence was often the result of the early confrontations between Calvinism and Catholicism. Calvinism taught that many of the traditional rituals of the Catholic Church were not just the products of wrong thinking, but were sources of evil that needed to be eliminated. Calvinist preachers often stressed the similarities between the idolatries God had vigorously punished in the Old Testament and those practiced by sixteenth-century Catholics. Many Calvinists believed that tolerating these modern idolatries would result in divine punishment, and so they staged episodes of iconoclastic destruction upon religious images, relics, and other Catholic objects. Calvinists often timed these demonstrations to occur on particularly important Catholic holidays. They sometimes subjected the Catholic host to mock tortures before destroying it. In this way, they hoped to demonstrate to their opponents that Catholicism's ritual objects were merely physical things that could not aid in a person's salvation.

Catholics responded with violent counterattacks, and deadly riots often erupted. In the second half of the sixteenth-century religious violence between Catholics and Calvinists, particularly in France and the Netherlands, was a frequent threat to public order and claimed many lives. Between 1562 and 1598 civil war raged in France over the question of what would be the state religion. During this time, there were many battles between rival noble armies and the forces of the crown. But sporadic outbursts of street fighting and rioting, similar to modern Northern Ireland or Lebanon, occurred throughout the period, too.

In the series of massacres that occurred around St. Bartholomew's Day in the late summer of 1572 as many as 5,000, mostly Calvinist French, may have been slaughtered. In 1598, the royal pronouncements of the Edict of Nantes helped to end this violence. The Edict granted Calvinists a limited degree of religious toleration in France, allowing them to fortify themselves for protection within certain French cities. Calvinists were forbidden to preach their religion outside these cities. The solution of the Edict of Nantes survived until 1685 when Louis XIV revoked it and forced Calvinists to convert to Catholicism or to leave France.

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Let us stand in the gap, weeping between the porch and altar, in representational repentance of this terrible blot on history of the Reformation movement! May the Blood of the eternal covenant put to silence the speakings of blood of multitudes who perished in that period of time!

Review Questions

1. Please summarize how Protestantism fostered Blood Guiltiness

Chapter 62

Negative Outcomes of the Reformation – Part 5 The terrible 3!

We enjoin all saints to tarry as we receive further insight into some of the dark trails left by fruits of the Protestant Reformation in the sands of time. To those who want to know the significance of this section on Negative Outcomes of the Protestant Reformation, the answer is simple: No matter how bitter, ultimately, Truth heals!

John 8:32 (KJV) *32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

Let us, therefore, examine three more negative fruits that afflicted the earth realm at different times – in which Protestants were complicit: The Slave Trade; Colonialism and Apartheid.

#.19. The Slave Trade

Just like the Catholic Church, different strands of the Protestant Movement participated in and profited from the terrible blight on humanity that was the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. During the period from the 15th to the 19th centuries it is estimated that between 25 - 40 million youths were uprooted from their families across several African communities, sold into slavery, packed like sardines into the hold of ships and transported in inhumane conditions to a life of hard labor in the West Indies, North and South America. Only about 12million of the slaves survived the middle passage. In the Americas, they were segregated and used as chattel to produce cash crops for their masters.

From those who owned Slave trading companies to those who owned or operated Slave ships and those who bought, owned and profited from this inhuman business were many who identified themselves as Christians, Christian leaders and even Christian denominations – Roman Catholic as well as Protestant. To worsen matters, some Protestant leaders, including Bishops in the House of Lords of the British Parliament were reported to have voted down the attempts of a notable Protestant Minister, William Wilberforce to abolish Slave Trade by law. Let us consider this highly insightful piece by Dr. Neil Frankel in his website slaverysite.com:

“Role of Organized Religion

Predominant Religions in European Countries Involved in the Atlantic Slave Trade

Portugal: Primarily Roman Catholic. In 1497, expelled the Jews and the few remaining Moors, or forced them to convert.

Spain: Primarily Roman Catholic. In 1492, expelled the Jews and the few remaining Moors, or forced them to convert. For five centuries, from the 8th to the 13th century, Spain was ruled by Muslims. Jews and Christians were free to practice their faith during this period.

Britain: Britain was a Catholic country until Henry the VIII split with the Roman Catholic church after the church refused to agree with his divorce from his first wife. When Elizabeth I became Queen in 1558, Britain became a Protestant country by law with the Sovereign declared head of the Church of England.

Netherlands: Anti-Catholic riots spread across the country in 1566, leading to a revolt that culminated in the formation of the Union of Utrecht. In 1581 the Union of Utrecht proclaimed independence from Catholic Spain. Today, northern Holland is predominantly Protestant, and southern Holland is predominantly Catholic.

France: Primarily Roman Catholic. In the 16th century the Huguenots, strongly influenced by John Calvin, were growing in number and viewed as seditious by the government. The result was eight civil wars and several massacres of the Huguenots. During the 17th century, persecution led many of the Huguenots to leave France. Many went to the Netherlands, and others settled in England, Ireland, America, Germany, Switzerland, and South Africa.

To What Extent Have Religious Leaders Apologized For 400 Years of Participation In The Atlantic Slave Trade and Slavery?

The Church of England: In February 2006, the Church of England apologized for its involvement in the slave trade and benefits derived from it. (48) Said the Guardian: "The Church of England last night said sorry for the role it played in the 18th century in benefiting from slave labor in the Caribbean. ... Speakers in the synod debate acknowledged that the church had played its part in justifying slavery during the long campaign by William Wilberforce and others ..."

The Rt Rev Tom Butler, Bishop of Southwark, told the synod: "We know that bishops in the House of Lords with biblical authority voted against the abolition of the slave trade. We know that the church owned sugar plantations on the Codrington estates [where they also owned slaves. Codrington estates are in Barbados]." The Guardian also noted that "A recent book, *Bury the Chains* (51), by the American author Adam Hochschild, clearly influenced the debate. It says the church's missionary organization, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, branded its slaves on the chest with the word SOCIETY to show who they belonged to."

America

On this subject matter, an article titled *Religion in colonial America: Trends, Regulations, and Belief* published on the website facinghistory.org have this interesting observation:

"Slavery—which was also firmly established and institutionalized between the 1680s and the 1780s—was also shaped by religion. The use of violence against slaves, their social inequality, together with the settlers' contempt for all religions other than Christianity "resulted in the destructiveness of extraordinary breadth, the loss of traditional religious practices among the half-million slaves brought to the mainland colonies between the 1680s and the American Revolution."

Even in churches which reached out to convert slaves to their congregations —the Baptists are a good example—slaves were most often a silent minority. If they received any Christian religious instructions, it was, more often than not, from their owners rather than in Sunday school.”

#.20. Colonialism

Colonialism is the business of extending a nation to territories owned by other people who are subjugated and ruled directly or indirectly. Where Kingdom culture exists, no people group who are identified with the New Covenant would encourage, endorse or participate in the brutal subjugation of a people to displace them internally, take over their resources and use same for the benefit of the colonial power.

Across Africa, Asia, South and North America as well as Canada, Australia and New Zealand and Island nations in the Oceans, Europeans of both Roman Catholic and Protestant persuasions sailed across the waters to discover, take over, rule new lands and appropriate local resources for benefit of their mother lands. This was as brutal a business as any other. In most cases, two main carrots that were deployed to entrap native Chiefs and their peoples were: Trade and Religion. With the Bible, natives were lulled to trust and when their guards were down, the Sword, representing the force of arms was unsheathed. It is noteworthy that both Roman Catholic as well as Protestant nations were active in various forms of colonial rule. In other words, being ‘Protestant’ did not extend to civic life. It was about being a ‘good Christian’ who goes to Church on Sundays and is ready to do what those regarded as part of Mystery Babylon did from Monday - Saturday!

For an analytical presentation of the subject matter, an article in Wikipedia titled ‘Christianity and Colonialism’ makes an excellent read:

“Christianity and colonialism are often closely associated because Catholicism and Protestantism were the religions of the European colonial powers and acted in many ways as the "religious arm" of those powers. According to Edward Andrews, Christian missionaries were initially portrayed as "visible saints, exemplars of ideal piety in a sea of persistent savagery". However, by the time the colonial era drew to a close in the last half of the twentieth century, missionaries became viewed as "ideological shock troops for colonial invasion whose zealotry blinded them”, colonialism’s "agent, scribe, and moral alibi."

Christianity is targeted by critics of colonialism because the tenets of the religion were used to justify the actions of the colonists. For example, Toyin Falola asserts that there were some missionaries who believed that "the agenda of colonialism in Africa was similar to that of Christianity". Falola cites Jan H. Boer of the Sudan United Mission as saying, "Colonialism is a form of imperialism based on a divine mandate and designed to bring liberation - spiritual, cultural, economic and political - by sharing the blessings of the Christ-inspired civilization of the West with a people suffering from satanic oppression, ignorance and disease, affected by a combination of political, economic and religious forces that cooperate under a regime seeking the benefit of both ruler and ruled."

Edward Andrews writes:

Historians have traditionally looked at Christian missionaries in one of two ways. The first church historians to catalog missionary history provided hagiographic descriptions of their trials, successes, and sometimes even martyrdom. Missionaries were thus visible saints, exemplars of ideal piety in a sea of persistent savagery. However, by the middle of the twentieth century, an era marked by civil rights movements, anticolonialism, and growing secularization, missionaries were viewed quite differently. Instead of godly martyrs, historians now described missionaries as arrogant and rapacious imperialists. Christianity became not a saving grace but a monolithic and aggressive force that missionaries imposed upon defiant natives. Indeed, missionaries were now understood as important agents in the ever-expanding nation-state, or "ideological shock troops for colonial invasion whose zealotry blinded them."

According to Jake Meador, "some Christians have tried to make sense of postcolonial Christianity by renouncing practically everything about the Christianity of the colonizers. They reason that if the colonialists' understanding of Christianity could be used to justify rape, murder, theft, and empire then their understanding of Christianity is completely wrong. "

Application of this principle in America

The early years of what became the United States of America is a case study of how Religion was effectively used to justify and sustain colonial endeavor. The Pilgrim Fathers were Protestants who sought space in the New World free from the stifling effects of State oversight of Religion in England. To them, the space in America would guarantee them freedom to worship God as they desired. Unfortunately, this ideal was to be pursued at the expense of the Native people groups who lived on the land. The systematic displacement and appropriation of their land and other resources offer a classic example of how 'the Bible in one hand and the Sword in the other' became a tool of conquest.

Interestingly, once oppression is accepted as a norm, it has a way of turning inwards when there are no more external enemies to fight. This article on "Religion in colonial America: Trends, Regulations and Belief" published on the website facinghistory.org shares some insight into how Religion generally and Protestantism shaped the emergent nation:

"To understand how America's current balance among national law, local community practice, and individual freedom of belief evolved, it's helpful to understand some of the common experiences and patterns around religion in colonial culture in the period between 1600 and 1776.

In the early years of what later became the United States, Christian religious groups played an influential role in each of the British colonies, and most attempted to enforce strict religious observance through both colony governments and local town rules. Most attempted to enforce strict religious observance. Laws mandated that everyone attend a house of worship and pay taxes that funded the salaries of ministers. Eight of the thirteen British colonies had official, or "established," churches, and in those

colonies, dissenters who sought to practice or proselytize a different version of Christianity or a non-Christian faith were sometimes persecuted.

Although most colonists considered themselves Christians, this did not mean that they lived in a culture of religious unity. Instead, differing Christian groups often believed that their own practices and faiths provided unique values that needed protection against those who disagreed, driving a need for rule and regulation. In Europe, Catholic and Protestant nations often persecuted or forbade each other's religions, and British colonists frequently maintained restrictions against Catholics. In Great Britain, the Protestant Anglican church had split into bitter divisions among traditional Anglicans and the reforming Puritans, contributing to an English civil war in the 1600s. In the British colonies, differences among Puritan and Anglican remained.

Between 1680 and 1760 Anglicanism and Congregationalism, an offshoot of the English Puritan movement established themselves as the main organized denominations in the majority of the colonies. As the seventeenth and eighteenth century passed on, however, the Protestant wing of Christianity constantly gave birth to new movements, such as the Baptists, Methodists, Quakers, Unitarians and many more, sometimes referred to as "Dissenters." In communities where one existing faith was dominant, new congregations were often seen as unfaithful troublemakers who were upsetting the social order.

Despite the effort to govern society on Christian (and more specifically Protestant) principles, the first decades of colonial era in most colonies were marked by irregular religious practices, minimal communication between remote settlers, and a population of "Murtherers, Theeves, Adulterers, [and] idle persons." An ordinary Anglican American parish stretched between 60 and 100 miles and was often very sparsely populated. In some areas, women accounted for no more than a quarter of the population and given the relatively small number of conventional households and the chronic shortage of clergymen, religious life was haphazard and irregular for most. Even in Boston, which was more highly populated and dominated by the Congregational Church, one inhabitant complained in 1632 that the "fellows which keep hogges all week preach on the Sabboth."

Christianity was further complicated by the widespread practice of astrology, alchemy and forms of witchcraft. The fear of such practices can be gauged by the famous trials held in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692 and 1693. Surprisingly, alchemy and other magical practices were not altogether divorced from Christianity in the minds of many "natural philosophers" (the precursors of scientists), who sometimes thought of them as experiments that could unlock the secrets of Scripture. As we might expect, established clergy discouraged these explorations.

In turn, as the colonies became more settled, the influence of the clergy and their churches grew. At the heart of most communities was the church; at the heart of the calendar was the Sabbath—a period of intense religious and "secular" activity that lasted all day long. After years of struggles to impose discipline and uniformity on Sundays, the selectmen of Boston at last could "parade the street and oblige everyone to go to Church . . . on pain of being put in Stokes or otherwise confined," one observer

wrote in 1768. By then, few communities openly tolerated travel, drinking, gambling, or blood sports on the Sabbath.”

#21. Apartheid.

The Protestant movement was heavily implicated in the emergence and sustenance of Apartheid in South Africa through the Dutch Reformed Church which grew out of Calvinism. Evidently, they translated the doctrine of election to mean that Europeans had the right to enforce slavery on Blacks because God gave them the right to do so; that Europeans were destined to perpetually dominate and rule over the Blacks who they regarded as less than human and therefore unfit to live in the same locations or enjoy the same quality of municipal services.

The Religious dimensions of this segregationist policy is further highlighted in another Wikipedia article

“The Apartheid system, as well as resistance to it, was both a political and theological matter. In the 20th century, several Christian churches supported Apartheid and racial divisions. Some opposed it. One of the largest Christian denomination, the Dutch Reformed Church (NGK), used Christian theology to argue a theological support for the Apartheid. The Dutch Reformed Church, with 3 million Christian members, remained the "official religion" of the Apartheid-supporting National Party.

The NGK not only supported Apartheid, in 1881 it established a separate colored church. In 1910, segregation was the South African Dutch Reformed Church's policy, and black Africans who were part of its denomination had to worship in Churches meant for black Africans. In 1948, Daniel François Malan – the former pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church became the Prime Minister. He cemented Apartheid ideas through additional laws and active enforcement. Most church leaders supported and were committed to Apartheid, but a few did not. Reverend Beyers Naude, for example, joined the blacks-only parish after leaving his whites-only church in the late 1970s.

Let us conclude this topic with this South African Proverb: “Christianity: South African Black Theology When the white man came to our country, he had the Bible and we (Blacks) had the land. The white man said to us, "Let us pray". After the prayer, the white man had the land, and we had the Bible - A South African proverb, Transl: Gerald West”

In the Name of God, great evil was committed across the world. Colonialism, Slave Trade and Oppression/Mistreatment of the weak, women and sinners were all justified with the Bible.

Review Questions

1. Please summarize each of the 3 Negative outcomes that arose out of the Protestant world in this chapter.

Chapter 63

The Dispensation of Ham: Closes out the Human Age

Some Inconvenient Truths about the Dispensation of Ham

Despite all that has been said, the reality is that all the negative effects of the Reformation did not catch Elohim by surprise. He knew that it would be so, just as He foreknew that the sons of Shem represented by the Hebrews/Jews of Israel would fall short of His expectations with the way they turned His Kingdom Covenant with them into the religion of Judaism. As Romans 11 clearly stated, their fall was to make room for the Gentiles to come onto the Commonwealth after which they would be restored.

When Paul made the prophetic remark in Acts 28:28 he was proclaiming the change of holding the Baton of Kingdom business in the earth realm from the house of Shem to the House of Japheth. The House of Japheth, represented by the Roman Empire was then the prevailing social, economic and political power in the world. As this study has clearly shown, the House of Japheth did not fare better: it threw the baton to the ground by turning Gospel of Yeshua, Jesus and the Kingdom into Christian Religion represented by Roman Catholicism and the divisive variations of Protestantism. Apparently, the Gentile led Church (both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism) had never given serious thought to what was at work in their failures: neglect of the warnings of Elohim in Romans 11.

The Baton in the hands of sons of Ham

Through the Slave Trade, Colonization and Apartheid, the descendants of Ham in Africa suffered untold deprivation of their liberties, forceful appropriation of their human and natural resources for building the economic and social prosperity of the two branches of the human family (Shem and Japheth). Africa, the Land of Ham suffered two dimensions of the Slave Trade:

- i. The Trans Saharan Slave Trade orchestrated and run by Arabs, who were of the seed of Shem.
- ii. The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade orchestrated by Europeans, of the Seed of Japheth.

For many Europeans who were influenced by Calvinism, Slavery of Africans was just a fulfillment of the pronouncements of Noah, (father of the human race after the flood) on his son Ham. This scripture has been used as a pretext to enforce subjugation of Africa and its offspring in North and South Americas and Europe:

Genesis 9:20-27 (KJV) *20 And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: 21 And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. 22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. 23 And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness. 24 And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him. 25 And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. 26 And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. 27 God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.*

The fact that humanity has been short sighted about the case of Noah and his three sons shows how and why cherry picking of scriptures can be dangerous. What has not been factored into the mix is the reality of two paradigm shifting interventions by Yeshua Ha Maschiach, Jesus the Messiah which permanently changed the course of history:

1. Yeshua sanctified Servitude as Service! He reversed the decree of the man Noah concerning pathway to leadership. Where Noah pronounced rulership as a function of inheritance by Shem and Japheth (Genesis 9:26-27), Yeshua declared that in the Kingdom of Elohim, the only way up is down, through Service. Service is not hereditary but an exercise of the will to decrease and be an instrument of blessing others:

Matthew 20:20-24 (KJV) *20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedees children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. 21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. 22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. 23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father. 24 And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren. 25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. 26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; 27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: 28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*

It is noteworthy that Yeshua did not just teach this principle, He demonstrated it while washing the feet of His disciples in John 13:1-17. Interestingly, Service is the redemptive gift of descendants of Ham. Whereas it worked negatively as servitude in the Slave Trade era and during apartheid, this grace is what qualifies every Christian of every race for leadership and greatness in the Kingdom. That this revelation was not caught and taught has robbed many saints generally and those whose roots are in Africa specifically, the awesome capacities they have for leadership.

Let us also note that whereas the Slave Trade was inhuman and evil to the extreme, the Lord turned it around for good: through it, He gave sons of Ham a portion in what would be the greatest modern Empire in contemporary history: The United States of America. African Americans are today 13.2 percent of the population! In this way, they have a secure place to be part of the redemptive mantle of Elohim on America!

2. Yeshua became the Lamb of Elohim to take away both the Sins of the World as well as cancel by His death on the Cross, all hand writings of Ordinances that were contrary to those who believe on Him! It is unfortunate that throughout the centuries, this reality of the finished work of the Cross has not been emphasized by Christian Religion. Accordingly, multitudes of Christians have remained in the yoke of ignorance believing that their color was the problem or that their fate rested in the hands of fellow humans!

Galatians 3:13-14 (KJV) 13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: 14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Colossians 1:12-23 (KJV) 12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: 13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: 14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: 15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. 19 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; 20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. 21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled 22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight: 23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

Colossians 2:9-15 (KJV) 9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. 10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: 11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: 12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

In effect, with and through Yeshua, all the comparative advantages the House of Shem and Japheth enjoyed over the House of Ham was permanently broken.

The Baton of the gospel in the House of Ham

The Redemptive purpose of Elohim for Africa has been expressed since the days of Abraham who Elohim specifically designated as a carrier of the Seed of the Woman. When he was in danger of starvation, it was to Africa that he was preserved. When Jacob and all Israel was in danger of starvation, it was to Africa that they were sent and preserved. When Yeshua, Jesus was born and Herod the Edomite sought to kill Him, it was to Africa that He was preserved as prophesied. When Yeshua was to go to the Cross, it was an African, Simon of Cyrene who helped Him to carry the Cross.

In the Last days when the gospel program suffered severe disfigurement into Christian Religion at the hands of the seed of Japheth (who with the mantle of Enlargement expanded it worldwide), Yeshua did not abandon His Own Church to remain in a state of ineffectiveness. Since the Church went into bed with the world from around AD 311 (through the patronage of Constantine the Great), Holy Spirit had more or less been pushed to the margin of Church life. He was no longer the quintessential Factor, Teacher, Guide, Revealer of Yeshua and Power of the Church. On the other hand, human beings virtually

ran the show, using their finite minds to comprehend things of the Spirit (an impossibility according to 1 Corinthians 2:14).

At various places in various times, Yeshua intervened with ready and available vessels, calling the Church of their generation back to embrace the ministry of Holy Spirit. The Wesleyan Revival; the Welsh, Hebrides, Scottish, Topheka outpourings all had limited effect.

With the failure of the Church out of Europe, the House of Japheth to maintain purity of the Gospel, it was His good pleasure to recourse to the unlikely: The House of Ham and use His remnant therein – to start a short and sharp period of unusual prominence in the gospel programme. From the revelation granted this vessel, the baton came upon the House of Ham during the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, California

But something was radically different with the Azusa Street Revival of 1906. Holy Spirit not only fell on a son of Ham, ex-slave, William Seymour, he became the leader and poster man of this particular visitation. It has been said without question that Azusa Street was in a sense, like the original Day of Pentecost. This is because the effect of this Pentecostal experience became globalized in line with the Acts 1:8 mandate of Yeshua. It has since then become the catalyst of hundreds of revivals in different parts of the world with Pentecostals now numbering approximately 279 Million (according to Pew Research)

The world has witnessed record shattering manifestations of Divine Power since Azusa Street:

- i. The Gospel has been preached in power by ministers of all races filled with Holy Spirit with signs and wonders following them
- ii. Gospel crusades have witnessed response of sinners in their hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands and even millions across the world
- iii. Through TV, Satellite, cable and Social Media, Iron Curtains of Ideology (Communism, Socialism); Religion (Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, etc.) have been penetrated with souls won below the radar
- iv. Multitudes of Churches have been planted across the world including in the remotest of places
- v. Many saints have enjoyed successes in this life through financial prosperity, elevation in public service
- vi. From 1906 till recent times, Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Movement have been the most-lively arms of the Church together accounting for about 586 million or more than a quarter of the estimated 2 billion Christians on earth.

Negative Outcomes of the Hamitic Dispensation

It was to be the shortest of the relay races involving the three branches of the human family: Shem; Japheth and Ham. Like Shem and Japheth before, the dispensation of Ham failed to deliver to humanity, the simplicity and purity of the Gospel of Yeshua, Jesus and the Kingdom of Elohim. It failed to produce sons of Elohim who are fit for purpose co-laborers with Yeshua in the vineyard of the Father, functioning as the Royal Priesthood after the Order of Melchizedek. That failure is manifested in these features:

1. **Nimrodic Leadership:** In many Churches, the need for strong leadership is emphasized out of proportion. Founders of ministries tend to own and control the brethren, micro-managing their lives under the guise of providing effective covering. Wherever the will of saints are taken over and they serve unwillingly or to please humans, their service becomes automatically defective.
2. **Levitical Priesthood:** The years spent in the wilderness of life has created a desire by leaders to be recognized as such. The simple pattern of priesthood modeled by Yeshua, Jesus and which He is High Priest of: Melchizedek Priesthood has been jettisoned for the more 'visible' type which He made defunct: the Levitical priesthood with the robes.
3. **Nicolaitane tendencies.** For this reason, too much emphasis is placed on Protocol, titles, and robes for leaders. This has led to an attraction for the Episcopal system with hierarchies. In many places, leaders are revered as 'founders' of churches by their congregants. The tendency to call saints 'my member' is more widespread in the Black Community.
4. **Black Theology.** Not realizing that certain things of history were either orchestrated by Satan or allowed by Elohim for a season, there have been Black preachers who have reconfigured the Bible to create what they consider a favorable view of their race. In this theology, Blacks are the real Hebrews; Yeshua was Black. There is a mixture of Judaism and Christianity in others.
5. **Pseudo-Prosperity Gospel.** Because of the intense suffering and deprivations of the past, many African and African-American preachers embraced the Pseudo-Prosperity gospel. Some of the principles taught were clearly biblical. Unfortunately, by not teaching about consecration to Elohim, holiness, and responsibility for the Great Commission, this Theology was basically unbalanced and defective. This utilitarian approach to the gospel presents Elohim as an indulgent Father Who exists basically to give His children what they want. Rather than invite people to live for Elohim, it ends up making Christians want Him to live for them. This fosters idolatry on a continual basis.
6. **Co-dependency.** In the bid to make people co-dependent, Preachers have devised all types of things to increase the faith in their power, rather than in the Person of Yeshua and the Finished work of the Cross. The mass of church goers are programmed to have faith in the prayer shawls, hand kerchiefs, oil, water and whatever else the preacher 'anoints' as a point of contact with his/her power.
7. **Syncretism, Occultic Tendencies.** From ordinary points of contact, many preachers have veered into dark realms of syncretism (the mixture of biblical Christian practices with things from the occult). This manifests in various types of prayers where people are led into realms of utterance that amount to angel worship, intruding into astrology, palm reading, and such things.
8. **Gospel of Racial Animosity.** Many African and African-American preachers have allowed their emotions to be trapped in hurts for mistreatments inflicted by people of European descent (Slavery, Apartheid, etc.). The result is constant feeding of the flock of Yeshua the poisoned chalice of racial animus. There is no space in such hearts for racial reconciliation in the natural or the unity of the Faith Yeshua prayed for. Unfortunately, Satan regularly opens the wounds with social issues like Police brutality and unequal criminal justice as well as government ideologies which are indifferent to the needs of the poor, weak, oppressed and women. In this atmosphere, evangelism is confined within the racial community rather than to all sinners. This practice runs counter to the message of the Cross.

9. **Gospel of Self-Esteem.** Many African and African-American and African-Europeans have over the past 50 years gravitated towards helping their congregants to be confident and exhibit healthy self-esteem. In the process, the 'successful' preacher is defined by the quality of clothing and thing worn; perfume, type of car owned and houses owned and accumulation of stuff as evidence of 'success'. Christians are then invited to come and tap into the anointing for success which he or she carries.

10. **'Holy Entertainment'**. Many ministers have gravitated to situations where their preaching with charismatic gifts are combined with imposing personalities, music, 'prophetic dance', mime, drama and many other things which minister to the flesh. Devoid of sound and systematic teaching of the Word, people are lulled to sleep and spiritual death as they are pumped up into the wild excitement of the flesh falsely labeled as visitations of Holy Spirit.

11. **ABC Christianity.** When people are conditioned to see the building, they go into or organization they join as Church, the basis is laid for systematic error. The result is an excessive deployment of modern advertising techniques to increase Attendance which simply is to pack people into designated Buildings. Ultimately, the target of much of what is done is to get the Cash out from their wallets into the Church till.

12. **Liberal Theology.** Responding to injustice and oppression suffered by the race in the past (and in some cases the present), many African-American preachers over the years have developed a soft spot for Civil rights. In the process, issues the Bible define clearly as toxic to Kingdom life such as immorality (of all types) are treated as 'Civil rights'. The tendency to embrace what Elohim decries is not considered contradictory. Those who are discerning will note that Barack Obama was miraculously made 44th President of America to seal the Hamitic dispensation in the Political arena. Unfortunately, he was groomed in a liberal gospel by his former Pastor Dr. Jeremiah Wright. The result is that he not only championed liberal causes at variance with biblical injunctions but promoted them with the full force of his authority. The rest, as they say, is history.

13. **Not empowering the Flock.** To worsen matters, the various failings of the African and African American gospel leads to situations where the environment and church pattern are not conducive to the empowerment of the Flock. Many saints go to church almost all their lives and yet do not know their identity in Yeshua; do not become His disciples and have no viable pathway of walking in Kingdom purpose. Meanwhile, they are 'good' church folks.

14. **Diminished Emphasis on Evangelism.** Most Africa and African American Churches would have turned the world upside down if they had launched out in the strength of the anointing of Holy Spirit to launch out in the Great Commission. Unfortunately, there has been a tendency to be content with looking inwards to the degree that enlargement has been compromised. Worse still the scars of the past created an aversion to reach out to people of Caucasian and Latino stock. The outcome is the existence of inward looking black spiritual communities.

The Divine Warning that was Ignored

With the benefit of hindsight, it can be clearly seen that the Gentiles, represented by the seed of Japheth and seed of Ham, made the same mistake that the seed of Shem made: turning the Gospel of the Kingdom into the gospel of Christian Religion! Christians from both races subjugated the gospel of

the Kingdom to their cultural roots and experiences. In so doing, the Gentiles ignored the express warnings of Holy Spirit uttered through the pen of Paul the apostle in this passage:

Romans 11:12-13, 17-22 (KJV) *12 Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? 13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:*

17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; 18 Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. 19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. 20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: 21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. 22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

Romans 11:24-25, 30-32 (KJV) *24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? 25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.*

30 For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: 31 Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. 32 For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

Elohim is no respecter of persons and does not change his standards! The raw truth is that through the three dispensations, it is clear to all who are honest that this scripture is fulfilled:

Romans 3:23 (KJV) *23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*

This failure of the three branches of the human family in running their respective laps of the Gospel project did not take Elohim by surprise! Their collective failure was designed to make room for the emergence of a brand-new Race: The Elect Remnant of Elohim who is redeemed from all races, tribes, tongues and are found in all locations worldwide. They have existed all through the millennia since Pentecost, preserved from the corruptions that destroyed the gospel during the Semitic era. Their exploits are recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. When the larger wing of the Church went into adultery with the Roman Empire, the Elect Remnant went underground and were preserved by Grace. Throughout the days and years since 1906, the Remnant of Elohim did not get drawn into the negative features we discussed in this chapter. It is that Remnant who Elohim will use to close out the human age. His clear instruction to the Remnant to be His Radiant Bride of Yeshua in the earth realm with guidance on how to live in love and walk in unity as His sons and Ambassadors of His Kingdom are clearly articulated in the Holy Writ. That is the essence of Part F of this ground-breaking course: Completing the Unfinished Reformation!

Review Questions

1. Please summarize this chapter in as brief a manner as you can

2. Please share any 7 of the failures of the gospel since the Azusa Street Revival of 1906 that particularly touched you.

Chapter 64

Section F: Biblical Blueprint for Final Reformation

Introduction

The great events of the Protestant Reformation triggered by Martin Luther with the Ninety-Five Thesis he nailed to the door of All Saints Church in Wittenberg on October 31, 1517, has been treated as an end in itself. For that reason, it ended up as a foot note in the long march of history. No better evidence can be produced than the reality that majority of those who are branded as 'Protestants' do not understand what that term really means. A better paradigm is called for! And it is this: The events of 1517 were the beginning of a process of Reformation of the Church. It was the beginning also of a process of Restoration of the Lordship of Yeshua, Jesus and all Truths which had been lost to Mystery Babylon and its false Religious narrative of the Gospel. It was the beginning of a process of Revival which would affect the personal spiritual health of saints which would, in turn, transform the corporate life of the Church. Instead of the cold, power hungry Religious organization which Rome had turned the Church to be, the Reformation was supposed to trigger off a process of reviving its original outlook as a living, loving organism of living Body parts: The very Body of Yeshua, Jesus in the earth realm.

While men slept, to use a phrase popularized by Yeshua Himself in Matthew 13 Satan sowed the tares of Religion in both the Reformation flagged off by Martin Luther as well as the rigid positions with which other Reformers like John Calvin held onto the insights they received, denying them the balance provided by the whole counsel of Elohim. Various visitations of Holy Spirit in the earth realm after 1517 have also been short circuited by saints when they boxed them into religious experiences confined within denominations. A typical example is the out pouring of Holy Spirit at Azusa Street, Los Angeles in 1906. Holy Spirit is given to revive the Church as a whole, not create a Pentecostal denomination! By doing just that, humans created another Religious Box among the existing slew of such Boxes! Instead of transforming and renewing the Body of Yeshua, the work of Holy Spirit was basically channeled to create another Religious wing of Christian Religion. Those outside that box roundly rejected Holy Spirit, deeming Him as having finished His earthly work on the Day of the original Pentecost in the Upper Room at Jerusalem.

As those upon whom end of the age has come, we have the privilege of the Long March of History and Time to look back at the past with clear eyes as Holy Spirit reveals the things that went wrong so He can show us how to cooperate with Elohim to bring about the true Kingdom Church that will be ready for the return of Yeshua, Jesus. This section of the Course will, therefore, provide us a download of the mind of Elohim – as clearly articulated in the Holy Scriptures concerning the way forward! We shall cover here as said earlier what is required of both the individual saints as well as the Body of Yeshua as corporate entities (whether at the Local Assembly, City Church or network level). The questions posed by the then persecutor of the Church, Saul and the Jailor at the City of Caesarea, Philippi are relevant here for all whose hearts are sincere in seeking to please Elohim:

Acts 9:6 (KJV) *6 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.*

Acts 16:30 (KJV) *30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*

Brethren, let us let go of our various perspectives, based on cherry picked Scriptures. That way, we can have open hearts and minds to receive and walk in the whole counsel of Elohim. The words of Paul to Timothy about the potency of the whole counsel of Elohim to bring about a complete transformation of life is worthy of affirmation:

2 Timothy 3:15-17 (KJV) *15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

What we must do at the Individual Level

It is not enough to 'name it and claim it' that one is saved or a saint of Elohim. The safest approach is to weigh our current lives and lifestyles based on the Holy Scriptures! No saint can afford the toxic diet of presumption when the end of the age is speeding towards a climactic end. From the day of Salvation till the day of ultimate redemption, either by death or the rapture, is a process of time. During that time, the enemy will attempt to seduce saints from the life of holiness unto the Lord. It is the duty of every saint to resist him steadfastly in the faith and overcome his wiles! Those who obey this simple instruction will find the Grace of our heavenly Father in Yeshua is sufficient to see them through all such solicitations of Satan.

James 1:12-16 (KJV) *12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. 13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: 14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. 15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. 16 Do not err, my beloved brethren.*

1 Peter 5:8-9 (KJV) *8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9 Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.*

Let us, therefore, receive from the word, a plan of action on how to be ready for the return of the Lord.

- Examine our lives as individuals to detect the presence of Sin: Thought, words, attitudes, and deeds which do not reflect the new nature received from Yeshua.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (KJV) *17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

2 Corinthians 13:5 (KJV) *5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?*

To consciously come to the Father not to ask for bread and butter but to seek deliverance from any sin is to seek life! The worst thing that can happen to a saint is to be dominated by besetting sins!

Hebrews 12:1-4 (KJV) *1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. 4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.*

Besetting sins are those saints commit without thinking! They suggest a life in which Sin, rather than Yeshua is Lord – is a contradiction in terms!

Romans 6:1-18 (KJV) *1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? 3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: 6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. 7 For he that is dead is freed from sin. 8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: 9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. 10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. 11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. 12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. 15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. 16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? 17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. 18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.*

While it is true we should have righteousness rather than sin consciousness, the reality is that sin is sin! If saints are truly holy, they will not live in sin as a lifestyle! Yes, they may stumble occasionally but as 1 John 2:1-2 says, they will obtain cleansing and justification before Elohim. What hyper grace preachers have done – whether those who robustly propound a jaded perspective of Eternal security or those who tell saints their sins are not recorded in heaven because they are automatically righteous (even when they sin) – is to give Saints license to march blindfolded to hell while holding onto the placebo of false Grace! Grace does not lead to Sin and sinfulness but to Righteousness and Holiness! There is no doubt whatsoever that Satan's best interests are served when Saints believe doctrines which make them prone to sin; comfortable in sin, and unconcerned about imminence of end of the age! Preachers who give saints the license to be comfortable with sin and sinfulness are in effect false shepherds because they work against the interests of the King, His Kingdom, and eternal destiny of souls committed to their trust. It is the hireling spirit at work and they will answer for this tendency on the last day.

1 Timothy 4:1 (KJV) *1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;*

Ephesians 5:5-7 (KJV) *5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. 6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. 7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.*

True saints awaiting return of the Lord owe themselves the responsibility to rely on Holy Spirit and the Word, not preachers/teachers and their emotions to assess where they are on the road to eternity! Let us see from the Holy Scriptures those who are saved can miss it and if they remain in the wrong lane, will end up excluded from the ultimate destination which is the manifest Kingdom! As we read the scriptures below, let us deliberately give Holy Spirit right of way, just as David desired in Psalms 139:23-24 to pinpoint the exact sins which may have gained access so they can be dealt with by conviction of Holy Spirit; true repentance, confession, and forsaking so Holy Spirit will release Grace for holy living.

1 Corinthians 6:9-20 (KJV) *9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. 12 All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. 13 Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body. 14 And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power. 15 Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. 16 What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. 17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. 18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. 19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

Galatians 5:13-21 (KJV) *13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. 14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. 16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. 18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*

Ephesians 4:17-32 (KJV) *17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: 19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. 20 But ye have not so learned*

Christ; 21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. 25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. 26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27 Neither give place to the devil. 28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. 29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. 30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Ephesians 5:1-8 (KJV) *1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; 2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. 3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; 4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. 6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. 7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them. 8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:*

Colossians 3:5-9 (KJV) *5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: 6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: 7 In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. 8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. 9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;*

Hebrews 6:4-9 (KJV) *4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, 5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, 6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. 7 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: 8 But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. 9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.*

Hebrews 10:26-31 (KJV) *26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

James 4:17 (KJV) *17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.*

The Golden Key: Don't Get Stuck but Rather Grow in Grace!

It is for this reason saints are expected to make their callings and elections sure by growing in Grace!

2 Peter 1:5-11 (KJV) *5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; 6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; 7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. 8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. 10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: 11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

When Saints stop growing, they get stuck in a posture of religion, seeking to please Elohim and gain His approval through activities they do on certain 'holy' days inside 'holy' buildings. That is how religion creeps in and take hold as an alternative to vibrant personal relationship with Elohim through the Grace of Yeshua released by indwelling Holy Spirit! True Grace empowers us to live holy unto the Lord! To sustain a lifestyle of holiness is to grow in Grace.

2 Peter 3:18 (KJV) *18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*

The final reformation will produce saints who every day are in expectancy of return of the Lord!

Hebrews 9:27-28 (KJV) *27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: 28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*

Because of this, they do not take chances with Satan, Sin, or their own flesh! They deal with every stumbling on a case by case basis, with transparency and sincerity and obtain the promise of currency of their Justification in the sight of Elohim!

1 John 2:1-2 (KJV) *1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

Galatians 5:13 (KJV) *13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.*

Review Questions

1. Whose interests does it serve that saints can sin, remain in that state and are not bothered because of false teachings of Grace?
2. What is your personal resolution going forward regarding Sin and Sinfulness (Thoughts, Words, Attitudes, Deeds)
3. How useful did you find this chapter?

Chapter 65

Imbibing the Glorious Truths

Individual Saints need to walk in the 16 Glorious Truths which are very liberating! As part of the final reformation, we need to acknowledge the reality that Christian Religion cannot make anyone perfect because of the leaven of Babylon which corrupts the free gift of Grace. Many believers brought up in the ways of Christian religion struggle with the identity issue: Programmed to believe they are perpetual sinners, though saved by Grace. This sin consciousness mindset sets many up for a life of constant struggle to accept the reality that they are saints of Elohim.

1.2 Accept the Reality that the all the Glorious Truths which collectively make up the New Covenant are for real in the lives of saints

For these things to be experiential in lives of saints, there is a real need for those who are in Yeshua to accept the reality of certain glorious truths that are grounded and settled. The glorious Truths are radical blessings Yahweh offers whoever will accept His call for translation into His Kingdom. They are the true heart of the glorious gospel of Yeshua, Jesus and the centerpiece of what constitutes our Kingdom life in the present which distinguish saints from the world around. In so doing, the Glorious Truths show why the gospel is called the Good News. These glorious truths should shape the true identity, world view, and lifestyle of saints and truly make them live an “other world life”.

These truths are different from the dry doctrines or church dogma new believers are forced to memorize or recite in so-called discipleship classes. These blessings, which all saints need to receive and appropriate by faith, as gifts from our heavenly Father in Yeshua and walk in our new creation realities. All who are truly saved – notwithstanding their racial backgrounds, geographic locations, gender or age need to know and manifest these truths as real life experiences!

Caveat: Teaching these truths to those who are not truly converted from Satan, Self, and World dominated life (and are not planning to do so) to know them mentally, recite and ‘claim’ is a perversion of the gospel of Yeshua and the Kingdom!

#.1. Grace. It is by Grace sinners are saved through Faith they exercise in the finished work of Yeshua. Grace is also the life of Yahweh in Yeshua and His strength that is the basis of the new life of the redeemed. Without Grace, saints will live a dry religious life free of the vitality that comes from their vibrant relationship with the Father. Grace is manifested in Mercy and Favor which sets saints apart from their contemporaries and on a higher pedestal of glory (Ephesians 2:1-8).

#.2. Election – Salvation did not just happen. Well before foundation of the world, Elohim had chosen them in Yeshua out of His love and mercy to be part of His glorious family in the earth realm. Though this has been His plan for all, the paradox is that only the remnant actually responds to this Divine lifeline! Election is based on the reality that Incarnation of Yeshua was not a plan B after Adam and Eve

sinned. Well before humans were created, He had offered Himself as propitiation and therefore slain before time as Revelation 13:8 says (Ephesians 1:3-6; Romans 8:29-30).

#.3. Redemption. Saints are redeemed through the blood that was shed at the cross of Calvary. He gave His life so that saints may live! Redemption is a total reality: deliverance from Satan's rule; from the power of Sin; from the Curse on the earth realm as a result of Sin of Adam and Eve; redemption from the Curse of the Law and all the dimensions thereof; To be redeemed is to be bought back from a wrong master (Romans 3:24).

#.4. Justification and Righteousness. This is the pronouncement that seals the deal of translation from sinner to saint for those who truly repent of their sins. It is the act of being counted blameless with no record of past sins in heaven as they were truly blotted out by the Blood. The outcome is peace with Yahweh and a good conscience free of guilt because there is no record of the past that was fully atoned for on the Cross (Romans 4:35; Romans 5:16; Romans 3:21-22).

#.5. New Creation. Though there are billions of people on planet earth, those who are the true members of the family of Elohim and citizens of His Kingdom are so because they are His New Creation in the earth realm. There is a change of nature that occurs within their innermost being – the spirit man where the Elohim type of life replaces the Old which was born in sin and ruled by Satan (2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:1-3).

#.6. Adoption. Here, the former sinner and enemy of Yahweh is made a member of His family and translated or conveyed into the Kingdom. Our adoption begins as children and progresses to sons. Sonship speaks of maturity so that we take responsibility for maintaining the estate of our Father in the earth realm (Romans 8:15; Ephesians 1:5).

#.7. Position. Based on what happened at the Cross, the saint has a shift in position. Whereas he/she was a full earthling, there is now a paradigm shift by which though still physically in the earth realm, the spirit-man of the redeemed is seated with Yeshua in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:1-6). Saints in effect are far above all principalities, powers and negative influences which rule the earth realm.

#.8. The Mobile Temple of Holy Spirit. The obverse side of the truth in #.7 is the reality that saints are mobile Temples indwelt by Ruach ha Chodesh, Holy Spirit. In this setting, they literally carry Him wherever they go and He will show up if they accept this truth by faith. The analogy is the Ark of Testimony which Israel physically transported whenever they moved camp (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

#.9. Security. The redeemed of Yeshua have a double layer of security in Him and Yahweh that they need to know and walk in. When this truth sinks in, fear will automatically jump out of their lives so that they walk boldly as lions (Colossians 3:1-3; Psalm 91).

#.10. Dual Citizenship. Saints are in effect, dual citizens. They are first citizens of the Kingdom of heaven while they are planted as its Ambassadors in specific nations in the earth realm. Their primary loyalty is to Yeshua their redeemer and there is absolutely no question that His word rules their lives. Yet His word requires saints to love, respect and honor temporal leaders of their earthly nations and obey laws, except where such will lead them to sin (Philippians 3:20-21; 1 Peter 2:11-15).

#.11. Show piece of Elohim. The redeemed of Yeshua are the showpiece of Yahweh who He wants to showcase. Our manifestation as His sons in the earth realm both in the now and in the world to come is something He yearns to bring to pass because it demonstrates His goodness (Ephesians 2:10; Romans 8:16-23)

#.12. Guaranteed Outcomes. Saints are guaranteed that while on their earthly pilgrimage if they remain in the center of the will of their heavenly Father and trust Him with their future, all things will work together for their good and are therefore part of the process of their maturation and perfection (Romans 8:28-39)

#.13. Walk/Live by Faith, not by sight. Saints begin the eternal journey by Faith and continue therein. By Faith they can relate with the Supreme Spirit Being that Elohim Is. (2 Corinthians 5:7; Mark 11:22-24; Hebrews 10:35-39; Hebrews 11:1,6). In effect, Prayer is the vehicle through which Saints release their Faith as they communicate with their heavenly Father on a spirit to spirit basis!

#.14. Inheritance. Sons have an inheritance from their Father. It is the full benefits of being in Yeshua, Jesus in time and in eternity. They are the Covenant Blessings of Calvary cross which Satan uses ignorance to offer them pseudo-blessings such as he did to Eve in Eden. (Ephesians 1:3; Romans 8:31-32; 2 Peter 1:3). These are gifts of grace to be received, appreciated and appropriated by Faith. All saints are to walk in them and by so doing, announce to people within their spheres of influence where they are and where they are going. Paul spoke of this reality with confidence in a tough situation.

Acts 27:23 (KJV) *23 For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,*

#.15. Sealed unto Day of Redemption.

In consideration of the awesome promises of eternal life and inheritance in the hereafter which we considered in the last truth it is needful to note Elohim did not just state His intent. He went further to seal the deal of eternal life in saints by the Person of His Own Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 1:13 (KJV) *13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,*

Out of the estimated 7.5 (+ or -) Billion people on earth, only those who He Himself knows as truly redeemed by the Blood of Yeshua have this seal of Holy Spirit!

2 Timothy 2:19 (KJV) *19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 (KJV) *21 Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; 22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.*

2 Corinthians 5:5 (KJV) *5 Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.*

Ephesians 4:30 (KJV) *30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*

This seal measure of Holy Spirit is not actively taught in the major wing of the Christian Church in this generation. When we know this truth, it is easy to understand that it is this point the spiritual DNA of Yahweh as Father is imparted into the redeemed. This seal measure of Holy Spirit basically writes the spiritual profile of the saint by the root gifts that are imparted thereby. This is what defines what role the saint will play in the Body of Yeshua as he or she grows in grace. The Truth of Holy Spirit as Seal of Redemption is a powerful motivation to remain in the faith, resist Satan, Sin, the World, and Flesh and be a yielded instrument in hands of Holy Spirit. The consciousness of the seal will open a saint to receive three additional dimensions of Holy Spirit: He is the Catalyst of Transformation of our character to make it conform to that of Yeshua. (Fruit of the Spirit Galatians 5:22-23; Philippians 1:6; Philippians 2:13). He also unites us with other saints worldwide because we are of one spirit with them (Ephesians 4:1-6; Galatian 3:26-26). He also releases the measure of power with which we can Demonstrate Yeshua, Jesus (Acts 1:8).

#.16. Delegated Authority of Yeshua, Ambassadors of the Kingdom

Saints are not just redeemed to fold their hands and wait for the Day of the Lord. That is one of the errors Christian Religion foisted upon 'church members' of various denominations. This theological error has crippled many saints to live 'normal' human lives that are selfish and self-centered, contrary to the basic operating system declared by Yeshua, Jesus to Paul which is selflessness:

Acts 20:35 (KJV) *35 I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.*

The redeemed are automatically enlisted in the Diplomatic Corps of the Kingdom of Heaven to represent the King in the earth realm! This is not a good idea or suggestion but a fact and reality which explains why we are not translated to heaven immediately we are saved (which would have been the safest guarantee to make it into eternity and avoid all the temptations and challenges that invariably trail the saved). Yeshua, Jesus said it all when He prayed to the Father asking that His saints be preserved from evil, not taken away from the earth realm John 17:6-16.

In one of the best parables illustrating the reality that there is ambassadorial work to be done while we are alive on earth, Yeshua charged His disciples and us to occupy until He comes:

Luke 19:11-13 (KJV) *11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. 12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. 13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.*

We have serious work to do during the span of time allocated to us in the earth realm! The Ministry of Reconciling sinners to their Father is at the heart of this assignment to occupy

Great in power as they are, the business of reconciling sinners to the Father is not given to angels because they are not human. It is a spiritual responsibility given to those redeemed out of human kind to be instruments in the hands of the Lord to reconcile others.

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 (KJV) *17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. 20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. 21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

It is not just about crunching numbers of those who respond to the gospel and profess faith in Yeshua, Jesus! Saints engaged in the ministry of reconciliation have the added responsibility of discipleship – turning those who believe on Yeshua, Jesus to become His followers

Matthew 28:18-20 (KJV) *18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

The business of discipling others is a function of spiritual reproduction: Like begets like! If those who preach and teach are disciples or followers who have submitted to the Sovereign rule of Yeshua, Jesus as their King, the kingdom business of enabling other believers to be disciples will be easy:

2 Timothy 2:2 (KJV) *2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

This responsibility is worldwide starting from our local communities to our Provinces, States, Nations, and worldwide.

Acts 1:8 (KJV) *8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

It is also to be an assignment which does not end until Yeshua returns – by which time, the last person ordained for Salvation would have been brought in!

Matthew 24:14 (KJV) *14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*

A careful reading of Acts 1:8 reveals Holy Spirit is given to be the Ambassadorial Credential of the redeemed! In addition, saints are vested with the authority of the Name of Yeshua, Jesus to undertake the assignment. With the Power of Holy Spirit within and authority of the Name of Yeshua, Jesus on their lips, saints are empowered as His delegated authority in the earth realm.

Luke 10:19 (KJV) *19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.*

Mark 16:17 (KJV) *17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;*

The Alpha Church knew, taught, and practiced the delegated power of the Name of Yeshua, Jesus and saw mighty manifestations.

Acts 3:6 (KJV) *6 Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.*

Acts 4:10 (KJV) *10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.*

Acts 4:12 (KJV) *12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*

Opponents of the gospel tried to shut down the mighty move of Holy Spirit in that era, they went for the jugular: forbidding them to preach or teach in His Name!

Acts 4:18 (KJV) *18 And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.*

Acts 5:40 (KJV) *40 And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.*

If we can only comprehend the height, depth, and breadth of the awesome love of Elohim manifested in the vicarious death of Yeshua, Jesus at the Cross, we will with hearts full of gratitude, love Him with all our hearts, minds, and might. All attempts to cling to the flesh will dissolve! In gratitude, we will surrender the throne of our hearts to Yeshua to reign supreme as Sovereign King. In that situation, our will is fully yielded to our Father so that Holy Spirit is given right of way to lead us in all things. This becomes our defining attribute!

Romans 8:14 (KJV) *14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*

Conclusion

Understanding and accepting the Glorious Truths will set saints free from Sin consciousness! They, therefore, empower them to accept the reality we all have been made saints of Elohim through the exchange that took place on the Cross. It is acceptance of those truths which lead to a reckoning of themselves to be dead indeed to Sin and rather alive unto the righteous nature of Yeshua their Lord

Romans 6:11-12 (KJV) *11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. 12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.*

2 Corinthians 5:17, 21 (KJV) *17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

To believe one is saved without accepting the reality of sainthood will lead to both a religious mindset and constant struggle with sin. Sainthood is an existential reality of Grace which needs to be accepted wholly by faith. When accepted, it releases grace to live holy unto the Lord and heightens more awareness when suggestions from Satan come into the thought realm. They are recognized as alien to

His nature. This, in turn, causes a saint to refrain from nurturing such imaginations but rather to reject and cast them down (Philippians 4:8; 2 Corinthians 10:3-6). This warfare of the mind and heart leads to a life of victory in the practice of righteousness which is the basis of 24/7 holiness to which we are called in the first place.

1 John 3:3-10 (KJV) *3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. 4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. 5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. 6 Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. 7 Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. 8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. 9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. 10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.*

Can saints sin? Yes, they can stumble, but not consciously. True saints detest sin because they recognize it as a work of Satan. But, there are times when saints are tripped over when off guard. Should a saint stumble into a sin in such circumstances, the Father requires a response of humility to be open to a conviction of Holy Spirit, quick acknowledgment of same and prompt repentance which sets the stage for justification to take place immediately. Because Elohim sees this inclination of the heart from the view point of His Omniscience, there is no break of Fellowship

1 John 2:1-2 (KJV) *1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

Those who live this way are truly ready for the return of the Lord at any minute! They are earnest for His return and therefore fulfill the condition for participating in the rapture of saints or resurrection of the dead in Yeshua.

Hebrews 9:27-28 (KJV) *27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: 28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (KJV) *13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

1 Corinthians 15:50-55 (KJV) *50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and*

this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

The reality that sinners can be made saints and yet issues can arise if they are careless which requires them to repent is critical to the understanding of the New Covenant. The Epistles of Paul the Apostle which warned of sins and exhorted on the way to maintain their spirituality. were all written to saints, not sinners as Romans 1:7 and 1 Corinthians 1:2 reveal.

Review Questions

1. Please describe any or some of the Glorious Truths which you need to come into the experiential reality of or grow in.
2. As one who will teach others, how useful is this chapter?

Chapter 66

Making the 6 Fundamental C's a Way of Life.

1.3. Individual Saints need to make the 6 Fundamental C their realities

The 16 Glorious Truths represent blessings of Grace the Father freely offers His sons in the earth realm. We do not earn them because they are gifts of Grace. They reveal the great esteem Elohim has for those who are called by His Name in the earth realm. His desire is to decorate them with virtue and grace that marks them out as extraordinary relative to other earthlings. The whole idea is to enable us to live the quality lives required as Ambassadors of His Kingdom, holy and unblameable in His sight.

Ephesians 1:3-6 (KJV) *3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: 4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*

From the beginning of time, however, Elohim created human kind with a special facility called the will. With the will, human beings have the capacity to choose to receive His love or refuse; choose to obey Him or not. It was the exercise of the negative exercise of the will by Eve and Adam which brought about great disaster to humankind: separation from Elohim (Genesis 2:15- 17 Genesis 3:1-7)! The consequence of disobedience was swift and painful!

A snapshot of the loss can be found in Genesis 3:7-19. The rest, as it is said, is history! But, it is significant that even before Elohim punished Adam and Eve, He provided for redemption!

Genesis 3:15 (KJV) *15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

In due season, The Seed manifested as Yeshua and through Him, human kind was offered the opportunity to reconnect back to Elohim, on His Own terms. He forces His Salvation on no one:

John 3:16-19 (KJV) *16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

Salvation by grace is the entry point into the Kingdom of Yahweh. As we have seen from this passage, acceptance of the free offer of eternal life in Yeshua, Jesus involves the exercise of the human will to respond in faith. In the same way, growing in grace and moving from one degree of light to others is entirely dependent on the way the redeemed exercise their will relative to the Word and will of Elohim. There are many who will dwell too long on the mountain of salvation by grace. If they do not make

further progress, they may end up in dead religious works and activities as 2 Peter 1:5-11 reveals. Holy Spirit is ever-present to enable saints to see the glory of the depth of the riches of Yeshua that lies ahead. As many as responding to the promptings of Holy Spirit to forsake the familiar and take a plunge into the depths of the grace of Yahweh in Him will discover the blessed state of their new life in Him!

True saints should never ever forget that His Salvation, Elohim requires obedience to His will, expressed in His Word.

John 15:10-14 (KJV) *10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. 11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. 12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. 13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*

To claim salvation and yet walk in self-will which leads to sin and sinful tendencies is a contradiction of epic proportions! One of the reasons why Yeshua came in the Flesh was to show us a vital secret for walking in intimacy with Elohim: lay down our wills and take up His Own!

John 4:34 (KJV) *34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.*

John 5:30 (KJV) *30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.*

John 6:38 (KJV) *38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.*

Submission of our will to Elohim means we will not make haste to decide what to do or take action on anything until we know, by how He speaks to us what is the will of Elohim!

Isaiah 28:16 (KJV) *16 Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.*

This lifestyle, when imbibed, will lead to a state of righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Spirit; will free us from anxieties, worries, and presumptuous sins!

Isaiah 26:3 (KJV) *3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*

It is the true evidence of the death of self and acceptance of the Sovereign rule of Yeshua as King over our lives. The surrender of the will is what will enable saints to respond properly to the 16 Glorious Truths. That response, which in any case comes from His Grace leads to the manifestation of the 6 Fundamental C's as hallmark of saints who provide evidence, by their manner of life, that they are His remnant in the earth realm! The interesting thing is that Elohim has by His Spirit provided sufficient Grace for His saints to live according to His will! He is the one Who supplies Grace

Philippians 1:6 (KJV) *6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:*

Philippians 2:13 (KJV) *13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

The 6 Fundamental C's

In view of the glorious truths Elohim presents to His Redeemed (apart from chapter 65, please read up the entire text in GSOM Course 104: The 16 Glorious Truths), there is a matching responsibility from those who are His own to ensure that His grace is not despised, squandered or misused.

2 Corinthians 6:1 (KJV) *1 We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.*

The issue we deal with in this chapter is extracted from GSOM Course 105: The 6 Fundamental C's. Collectively, they advance a simple thesis: As we receive the holistic blessings that are part of the Grace package our heavenly Father bestowed on us, without charge, based on the Finished Work of Yeshua on the Cross of Calvary, He has invested us with the capacity to respond to His Love in a way which aligns us with Him in His will and nature. That level of bonding He and Yeshua enjoyed is available to all of us who are His sons in the earth realm!

John 17:21 (KJV) *21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*

What kind of responses does He require from His redeemed so that they can grow in grace to be all He ordained them to be?

2 Peter 3:18 (KJV) *18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*

For ease of reference and to foster simplicity of application, the six core responses of the truly redeemed to the unlimited love of the Father in Yeshua are these:

1. Conversion

Acts 3:19 (KJV) *19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.*

This is the change of mind and heart arising from true repentance from Sin and receiving of Yahweh's salvation in Yeshua. Conversion is the fruit of genuine holistic repentance. Without Conversion, an individual is still in sin. Mere repentance of any thought, word or deed that one was convicted of will not do. As we will see, Conversion is that point at which the encounter with Yeshua, Jesus is so real that it manifests as new life in Him. Those who are truly converted bring forth the fruits of repentance which is righteousness.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (KJV) *17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

Matthew 3:8 (KJV) *8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:*

Those who are truly converted manifest a deep and unconditional love of Elohim and gratitude for what Yeshua accomplished on the Cross. They also love the brethren and all humans. It is the responsibility of all saints living in these end times – with all the baggage of uncertainties - to avoid the deception of

religion which makes human beings to glory in rituals without heart and approval of humans. We all have a duty to sincerely answer the question: are you truly converted with evidence of a new nature based on an experiential encounter with Yeshua? Or, are you living a religious life.

2. Consecration

This experience is based on these scriptures:

Romans 12:1 (KJV) *1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

Matthew 16:24-26 (KJV) *24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. 25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. 26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*

Galatians 2:20 (KJV) *20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

Consecration is the act of complete surrender to Yahweh to live for Him wholly. Those who enjoy the experiential reality of the 16 Glorious Truths are those who die to self-interests and are wholly consecrated to Yahweh and live for His supreme purpose. When they are yielded totally to Him like this, His Zoë life (nature and life of Elohim) flows through them. Consecration implies the sacrifice of our entire beings to the degree that they no longer serve any selfish or self-centered purpose. Rather, Elohim uses our beings as vessels of honor for expressing His Will, Presence, and Power!

Psalms 50:5 (KJV) *5 Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.*

Saints living in these last days need to realize that the only place of safety is the Consecrated life: one totally immersed and hidden in Him!

Colossians 3:1-3 (KJV) *1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*

1 Peter 4:1-2 (KJV) *1 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; 2 That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.*

3. Commitment

This is based on proper understanding of the reality that the King and His Kingdom cannot be subordinated to any other pursuit, otherwise, an idol is in operation in hearts of saints.

Matthew 6:19-34 (KJV) *19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. 22 The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. 23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be*

darkness, how great is that darkness! 24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. 25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? 26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? 27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? 28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: 29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? 31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Commitment is the act of single minded pursuit of the Kingdom and its righteousness as the primary goal of the redeemed on planet earth. This single-minded pursuit of the Kingdom un-clutters their lives to release a sense of Divine Purpose and strategic direction. In this mode, the saint is delivered from the clutches of Satan, the deceptive attractions of the world system and the ambitions of the self-nature.

With this deliverance, the glory of the aroma of Yeshua, Jesus in them is unleashed, making them the flames of fire they are supposed to be: passionate and burning with zeal for His glory in all situations. Saints in this mode become tasteful as salt and penetrating as light which dispels darkness. By being committed to the King and His Kingdom, they cannot be comfortable inside the stifling boxes of religion called denominations! Those who are unable to make this commitment are mere professors, rather than possessors of the Kingdom! Their empty religious slogans mask the reality that self, represented by their belly (what to eat, drink, clothes to wear, jobs, career and houses to live in) drive their lives and priorities! Those who want to work for Yahweh without first walking with Him tend to be religiously inclined hirelings and fair-weather Christians. When there are blessings, they loudly proclaim their affinity with The Creator. But when expected blessings do not come through or seem delayed, they vent their anxiety, doubt, unbelief and even worse, some backslide or go into apostasy. For such people, their real god is their belly!

Philippians 3:17-21 (KJV) *17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. 18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 Whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)*

Those who desire to labor in the vineyard of the King must never forget the real deal of the new life we have in Him and the ultimate prize. Our esteem of the ultimate prize should be so great that we are willing to forsake all else to obtain it!

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (KJ V) *24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. 25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. 26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one*

that beateth the air: 27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

We need to shift emphasis from chasing after the anointing of Holy Spirit for selfish purposes (fame, popularity, wealth) to unending hunger for an intimate relationship with our Redeemer and function as sons of the Most High in the earth realm.

4. Communion

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (KJV) *17 Pray without ceasing*

Communion is the act of being in continual fellowship with Yahweh; conversing with and seeking directions from Him in all things. A life of Communion implies unbroken fellowship arising from hearts connected with Elohim and the Throne of Grace on a 24/7 basis. With that kind of alignment, saints posture as midwives for birthing His determinate counsel in the earth realm. We hear His will, pray same and therefore become useful instruments of ordering the earth realm with Him. Communion also describes a life of true fellowship based on love with other saints who are citizens of the Kingdom. This happens when saints are bonded together in Him as Head and in each other, releasing and receiving Grace for building up of the whole Body. True communion is possible when the Fivefold – Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers – are fully engaged in ministering to the saints in an organic, rather than organizational paradigm as Ephesians 4:11-16 reveals.

Ephesians 4:15-16 (KJV) *15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

5. Call

John 15:16 (KJV) *16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.*

1 Peter 2:9 (KJV) *9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;*

In the New Covenant Kingdom Church, ALL (not a few or some) saints in the Kingdom are called by Yahweh to serve as priests and kings, ministering to Him, His people; fulfilling the transformational assignment of the church in our environment as the salt and light. They are fully invested in continuation of His Mission Statement to seek and save the Lost

Luke 19:10 (KJV) *10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 (KJV) *17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. 20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye*

reconciled to God. 21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Matthew 5:13-16 (KJV) 13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

The Priesthood after the Order of Melchizedek is what all saints are called to! It is totally different in nature and form from the Nimrodic and Levitical Priesthoods that are popular in Christendom.

Hebrews 5:5-6 (KJV) 5 So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. 6 As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

It is for this reason that all saints are blessed with spiritual gifts as instruments of ministering to Elohim, other saints, and society. To know and exercise our spiritual gifts is to perform our priestly duties at the most primary levels:

Romans 12:5-6 (KJV) 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 11-12 (KJV) 4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. 12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

Ephesians 4:7-8 (KJV) 7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. 8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

The spiritual gifts we have been given are not trophies to be admired but rather divine instruments for accomplishing the assignments committed to our trust. To remain ignorant of them is to court disaster on the last day as Luke 19:11-27 reveals. That is why saints are encouraged to discover and deploy all their spiritual gifts for Kingdom service, knowing fully well that a day is coming when the King will require full accounting!

1 Peter 4:10-11 (KJV) 10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

The Melchizedek order is universal < for all saints of all ages, gender, and socio-economic backgrounds> while the other two are exclusive preserves of a priestly caste which act as mediators between a 'holy God' and an 'unholy people'

6. Clinging

John 15:1-8 (KJV) *1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. 3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. 6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. 8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.*

All saints are also called to abide in Yeshua for He is our life! In Him alone we live, move and have our being. The saint who is serious about eternity understands and walks in the reality that as long as we cling to Yeshua as our life by abiding in Him and giving His Word space to be grafted and made flesh/abide in us, our will easily gives way to His will. As we learn to depend on Holy Spirit and surrender our will to Him we are enabled to cling to His Person and voice.

In this way, He uses our beings to release the quantum of Grace that is needed at any given time. As long as He guides us in all things, our Salvation will not only bear abundant fruits but more importantly, we will grow in Yeshua to live like Him as sons of Elohim

Romans 8:12-14 (KJV) *12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*

When we cling in this way, all the storms the enemy can activate are stripped of the power to impact us negatively

Romans 8:28-39 (KJV) *28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. 31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. 34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

It is when we cling to Him – despite all the storms of life, that His Great Grace in us becomes evident. Whatever we go through, let us be encouraged by the experience of Paul the Apostle to realize that clinging to Him makes all the difference!

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 (KJV) *7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. 8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. 9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.*

Conclusion

It is essential that saints get away from tendencies to cram their brains with dry dogmas for purpose of engaging in religious debates with those who believe otherwise. In the same way, engagement in cultural wars with unbelievers and sinners has little or no value in the Kingdom. The key is for saints to understand that the new life we have in King Yeshua produces real evidence of newness of life. It is the responsibility of saints to cross check our lives relative to each of these 6 experiences. Any experience which is missing represents a chink in the armor of Kingdom life.

Review Questions

***Please study this teaching note on your own and do the assignment

Chapter 67

Recovering the Lost Axe Head of Kingdom Life

We are still downloading the blueprint of how saints ought to live in order to be ready for the return of King Yeshua and the end of all things. Let us consider these 10 realities that Elohim desires to see in those who are saved by His Grace. Interestingly, He undertakes to supply more grace to enable saints to walk in them.

1. Rooted in the Word by diligent study of the whole Scriptures. The end time saints must return to a life that is word based. We are born again by the Word

1 Peter 1:23 (KJV) *23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.*

The Word is to be made flesh to the degree that Holy Spirit quickens its provisions as moral compass of our lives

John 14:26 (KJV) *26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

Our Thoughts are pure when they line up with the Word

Philippians 4:8 (KJV) *8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

This is a function of the renewing effects of the Word which challenge worldly culture in the mind to replace it with Kingdom culture

Romans 12:2 (KJV) *2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

Ephesians 4:23 (KJV) *23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;*

The Word within our hearts is the greatest insurance against presumptuous sins

Psalms 119:9 (KJV) *9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.*

Psalms 119:11 (KJV) *11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.*

Those who know the Word cannot be easily misled by Preachers sent by their bellies or hell

Ephesians 4:14 (KJV) *14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;*

Knowing the Word makes saints wise to the degree that they cannot be co-dependents of Nimrodic preachers and Teachers nor can they fall victim to Levitical paradigms of priesthood. They can spot error and decline to follow religious ways which take people outside the Kingdom

2 Timothy 3:15-17 (KJV) *15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

For those called to ministry or already in Ministry, it is only through thorough study and application of the Word that they can please the King of Kings and excel.

2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV) *15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

When ministers know the Word, they are less likely to play with it! Just as was reported about the saints at Berea in the Alpha Church, we on who end of the age has come need to be diligent about searching the Scriptures, not allowing ourselves to be intimidated by the personalities of preachers and teachers/

Acts 17:10-11 (KJV) *10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*

2. Effective, Unbroken Communion with Holy Spirit in real time. It is not about loud expressions of tongues or other showy actions that Pentecostalism has taught ministers and saints to do inside human boxes called 'Churches'. It is rather getting to a much deeper and intimate relationship with Him based on these things:

The reality that He is the Seal of our Salvation.

2 Corinthians 1:22 (KJV) *22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.*

Ephesians 1:13 (KJV) *13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,*

Ephesians 4:30 (KJV) *30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*

To make the matter more critical, He lives right within our beings!

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (KJV) *19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's*

In effect, true Communion ensures when we receive Him as the Divine Personality He Is within us, not an external 'It' we can switch on (during 'Church services' inside a building) and off (at home, in the work space and society) at will!

Our Communion is enhanced when we receive Him as the Divine Personality assigned to be with us, comfort, guide and strengthen throughout our earthly pilgrimage in the Body.

John 14:26 (KJV) *26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you allthings, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

When these things are settled in our hearts, we are inclined to submit to His leadings and promptings which are a vital mark of sonship.

Romans 8:12-14 (KJV) *12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*

Accepting His empowerment through exercise of spiritual gifts and callings

Ultimately, it is Holy Spirit Who uses the Word to Comfort us in all situations, provides us the internal stability which comes from being truly invested in Kingdom business

Romans 14:17-18 (KJV) *17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. 18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.*

To Him is given the capacity to enable us to enjoy the Divine Presence in a tangible way. To attune our ears, hearts, and minds to hear Him in real time through a lively conscience is perhaps the greatest insurance against all evil and guarantee of success from a Kingdom perspective.

3. Live Holy unto the Lord. Elohim begat us to live on earth, just as He Is.

1 Peter 1:15 (KJV) *15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; 16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.*

Sin and sinning are not part of His nature but rather part of Satan and our old natures. In the normal order of things, our natural ways of thinking and past experiences can come in between us and true holiness. That is why we need to recognize all tendencies within our inner beings - especially the Soul's compartments: Mind (thoughts); Will (decision making); Emotion (attitudes/feelings) – which are earthly. Dissatisfaction with carnality will position us to accept the offer of Elohim to sanctify our hearts wholly. Our Father is willing to sanctify us completely so that we can enjoy the fullness of our new natures.

1 Thessalonians 5:22-24 (KJV) *22 Abstain from all appearance of evil. 23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.*

4. Live in Love. With renewed minds and hearts submitted to Holy Spirit, there is no room for struggle to see things as they are. Our heart is more inclined to love Elohim, all saints, and all people just as He requires.

Matthew 22:37-40 (KJV) *37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets*

Yeshua made Love the central plank of Kingdom Culture. There is no way around it!

John 13:34-35 (KJV) 34 *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

John 15:12 (KJV) 12 *This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.*

Walking in love makes us manifest the DNA of Elohim Who Is Love personified. While the capacity is in us, it is still imperative for all saints to reject any tendencies that are contrary to it as a lifestyle

Ephesians 5:1-2 (KJV) 1 *Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; 2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.*

5. Make Faith our Kingdom Lifestyle. We became the new Creation of Elohim when by Faith we appropriate the Grace of His Salvation.

Ephesians 2:8 (KJV) 8 *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

In effect, the DNA of Faith which belongs to our Father Yahweh is imparted to us but only needs to be activated by choice of obedience.

2 Corinthians 5:7 (KJV) (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

When we choose to walk by Faith, impossibilities disappear from our consciousness! We are rather emboldened to become vibrant Ambassadors of the Kingdom, calling things that are not as if they are. It is in this way that mountains of life are moved.

Mark 11:22-24 (KJV) 22 *And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. 23 For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. 24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.*

Hebrews 11:1, 6 (KJV) 1 *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

6 *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

Hebrews 10:35-39 (KJV) 35 *Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. 36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. 37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. 39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.*

When natural humans behold how we live, they marvel and are open to being like us which prepares them to receive the word. A life of Faith is infectious! It distinguished Abraham so much so that Elohim asked His saints of all ages to emulate this virtue in him,

Romans 4:17 (KJV) 17 *(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. 18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. 19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an*

hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: 20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; 21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. 22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

Isaiah 51:1-2 (KJV) *1 Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. 2 Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.*

6. Walk in Unity. Our King, Yeshua made Unity one of the dominant features of His Kingdom Church which, when unbelievers see manifested in saints, open them up to believe. To walk in line with His desire becomes imperative!

John 17:20-23 (KJV) *20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*

Miracles, signs, and wonders become common place when saints live in love, are aligned to Yeshua and each other, walking in unity. It makes prayers more potent, producing the right outcomes!

1 Corinthians 1:10 (KJV) *10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

Matthew 18:19-20 (KJV) *19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*

That is why Elohim warns saints to throw out of fellowship, divisive people who work against unity of saints!

Romans 16:17-18 (KJV) *17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. 18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.*

End time saints cannot afford to live isolated lives. The Spirit of Grace in us yearns to connect us with others who have the same seal.

Hebrews 10:25 (KJV) *25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

Those who refuse to accept this Kingdom reality end up with all kinds of afflictions that vex their spirits. To recognize that we are not alone in the quest for immortality is the very basis of embracing the remnant of all ages in various parts of the world. This is where social media like Facebook – with 2 billion users – becomes a vital tool of Kingdom Connection and Community. Let us use it wisely.

Romans 11:1-6 (KJV) *1 I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the*

scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel saying, 3 Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. 4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. 5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

To walk in unity requires active cooperation with Holy Spirit Who enables us to make choices that foster a bonding rather than dissipation of strength in the community of saints

Ephesians 4:1-5 (KJV) *1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

6. Make Prayer a lifestyle rather than an event. Prayer is in a sense, the highest expression of humility and statement of total dependency on Elohim. What the Lord shared with us concerning communion in chapter 66 is worth reminding here. The life of praying is one of reporting regularly to headquarters of the Kingdom: The Throne of Grace for instructions, Insight, directions and to draw down Grace for representing our King with distinction. Those who pray regularly, hear from Elohim and do as directed do not easily get buffeted by the storms of life nor are they distracted from the course they are set on by Him.

Luke 18:1 (KJV) *1 And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;*

Our King had a regular habit of settling issues with His Father in prayer, early each day. So, should we.

Mark 1:35 (KJV) *35 And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.*

As 1 Thessalonians 5:17 says, we should also pray without ceasing.

7. Service. King Yeshua is very clear that His Kingdom in the earth realm is marked by a lifestyle of service. Service enables us to lovingly and willingly be invested in seeking well-being of others, not ours. It is a lifestyle of being poured out for the benefit of others, for their edification, the highest expression of selflessness!

Matthew 20:20-28 (KJV) *20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedees children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. 21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. 22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. 23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father. 24 And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren. 25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.*

26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; 27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: 28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

When we imbibe the culture of serving one another, the Spirit of Grace is let loose upon any group of saints who are connected by Him. All are blessed and all are edified. That is why our spiritual gifts should be seen as what they are: instruments of service, not personal exaltation or pride!

Romans 15:1-3 (KJV) *1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. 3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.*

Yeshua deemed the issue of sufficient import that He modeled what it means to serve others by washing feet of the disciples. John 13:1-17 When leaders release all that the Father placed in them for the benefit of building up saints towards their destinies, they are doing likewise!

8. Doing Kingdom Business with everything we are and have received from our Father. Our entire spiritual assets (eternal life, spiritual gifts, callings); Persona (physical features and carriage); Physical Assets (Money, Resources) as well as Social assets (Businesses, Jobs, Position in Society; Goodwill; Esteem) are to be consciously laid down at the Feet of King Yeshua so that He uses them all to advance His Kingdom in the earth realm. That is how we occupy! Luke 19:11-13

Those who lay down 100 percent of their total assets in this way make a sure investment of themselves which the Lord has promised great rewards in Time and eternity! To serve in this way requires profound confidence in Elohim as a righteous judge Who will, in His Own set Time bless the Faithful

Matthew 19:29 (KJV) *29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.*

9. Impacting the Society with the transformative substance of the Kingdom Salt and as Light: This is the Ministry of consciously doing good to impact those outside the Kingdom on His behalf and preserve our spheres of influence from the effects of Satan and the Fall.

The reality of Kingdom life is that though Yeshua wants us to be separate from the world, He does not mean it to be a life of isolation behind walls of Monasteries and Abbeys. Rather, He wants us separated from the influence of the prince of the power of the air and worldly culture which is corrupting so that we can engage with them as Kingdom ambassadors. In this regard, He wants Saints positioned as His Salt and Light!

14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Salt preserves things it is applied to from corruption or decay

Salt adds value which brings forth taste

As individuals, we are to be the extended hands of Elohim to touch the poor, homeless, weak and vulnerable such as prisoners, ex-offenders and all on the margins of society.

Matthew 25:31-40 (KJV) *31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. 37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*

Galatians 6:9-10 (KJV) *9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. 10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*

10. Eternity Consciousness. True saints of the Omega Church do not just crunch the days of life, chasing 'success' like their natural companions. They live for a higher purpose! Their citizenship, being in Heaven, they are in everyday expectation of their King and Head! This makes them live like the Wise Virgins of Matthew 25:1-13. It also enables them to avoid entanglement with the affairs of this life which are potentially toxic. Worldly amusements such as watching worldly thriller movies or entertainment to feed lusts of the flesh and eyes no longer appeal to them as they grow in grace.

2 Timothy 2:3-5 (KJV) *3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. 5 And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.*

Awake from the stupor of worldly influence, they rather redeem every moment of time to ensure they are accounted duly.

Romans 13:11-14 (KJV) *11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. 13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. 14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.*

The intensity of their focus on the world to come makes them overcomers of this present world system.

Philippians 3:20-21 (KJV) *20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*

Brethren, all the things discussed in this chapter are fruits of Grace. However, knowing them brings liberation from ignorance posed by Religion. He requires saints to yearn for these experiences and their Faith to receive!

Review Questions

1. Which of these 10 points do you need the Grace of Elohim to excel in?
2. How useful is this chapter to you personally?
3. What will you do with this chapter?

Chapter 68

Taking responsibility As Sons of Elohim to Walk in Victory

One of the most profound effects of Christian Religion is the systematic redefinition of the gospel to the extent that it produces religious zealots rather than sons of Elohim who function as citizens and Ambassadors of the Kingdom in the earth realm

A. The reality of Sonship

Yeshua came as a Son so that through His sacrifice, the earth realm could be re-populated with sons of Elohim! This truth has been lost since Rome and a larger wing of the Church went into marriage and began to produce strange children who are powerless members of churches! Sons of Elohim are not 'church members' but rather 'members of Yeshua' who Holy Spirit places in congregations for empowerment, mutual edification, and accountability.

Hebrews 2:9-15 (KJV) *9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. 13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. 14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

In the realm of Sonship, there is neither male nor female; bond or free! It is a state of heart maturity which derived from recognition of our identity in Yeshua and Who He Is in us.

Galatians 3:26-29 (KJV) *26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

2 Corinthians 5:16 (KJV) *16 Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.*

B. Pathway to sonship

Though called to be sons, the state of maturity is not automatically attained. The starting point is to know that by Adoption we are grafted into the holy Family of Elohim.

John 1:12 (KJV) *12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

Galatians 4:4-6 (KJV) *4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*

The reality is that every saint starts the new life in Yeshua as babes needing milk.

1 Peter 2:1-2 (KJV) *1 Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, 2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:*

Those who find themselves in congregations which operate according to tenets of Christian Religion will get stuck as Babes always needing milk. Consequently, their growth will be negative and Religious. This is because ABC Christianity (where the emphasis is on Attendance/Numbers; Buildings and Cash/revenue) makes those within its loop to be ever learning but never able to outgrow the need for milk. It is a high stake religious game which puts the spotlight on the superstar preacher or the Religious organization rather than Yeshua.

Those who swallow their evil hook tend to grow to be co-dependents. Relative to Elohim, their mindsets are either that of Orphans (never accepting love of Yahweh as a Father); unwilling slaves (who perceive Him as a hard task master that can never be pleased); Distant God (they have to scream at, cajole or tune up through various religious exertions before He can hear them) or grandchildren (who can only access Him through their real spiritual Fathers and Mothers/Pastors). Christian religion is inherently programmed not to provide saints with proper understanding of their true identities in Yeshua and the reality that they can independently enjoy a vibrant, intimate personal relationship with Yahweh as Father; friendship with Yeshua and intimate walk with Holy Spirit. To foster this evil, Christian Religion uses the wrong priesthood paradigms (Nimrodic and Levitical) to rule Christians, making them members of ministers and 'churches'.

In these last days, the final reformation is being used by Elohim to lay His axe at the root of organized Christian Religion so that the elect is liberated to know their true identities in Yeshua and grow in Him Who is their Head!

Therefore, the Yeshua leads the true Kingdom Church through the foundational office gifts of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers. Where there is space for the five offices to function, saints are built up in a holistic way to discover and function as living parts of the spiritual Body of Yeshua who ministers to Him and to each other so that all grow to be a living, loving organism. These scriptures collectively tell the story: Ephesians 4:7-16; Romans 12: 1-8; 1 Corinthians 12; 1 Corinthians 13; 1 Corinthians 14; 1 Peter 4:10-11.

As individual saints respond to the pure truth of the word, they grow rather than getting stuck like Religious folks.

Hebrews 5:12-14 (KJV) *12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 But strong meat*

belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

The Growth Grid

King Yeshua clearly showed us that those He calls are supposed to grow in their relationship with Him. From the example, He set with His disciples, we note that positive growth involves these patterns

- They started out responding to His call and serving without agendas. Whatever He needed, they did, considering nothing as too menial including serving food, ushering crowds and rowing boat while He slept. This is also the way we start our service to Elohim
- He announced their transition to becoming His Friends. After serving faithfully, Yeshua Himself told them one day:

John 15:14-15 (KJV) *14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.*

Friendship speaks of intimacy in a relationship; openness of communicating heart to heart. We share intimate details of our lives with friends which are secrets to others. In the same way, when we move away from religious activities and rituals and desire to know Yeshua like Paul hungered for in Philippians 3:1-18, He draws us closer, revealing His heart to us. We become friends who enjoy His Presence; considering prayer and study of the word as precious rather than laborious.

> After paying the price for Sin at the Cross He announced their further transition to becoming sons of Elohim, just like Him and in a sense become like His brethren. The way Yeshua responded to Mary Magdalene on the day of resurrection offers profound insight into the reality that the way was now open for sons of Elohim, just like Him to function in the earth realm.

John 20:17 (KJV) *17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.*

Hebrews 2:10 (KJV) *10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*

In the last days, sons of Elohim will emerge out of the cocoons of Churchianity as they get to know the Truth which sets Free! They will be the Church so radically different from Christianity Religion to the degree that they will stop at nothings from fulfilling what Yeshua started over 2000 years ago, by the instrumentality of the same Holy Spirit in them Who also empowered Yeshua.

Romans 8:14 (KJV) *14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*

John 14:12 (KJV) *12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.*

The earth has been yearning to see sons who live and function like Yeshua. Before the final age fully comes, when they will be fully manifested, they will offer a dress rehearsal for the world to see:

Romans 8:19 (KJV) *19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.*

It is sons who serve Father as priests after the priestly royal order of Melchizedek

C. Some Responsibilities of sons

Sons of Elohim do not play the religious games of Roman themed Christianity. For them, the gospel has the power to transform and empower. Sonship places on them the tendency to accept responsibility for doing the will of Elohim relative to certain things:

1. Manifesting His Heart by Right Attitude to Sinners

In this regard, some markers are evident:

- Sons do not engage in negative commentary on the lifestyle of sin and sinfulness which sinners prefer, lest we descend into religious arguments, debates and cultural wars where fiery speech is deployed to take down those who are not like 'us'. This is because sons know that not all humans will embrace the salvation offered by the Blood of Yeshua. Yet Elohim does not blot such people out of this world but rather is patient with them. So too are sons patient with those outside the Kingdom.
- Positively: knowing what it means to be a sinner and the bondage they are in to Satan, Sin and the Flesh drives sons of Elohim to intense intercession and spiritual warfare to pull down strongholds of the mind, heart, will, and emotion which hinders them from receiving the Truth.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 (KJV) *3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

There is a recognition of the reality that no one can come to the Father except Holy Spirit penetrates their cloud of darkness to convict of sin and reveal Yeshua

John 6:44 (KJV) *44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

2. Manifesting the Father's heart with Right Attitude to Governments and human authorities

The Father did not make a mistake in placing us in the earth realm where we and natural humans are citizens of same nations, under civil authorities. The reality is this:

- Though our primary citizenship is in heaven, we have natural citizenship of nations whose Passports we bear.
- We are called to recognize, respect, honour and obey civil authorities except in specific instances where they require us to do sinful things for which we are to be conscientious objectors (Romans 13:1-7)

1 Peter 2:13-17 (KJV) *13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; 14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the*

praise of them that do well. 15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: 16 As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. 17 Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

- We are obligated to love our natural civil authorities – from Councilors, Mayors, State Governors, Legislators, Law enforcement to the President and Federal authorities – unconditionally, despite their sins, mannerisms or negative attitudes which are off putting.
- We owe them a divinely vested mandate to intercede so that we can live godly lives. While it is easy and cheap to hate on them and rail at their failures, a more excellent way is to intercede earnestly, placing their hearts, minds, attitudes, and action in the hands of Elohim Who can turn same to become instruments of fulfilling His determinate counsel for the nations

1 Timothy 2:1-3 (KJV) *1 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; 2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; 4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*

Proverbs 21:1 (KJV) *1 The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.*

- Just like in the natural, Kingdom Ambassadors should note that no one with a nasty attitude who brawls with authorities of host nations can succeed in their postings. That is why we must acquire Kingdom diplomatic skills! It is not about compromising with the world! Paul the Apostle modeled this style of not fighting unnecessary battles so that he could win the larger war:

1 Corinthians 9:19-23 (KJV) *19 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. 20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; 21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. 22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might, by all means, save some. 23 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.*

It is all about operating in superior wisdom so that we engage with them from a position of superior strength which comes from the reality that the Greater One is in us. The reality is that the day of Judgement is still in the future when all those Elohim granted the privilege of temporal rulership will account for the great responsibilities committed to their trust. Sons of Elohim do not judge things before their time. In any case, sons of Elohim also know about a strange truth: Elohim knows why He created some rulers for in the earth realm.

Romans 9:17 (KJV) *17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.*

3. Dealing with the Critical Adversaries of Denominationalism

Denominationalism is a box in which saints are sealed away from the larger Body, from revelations that will bless them, and from the full measure of the anointing they need to excel. End time saints who want

to be all that Elohim has made them to be will deliberately obey Yeshua Who desired and prayed to the Father for Unity of saints (John 17). Accordingly, they will:

- Relate with saints from other ministries and congregations discerning by Holy Spirit where they are in their walk with Yeshua. They will be used to positively impact those they can and draw strength from those who have something to offer.
- With the explosion of social media and mass communications, end time saints will discern those in the Fivefold who Elohim has given aspects of His whole counsel; revelation and anointing which is pure and free of Nimrodic hooks. They will tap from them, what they lack in their local assemblies and leaders without shame, knowing that those are gifts from the Father. They will resist any attempt to draw them away from leaders the Lord gave Pastoral oversight of their lives
- In other words, end time saints will not allow their spiritual leaders who operate in mono or dual gift dimensions to prevent them from tapping into the grace of the full Fivefold. They will open themselves up first however to be the missing 'folds' in this way, Ephesians 4:11-16 will still be fulfilled in the Body. For some saints whose Pastors are extremely insecure and roundly reject the Truth about the Fivefold, the saints will at some point make a choice: to detach from them and go to find fulfillment in healthier Kingdom communities
- This also applies to congregations where spiritual gifts are not given space to flourish
- All saints who are serious about the return of Yeshua will not stay in congregations and ministries which function as tombs of their destinies. Once they discern Nimrodic leadership patterns which 'own' saints and keep them in pews to produce tithes and offerings, they will take a stand for Yeshua. As they open up to Holy Spirit, He will lead them to kingdom communities (congregations and networks where the Teach, Train, Equip, Activate and Release process is in place. These environments will in effect function like hatcheries which empower saints to be all that they were redeemed to be

4. Sons enforce victory of Yeshua over Satan in spiritual warfare: Take on the whole Armour of Elohim at all times, always battle ready!

It is one of the most serious breaches of Kingdom life that the average saint is not well equipped to do spiritual warfare in these last days when Satan is unleashing the full measure of his evil machinations. Two approaches to Satan are entirely wrong:

- Those who exalt Satan to the degree that saints fear him
- Those who deny the reality of Satan and therefore fall victim to his wiles. He therefore steals, kills and destroys among both those who overrate and those who underrate him.

The safest place to be is to stay in the word and know that with Yeshua in us and us in Him, we have the victory over the enemy! True saints who are the Omega Church have been clearly equipped by Elohim to be overcomers. The Blood of Yeshua is still the greatest weapon to neutralize Satan and his evil cohorts.

Revelation 12:10-12 (KJV) *10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. 11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. 12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*

Sons of Elohim have the capacity and grace to enforce the victory of Yeshua over Satan on the cross. They know that seated in heavenly places with Yeshua, they are elevated far above Satan and all his cohorts.

Colossians 2:6-19 (KJV) *6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: 7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. 8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. 9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. 10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: 11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: 12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. 16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: 17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. 18 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, 19 And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.*

Accordingly, sons of Elohim are to stand on the solid ground of having the whole armor of Elohim on at all times so that no matter how Satan chooses to operate, they cannot be caught off guard.

Ephesians 6:10-18 (KJV) *10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; 15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: 18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;*

Further reading: Critical Adversaries; Prayer, Fasting & Spiritual Warfare available for free download on the website www.kingdombooksclub.org

Review Questions

1. Which of the truths shared in this lesson made the most impact on you?
2. What will you do with this lesson?

Chapter 69

Assured Victory Over the Spirits Which Work Internally

Contrary to the profile of weakling subject to Satan and the elements of nature, the new creation of Elohim is ordained to be a powerful being in the earth realm, walking in total victory, based on what Yeshua procured at the Cross!

The victory purchased for saints by the Blood which Yeshua shed is a comprehensive one to be cashed by Faith.

1 John 4:4 (KJV) *4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*

We so far have dealt with how saints should have victory over Sin; the Flesh; Self; Denominationalism and Satan. Let us today focus on how sons of Elohim rate and deal with two other adversaries: one internal to the Self-nature and the other external as in the spirit which rules the world.

Overcoming the internal Foes

The worst internal foes are not the big giants! They are the very little foxes that spoil the vine of true spirituality!

Song of Solomon 2:15 (KJV) *15 Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.*

True spirituality is who we are when no one is watching: that aspect of lives of saints known only to the Omniscient and Omnipresent Elohim. Because many saints do not even truly know themselves, drifting into a delusion of spirituality is a very real thing.

Saints living in the age when the possibility of Yeshua returning is imminent must push the limits to be truly whole internally! For that reason, there must be particular attention to ensure that these sins and weights do not find hiding and holding space within the heart:

1. Offenses/ought plus vengefulness: – these are negative reactions of the heart and mind to negative things saints experience in everyday life. When offenses come, the pure heart and mind knows it immediately because there is an immediate distortion of the Philippians 4:8 mindset. Let us remember that our King, even Yeshua has already given us advance warning that as long as the earth remains, offenses will come. And He gave us a radical formula to deal with offenses – right at the root!

Matthew 18:7-9 (KJV) *7 Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! 8 Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. 9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.*

There is a direct co-relationship between holding and nurturing offences and eternal destination of saints! Imagine that a saint may not commit any of the so called 'gross sins (immorality, murder, fraud) but end up in eternal damnation because of offences! Let us beware and be foolish so that we can walk in perfection before Elohim!

To ensure that offences do not corrupt the heart to the point it becomes calloused, Yeshua made a radical instruction. Equating offense with murder, He commands saints to deal with offense at the root so that true fellowship can be enjoyed with Him and with brethren:

Matthew 5:21-24 (KJV) *21 Ye have heard that it was said of them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: 22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. 23 Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; 24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.*

If only saints will diligently study the Word to know the truth which sets free! Here are clear instructions of King Yeshua about how saints should rate offense and proactively determine to deal with the various dimensions that can come up in everyday life:

Matthew 5:40-48 (KJV) *40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. 41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. 42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. 43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. 44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; 45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? 47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? 48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*

Because these truths are not fully taught in Churches, many saints whose hearts and minds are filled with offences against their spiritual and natural leaders; with fellow brethren and family are oblivious to the sad state of their lives – because they are not guilty of what they think are the 'gross sins'! What deception!

It is significant that the Sermon on the Mount gives us a powerful remedy: Rather than feel bad when evil such as persecution has been committed against saints, it calls for the reverse: rejoicing!

Matthew 5:10-12 (KJV) *10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*

By no means does Elohim count those who cause offense guiltless. On the other hand, they have the greater condemnation if they do not repent!

Matthew 18:6-7 (KJV) *6 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. 7 Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!*

The point is this: Elohim wants to be all in all for His Own. He wants to own the offences and take vengeance. That is why He calls on His saints to give Him the opportunity to fight for them. He does this best when the saint responds with good to the evil committed!

Matthew 5:44 (KJV) *44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you*

Romans 12:14, 17-21 (KJV) *14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.*

17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. 18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. 19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. 20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. 21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

The end result of offence/ought is what the Bible calls 'Root of Bitterness'. This is when ought has congealed to an almost incurable degree and becomes hatred and therefore potentially murderous! At this stage, the grace of Elohim in the saint is at risk.

This is because one of the greatest ways to attack Grace and drain it from the life of a saint is to open the heart to receive and retain offences! Once offence enters the heart, Grace jumps out as it were.

Hebrews 12:14-15 (KJV) *14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: 15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;*

This weakens the capacity of saints to retain the virtue they are clothed with by Elohim. This, in turn, opens the door to Satan to afflict with internal diseases/sicknesses such as Cancer and other incurables and externally, they make saints sitting ducks of satanic plots. They also hinder prayers and cause the heavens to close to a financial breakthrough.

1.2 Unforgiving spirit: Satan is a vengeful being while Elohim recreated us with the capacity to forgive and forget when offended. The truth is that at such times, when offence comes by the speech, attitude, and actions of others, we have a choice to forgive, let go and allow Elohim to settle accounts (which is the godly thing to do) Or to retain the offence, refuse to let go and seek vengeance (which is what Satan who desires to break fellowship and unity wants. This can happen in the home between couples; between them and their children; between siblings; between saints in the same local assembly; between saints and fellow saints or between saints and unbelievers!

Matthew 6:14-15 (KJV) *14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: 15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

One of the reasons why a majority of saints are unable to exercise Mountain moving faith may be attributable to the little fox of unforgiving spirit lurking in their hearts and minds!

Mark 11:22-26 (KJV) *22 And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. 23 For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. 24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. 25 And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. 26 But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.*

Solution:

1. Let us sincerely desire to have a conscience void of offence before Elohim and all humans, realizing that we cannot please everyone
2. Forgive unconditionally. Apologize with speed as soon as Holy Spirit convicts you
3. Desire reconciliation; pursue peace and ensure it with all diligence. In the process, people may perceive you as weak or the offender but trust Elohim Who knows that you do it for His sake!
4. In these days of social media, saints should resist the temptation to air their grievances and accumulate endorsements of their friends who do not know the full facts. This can only make the process of reconciliation more difficult
5. Have it in your heart to be a blessing to those who do you wrong
6. Let Elohim handle what is beyond us by handing over to Him

2. Overcoming the world

The Word makes it clear that overcoming the world is a done deal, sealed by the Blood!

1 John 5:4-5 (KJV) *4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. 5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?*

Unfortunately, one way Satan has rigged up his evil kingdom to ensnare saints is the way he packaged the world system under his control to be appealing to saints! The result is that many well-meaning saints who are otherwise holy unto the Lord, fail at the altar of worldliness!

Yeshua knew how the world would hold an attraction for saints and specifically prayed to the Father to deliver His Own:

John 17:9-17 (KJV) *9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. 10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. 11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. 12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name:*

those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

How Satan uses the world

From the first day, Satan successfully seduced Adam and Eve to sin against Elohim, he used the key instruments of the world: Lust of the Flesh; Lust of the eyes and pride of Life.

1 John 2:12-16 (KJV) *12 I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. 13 I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. 14 I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one. 15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

James 4:4-5 (KJV) *4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. 5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?*

Things of the world we are to beware of:

1. The Fashion system which fosters seduction of opposite gender by showing off parts of the body which are best kept covered; True fashion should be COFA
2. Lusting after things we see or esteem too highly that we want to possess them even when not in the will of Elohim and suffer oppression when they are not received
3. Tendency to live on Credit as a result
4. Disproportionate investment in our exterior looks when less time is invested in our internal spiritual health.
5. ABC Christianity – focusing on Numbers of people who gather inside religious buildings and how much revenue are generated from them
6. Making wrong alliances – marriage, business, etc.

2 Corinthians 6:14 (KJV) *14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate,*

saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

This same principle was enunciated in the Psalms

Psalm 1:1-3 (KJV) *1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.*

Yeshua prayed that we be separate from the world system and the spirit of Satan which rules it. He did not mean for us to be isolated in Monasteries and Convents but rather to be detached from the corruption in order to engage with the world as Ambassadors of the Kingdom!

2 Peter 1:4 (KJV) *4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

Let us receive and walk in the grace to be 24/7 ever ready for return of the Lord. In so doing, let us receive the Liberty and Freedom from yoke of little foxes with which to occupy, until He comes!

Review Questions

1. Which point in this lesson did Holy Spirit use to convict you of anything which needs to be sorted out?
2. What will you do with this lesson?

Chapter 70

The One New Man of Elohim His Remnant in the Earth Realm - Part 1

By now, the reality should hit home that the Gospel brings a change of nature in all who believe. This change occurs in the realm of the spirit-man which is neither male nor female; Hebraic/Jewish, White, Black or Latino; neither is it defined by age. The 12 disciples who walked with Yeshua for 3 and half years did not grasp this reality largely because of cultural blocks in their mindset. Yeshua had to leave the comfort of heaven for a trip to the dusty road to Damascus where He specifically arrested the then Saul, a Pharisee mentored by Old Covenant Professor Gamaliel. The unforgettable encounter of Saul with Yeshua led to receipt of a mandate which caused him to burn the bridge as he crossed the Rubicon of Kingdom consecration. His mandate which was generally well known was expressed in these words with which Ananias was persuaded to minister to him:

Acts 9:15 (KJV) *15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:*

Situating the Pauline Epistles as a vital instrument of re-discovering Gospel of the Kingdom

One of the greatest failings of Christian religion is the failure to understand the strategically critical nature of the call of Paul and how the revelations committed to his trust are absolutely necessary for proper understanding of the nature of the present dimensions of the Kingdom (Kingdom Now/Within and Kingdom Nation) and how they properly prepare saints for the Kingdom to Come when Yeshua returns to preside over its earthly manifestation as Supreme Potentate. The reality is the four gospels are basically biographical sketches of Yeshua as Incarnation of Elohim; Fulfillment of Prophecies about Seed of the Woman Who would be Messiah of Israel and the world; the Servant King who lived among His people. The gospels document His life, ministry and teachings/preaching up to the Cross and resurrection.

To Paul was committed a critical aspect of Truth: What happened at the Cross and their implications for the divine program to re-populate the earth realm with sons of Elohim who would superintend over it as Ambassadors of the Kingdom, just like Adam did before the fall. To Paul was committed a detailed understanding of the nature, features and full assignment of the One New Man of Elohim that emerged from the finished work of the Cross. Peter who walked with Yeshua for 3 and half years and played a prominent role in the Alpha Church could not but exclaim to saints that the revelations granted Paul were extraordinary resources for all.

2 Peter 3:15 (KJV) *15 And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; 16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*

Christian Religion totally lost it on this critical revelation which Paul was particular about. It leads to two realities

1. No saint should be discriminated against on the basis of Gender, Race, Age or Location

Galatians 3:26-29 (KJV) *26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 8 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

2. Henceforth, we should know no one according to the flesh but rather receive all according to who the Father has made them to be

2 Corinthians 5:16 (KJV) *16 Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.*

The Remnant embrace /cash the cheque (check) of Faith in drawing down all the blessings Yeshua purchased at Calvary Cross. They know, without any shadow of a doubt that all the suffering of Yeshua was to pay the price to redeem out of the earth realm a peculiar people who would have access to the treasures of heaven for all things which pertain to life and godliness. They know that Elohim is purposeful Sovereign Who has made sufficient provisions for the assignments of all His sons and Kingdom Ambassadors. When they need anything pertaining to life and godliness, they ask their Father in Faith, counting same as a done deal.

Yet, their prayer life is not filled with lusts for stuff neither do they have the stomach to pray 'Gentile' prayers which bother on the acquisition of material things. There is such a quiet confidence in the benefice of Yahweh as a good Father that they know instinctively that whatever they need is already met. Their prayers are therefore not filled with anxiety but with thanksgiving (Philippians 4: 4-7). Rather than spend all their time asking for material things, they surrender their heart, mind, will, emotions and desires afresh on a constant basis to Elohim so His will becomes their own. Armed with His burden, they become as it were midwives of His determinate counsel and perfect will within their loops of Kingdom influence. They pray His heart and the joy of hitting the mark floods their souls, making them spectacles of how virtue can renew strength and confidence in their King. For this reason, the picture in Matthew 6:19-34 is their existential reality as they seek first the Kingdom and its righteousness. Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost define their lifestyle as Romans 14:17-18 states. The One New Man is The Remnant of Elohim in the earth realm!

One truth hidden by Christian Religion is the reality that Elohim has always gone out of His way to preserve a remnant for Himself who He keeps away from the manifestation of the spirit of the age. It was in this way Elohim preserved Abel from the spirit that dominated Cain; found in Noah and his family a remnant to be preserved from the Flood. In this way, Abraham was called out of an idolatrous and occultist environment of the Chaldeans to be the patriarch of a people group from whom Seed of the Woman would spring from. In this context, Elohim preserved the Hebrews/Jews as a remnant, out of all nations and peoples of the world who He deemed as 'Gentiles'. When Israel went into spiritual harlotry, Elohim preserved a remnant. That was how Elijah and 7,000 other of the faithful came to be.

Romans 11:1-6 (KJV) *1 I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the*

scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel saying, 3 Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. 4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. 5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

When Rome and larger wing of the Church went into a strange marriage, Elohim preserved the remnant for Himself who was not part of Mystery Babylon. The Lord used Paul to explain the mystery of the ages: That in Yeshua, sufficient provision was made for the remnant of Elohim to connect to Him and each other as His one new man. In other words, the Remnant is the 4th Race He will use in the earth realm to close out the human dispensation! (first 3: Shem; Ham and Japheth all failed Elohim as we saw in this course!) The remnant has enough space for both Hebrews and Gentiles to cohere as one in His sight:

Ephesians 2:1-9, 11-22 (KJV) *1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. 11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; 12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. 14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: 17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. 18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. 19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*

Ephesians 3:1-21 (KJV) *1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, 2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: 3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, 4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) 5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; 6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: 7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. 8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; 9 And to make all men*

see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: 10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, 11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: 12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. 13 Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. 14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. 20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, 21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Some Indicators of the Remnant

The remnant of Elohim is in every conceivable 'Church' expression. Some are still unbelievers at the moment; others are still trapped in religious organizations such as Roman Catholicism and its Protestant Offspring. But because of operation of Holy Spirit Who sealed them into Yeshua's Body and Who lives within them, there is a 'knowing' that things are not right and a yearning for fullness of truth and experiential liberty from religious structures and systems. The Truth is already planted deep within their hearts as scriptures said even though they may not have the consciousness of the knowledge in their minds and brains

Hebrews 10:16-17 (KJV) *16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; 17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.*

When they come into contact with Truth preached or taught, there is a deep resonance within their hearts and minds! When they meet other remnant, even for the first time, there is a sense of having known them before! The reason is simple: All of the True Church of Yeshua are one in the realm of the Spirit! Their spirit-man are all connected to the Head by Holy Spirit and to one another, though they may be in different physical locations. Let us outline a few things that are indicators of being the Remnant of Elohim, His One New Man in the earth realm: Part of the Church Militant and connected spiritually to the Church Triumphant (those who have finished their earthly pilgrimage and are translated).

Hebrews 12:22-24 (KJV) *22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, 23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.*

Please note this list is not exhaustive in any way!

1. Rejection of the narrative of Christian Religion which claims that Roman Catholicism is the Mother Church. Accordingly, the Remnant is not comfortable to be branded as 'Protestants'. With time, they

grow to know the reason: They are members of Yeshua as part of His Body and citizens/Ambassadors of His Kingdom. These are what define them!

2. Rejection of Denominationalism, the various Boxes of Christian Religion which divide the Body and cause her to walk in a state of an unending spiritual equivalent of a civil war. For this reason, they refuse to be confined to the camps of 'Pentecostals', 'Charismatics', 'Evangelicals', 'Full Gospel' and other labels.

3. Refusal to be rated as 'owned' by Nimrodic preachers and Levitical Organizations. They know that human spiritual leaders do not own them and should not control their spiritual and natural lives. They respect authorities and honor them but not unto foolishness of handing over keys to their lives.

4. The remnant also refused the divisions of the Body based on Race; Gender; Ages; Socioeconomic status

5. Accordingly, the remnant rejects the Christian Religion perspective of Ministry as a professional calling into a special caste restricted to a few academically qualified priests. They reject the Nimrodic and Levitical priesthoods/patterns of Ministry and their Theater paradigm of ABC Christianity (Attendance; Buildings; Cash)

6. The remnant knows the world is a snare to their souls and do not give space for its partisan politics and religious boxes to divide them from other brethren or its fashions

7. The Remnant live Holy unto the Lord as a basic quality and have a Righteousness consciousness which does not give Sin space to subdue and dominate them. Romans 6: 1-18.

8. The remnant is open to ministry from those with spiritual gifts to express, notwithstanding their gender, ages or socioeconomic situations. They do not know people after the flesh.

9. Brothers and sisters in Yeshua who are the remnant do not see themselves in terms of gender when brought together to labor in the same vineyards by Holy Spirit. They see themselves rather in terms of spiritual gifts and callings and how there is alignment. In this way, they emulate Yeshua the Head who worked closely with women, yet without Sin.

In this way also, they emulate Paul the Apostle who worked closely with various women yet without Sin (See Romans 16; Philippians 3).

10. The remnant is wired to reproduce after kind, just as Elohim ordained from the beginning in Genesis 1:26-28. They do not wait for Church Evangelism and discipleship programs before getting involved. It is their life to reproduce after kind, reconciling the lost to their Father

2 Corinthians 5:17-19 (KJV) *17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*

2 Timothy 2:2 (KJV) *2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

11. As priests after the order of Melchizedek, they exercise Royal Authority to rule the physical world from the spiritual realm in prayer, spiritual warfare and exercise of Faith in the Name of Yeshua for signs, wonders, and miracles to happen. They legislate in prayer, aligning with the determinate counsel of Elohim to bring same to pass. As He reveals to them secrets of things to come, they are ever ready to call forth in prayer and warfare, enforcing ordinance of the Kingdom.

12. They embrace chastisement when they err and move outside the center of the will of Elohim, knowing instinctively that the stripes of their heavenly Father come out of His love for them and are therefore in their best interests

Hebrews 12:5-13 (KJV) *5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? 8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. 9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? 10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. 11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. 12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; 13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.*

13. Though they enjoy the full benefits of what Yeshua procured for them, they also know that until the full manifest Kingdom is established at the return of King Yeshua, there will be an occasion for suffering to be exacted for His sake. They know with their Kingdom mandate also comes various degrees of suffering which they joyfully accept. It is not that they love being 'suffer heads'. They just know that inheritance of certain dimensions of glory to come will be a direct function of what the remnant suffer for His Name sake.

Romans 8:17 (KJV) *17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*

2 Timothy 2:12 (KJV) *12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:*

14. They are not in a hurry for prominence and 'breakthrough'. This is because they accept the wisdom of Elohim Who processes His remnant before manifesting them in due season. They are willing therefore to patiently await the due or set time of Elohim (Psalms 102:13).

Joshua 3:7 (KJV) *7 And the Lord said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.*

Luke 1:80 (KJV) *80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.*

Luke 2:52 (KJV) *52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.*

15. The remnant does not compete but rather complement each other, walking in alignment. In this way, they generate Kingdom synergy which unleashes the power of Holy Spirit and Presence of King Yeshua

1 Chronicles 12:38 (KJV) *38 All these men of war, that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel: and all the rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David king.*

Joel 2:7-8 (KJV) *7 They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks: 8 Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded.*

16. They do not seek their 'labels' to hang on any aspect of the Church committed to their Trust. They rather release everything to King Yeshua, the Head to whom they and the brethren gather. They make it all about Him and His Kingdom and do not seek to get in the way. They therefore emulate John the Baptist to point saints to Him, not themselves (John 3:26-36). In all that they do, they posture as servants, serving Him and the saints

17. The remnant – no matter how 'blessed' or 'successful' know the glory to come when Yeshua returns to establish and rule in full dimension of the Kingdom is far greater! They are earnest for His return and it never departs from their consciousness! In this way, they are sustained spiritually and refreshed continually. Those who come in contact with them are impacted by the freshness of the Grace of Elohim in their lives and infected with same.

18. They know it is all of Grace. It is His Grace which brought them into the Kingdom and which sustains them. Relying on His Grace, they do not boast or fear but trust in His ability to uphold them as He promised.

Jude 1:24-25 (KJV) *24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, 25 To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.*

Review Questions

1. Which of the 18 indicators have you noticed in your personal experience
2. How useful is this lesson to you?

Chapter 71

Disposition of Remnant: Ministers in the End Time

Most of the time, our attention tends to focus on the negative things of history. In lesson 70, we saw the reality that Elohim always preserved a remnant for Himself when there were mass falling away from His program in the earth realm. We also saw 18 indicators that signify an individual believer is operating in the realm of the remnant.

Amidst the gross darkness that was the religion of Mystery Babylon, Elohim tugged at the heart of German Friar, Martin Luther in 1517 that all the exertions of the flesh in religious rituals was not the way to find peace with Him. Illumination of Romans 1:17 by Holy Spirit led to his liberation from the yoke of organized religion.

He was a remnant, preserved by Grace. Unfortunately, the Reformation Martin Luther initiated was also tainted by several missteps which reveal a lack of perfection. These include blood guiltiness over the mass murder of Peasants by nobles; tendency to bicker with other reformers; the spirit of anti-Semitism which drove a tendency to replacement theology. Worse still, all that great work ended up in a denominating of truth to create a religious system with his identity: Lutheranism of the Lutheran Church essentially embraced firstly by a people group, the Germans, and their neighbors.

Ever since that year, the Lord has raised many of His remnant in different parts of the world. The emphasis has been to use them to restore certain 'lost' truths and spiritual experiences in the Church. Despite later misapplications, John Calvin received a revelation of the Majesty of Elohim and extreme vastness of His Grace like none before him. It is unfortunate he did not grasp fully the reality that Elohim in His Grace did not create humans to be robots but gave them the facility of the Will with which to choose to obey or disobey Him. Only a secure Being could take such a risk. In any case, the best of John Calvin was to lead to no more than a theology branded with his name 'Calvinism' by which the Church was divided, not united.

John Wesley and his brother Charles were used to restore the Truth of sanctification and beauty of simplified congregational meetings and leadership that is accountable. Unfortunately, all that they achieved ended up into a tunnel called 'Methodism' or the Methodist Church. The degree to which various strands of Methodism have become the liberal bastion of Christian religion does not reflect the reality that John Wesley was separate from the world in his era, lived and advocated for Holiness as a lifestyle.

William Seymour was used to advance the absolute necessity of Holy Spirit in the life of saints at Azusa Street in 1906, leading to a fresh Pentecostal experience. Unfortunately, this great blessing was not properly managed. Rather than Holy Spirit becoming a widespread reality in the global church, the best that was achieved as the creation of a new denomination Pentecostalism. Before then, the Church of God in Christ and Assemblies of God Church respectively had essentially allowed race to be the defining factor in their application of visitation of Holy Spirit.

Another thing which marked out reformers of old is they were Elijah like figures. They functioned alone or with a very small group of like-minded people. Because of that, their impact, in their various generations was substantially limited to their individual loops of influence. For this reason, the divine purpose of preparing the church on a global scale for the return of Yeshua has not yet taken place.

The reason for this is interesting: The final reformation was not given to the past generations to implement. They were instruments of starting the process. Unfortunately, the Church did not wait on the Lord to receive this revelation. That is why many ministries, denominations, and individuals have been stuck as it were on the past Mountains of revelations that were received by reformers who lived 100 - 500 years ago. Just like the Church in the wilderness, there is a call to move forward!

Deuteronomy 1:6-8 (KJV) *6 The Lord our God spake unto us in Horeb, saying, Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount: 7 Turn you, and take your journey, and go to the mount of the Amorites, and unto all the places nigh thereunto, in the plain, in the hills, and in the vale, and in the south, and by the sea side, to the land of the Canaanites, and unto Lebanon, unto the great river, the river Euphrates. 8 Behold, I have set the land before you: go in and possess the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give unto them and to their seed after them.*

In the economy of Elohim, what they started would be accomplished by the generation upon whom the end of the world has been ordained. In a sense, this scripture about the heroes of faith of old is now due for fulfillment:

Hebrews 11:37-40 (KJV) *37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; 38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. 39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: 40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.*

In the age, before the Church is consummated with the return of Yeshua, these features, tendencies, and trends will define remnant ministers.

1. The Word will be elevated in their esteem as the Compass of Life and Ministry! They will not allow their emotions, ideas, or worldly culture to drive their ministries! They will rather be personal students of the word, under the unction of Holy Spirit. That diligence will pay off as they are vested with grace to rightly divide the Word that is served saints. In this way, there will be no space for cherry picking scriptures to make saints 'happy'.

2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV) *15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

This tendency will arise because Remnant ministers embrace the reality that ultimately, Yeshua feeds His flock with His word and perfects them through it. This is why the Teaching Ministry will be exalted among the remnant again. When saints begin to gather unto the Lord in His Word, their worldly mindsets are purified; cultural strongholds are pulled down and all begin to have the mind of Yeshua. Remnants ministers will realize this power of the word to grow saints to perfection is a primary reason for which they are called.

Ephesians 5:25-27 (KJV) *25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

2. Though He may start off with a few people scattered across the world, Elohim will imbue them with the grace not to 'denominate' the revelations committed to their trust. Accordingly, Remnant Ministers will embrace the grace to document what Elohim is saying and communicate same to the largest possible audience.

Habakkuk 2:1-4 (KJV) *1 I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved. 2 And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. 3 For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end, it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. 4 Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.*

It is time to record sermons and teaching series, transcribe them with affordable equipment, edit and publish them into books to bless a wider spectrum of saints beyond four walls of the 'church'. The motive should not be to make money but to extend the reach of truth! For that reason, low prices are recommended for truly Kingdom revelations. E-book versions can be developed for free distribution on social media and the internet.

They may use copyright laws of nations only to the degree it is necessary to prevent hijack by false brethren. Elohim will also give them the large heart to accommodate as many saints as they can empower. Remnant ministers will not discriminate against saints on the basis of what they have or not.

3. Rather than a few individual superstars, the Lord will raise a great company of remnant ministers. Across cities, counties, States, Regions, Nations and even on cyberspace, Holy Spirit will be poured out afresh on many people. It will not be a reenactment of the Upper Room experience but the emphasis will be on a fresh revelation of the Majesty of Elohim as the Thrice Holy One Who Is Omniscient, Omnipresent and Omnipotent. The reality of Yeshua, Jesus as His Incarnate revelation in the earth realm Who deserves to exercise Sovereign rule over the redeemed by Holy Spirit Who guides their everyday decisions, desires, prayers, Kingdom lifestyle, and ministries will be unleashed. Those who are empowered will make themselves available to mentor, support and promote younger vessels the Lord will call.

4. Remnant ministers will recognize and reject the extremely toxic nature of Christian Religion which makes people cling to religious activities and rituals performed inside religiously designed buildings on certain holy days.

5. They will preach and teach the Gospel of the Kingdom, not Christian Religion. Remnant ministers will not be content with preaching and teaching to their immediate local congregations. They will make a determined effort to deploy every resource at their disposal to reach as many people as possible with the Truth. This includes local, national, regional and international missions. It also includes strategic deployment of assets of Social media.

Matthew 24:14 (KJV) *14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*

Matthew 28:18-20 (KJV) *18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

6. For this reason, their ministries will be used by Holy Spirit to produce sons of Elohim who are Kingdom citizens and ambassadors, functioning as Royal priests after the order of Melchizedek. Instead of remaining stuck as 'sons and daughters in the Lord' of the visionaries, they will grow to become their co-laborers and colleagues.

7. Some of those brethren will be so faithful to Elohim, the vision and visionaries that they will come alongside them to extend the grace given by Elohim in the form of achieving the organic Church structure in Ephesians 4:11-16. Some faithful brethren will willingly spearhead Church plants. Congregations and ministries planted in this way will be organically related to the headquarters ministries but will not be controlled by it.

8. These ministers will reject denominationalism with vehemence! They know the Church is One Body of Yeshua. They, therefore, regard the portions of the Body committed to their trust as parts of the whole rather than the whole. For this reason, the brethren they lead will be generally secure in Yeshua and trust Holy Spirit to the degree they can freely interact with other brethren without feeling out of place.

9. One way they will be able to do this is recognizing they do not 'own the flock'. They know Yeshua alone purchased the flock with His Own shed blood. They will serve with the consciousness that they are but under-shepherds of Yeshua:

1 Peter 5:1-4 (KJV) *1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: 2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*

10. Remnant ministers will, therefore, emulate John the Baptist to deliberately decrease in the hearts and minds of saints they lead so they will grow in Yeshua alone who they persistently point saints to. In the deepest compartments of their hearts, they desire that saints will know Yeshua and grow in Him. They, therefore, do not glory in displaying their photoshopped posters.

John 3:30 (KJV) *30 He must increase, but I must decrease.*

They therefore continuously lift up Yeshua to the people as the Author and finisher of their Faith, challenging them to grow up into Him in all areas of life

John 12:32 (KJV) *32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.*

11. For this reason, the saints they lead will not be co-dependents, perpetually needing 'Milk' and words of 'encouragement'. They do not use sweet words to coax the saints to be in Church neither do they allow those who sin to be comfortable.

12. Remnant ministers will stay in the lanes assigned to them by the gifts of Holy Spirit and callings they know. They will deliberately create space for those called to other offices and gifted differently to find their own spaces so all will function in synergy.

12.1 One of the reasons why they function in this way is they are secure in the knowledge of the kingdom principles of 'sheep allocation'.

12.2 Only Yeshua is the Great Shepherd Who Owns and ultimately leads all His flock

12.3 In the Kingdom economy, the Great Shepherd allocates different sheep to different human vessels to Pastor them.

12.4 Without human effort, loud advertising or promotion or even with them, all the sheep assigned to them as under shepherds shall somehow connect with them. Those that are truly assigned will hear His voice through them. Those who connect in this way, as led by Holy Spirit will abide in fellowship. No one can pluck them away, no matter how 'anointed'. If such sheep are confused and misled outside fellowship, Holy Spirit of Grace will orchestrate their reconnection.

John 10:5, 27 (KJV) *5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.*

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

12.5 As they feed the sheep fresh food, nurture and invest in them, they will grow and abound. As they grow and mature, such brethren will take their places as co-laborers with the ministers to occupy their allotment together. Well-fed sheep bring forth three things: They get pregnant and bear other sheep, they also produce Milk and Wool, and in the spiritual realm, well-fed brethren engage in the ministry of reconciliation, bring more souls to fellowship. They also prosper in possessing their possessions and joyfully make financial investments which are used to grow the ministry. They disciple young believers and participate actively in Church Kingdom life of the congregation. This is an exciting truth! When remnant ministers practice the Teach, Train, Equip, Activate and Release paradigm of empowerment, the outcome will be this scripture in the lives of the brethren:

2 Timothy 2:1-2 (KJV) *1 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

In this way, the Kingdom is expanded and enlarged exponentially!

13. Remnant ministers avoid the tendency to dabble into the divisive and hateful rhetoric that reveal insensitivity to feelings of others. They do not dabble into cultural wars, knowing that more harm can be done to the gospel through such popular actions as bashing particular sinful lifestyles. They preach about the dangers of sin and life of living outside the will of Elohim expressed in the word. They do not play the racist card and are even handed when discussing the races.

14. For this reason, they can overcome the snares of Satan, the world, Flesh. Dead to self, they are alive to Yeshua. This accounts for their fruitfulness in Kingdom ministry

John 12:24 (KJV) *24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.*

15. Remnant ministers never come to the point of relaxing, thinking they have 'arrived'. Rather, they continue to grow, like Paul the apostle and never stopping until they become all that our Head and King ordained them to be.

Philippians 3:7-15 (KJV) *7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.*

The reality is that ministers who stop growing, start to die! And they take many down the path of death!

16. All the above are real because true remnant ministers respond to the call of Yeshua to die to self; be enthroned in their hearts and give Him right of way to process and release them to go and do exploits by the power of Holy Spirit. They are just vessels in His hands with no independent agendas. Their attitude is that of availability for their vessels to be used by Holy Spirit!

Matthew 16:24-26 (KJV) *24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. 25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. 26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*

Galatians 2:20 (KJV) *20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

17. All these things shared are what make remnant ministers men and women of integrity, whose character reflects their Head. They do not play games with Elohim, neither do they play with other ministers and brethren. They are honorable in managing assets of ministry committed to their trust, not treating ministry resources as personal. They escape the snare of immorality which runs rife in the Body of Yeshua worldwide. They are also not part of the disorder which ravages the church as ministers break congregations and ministries at will to establish their fancy ambitions which they call 'visions' of the Lord.

18. They do not just engage in ministry; their sights are set on the things of eternity and the rewards of their King

1 Corinthians 9:27 (KJV) *27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*

2 Timothy 4:6-8 (KJV) *6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*

Conclusion

The Lord has given us these benchmarks to enable us to assess where we are as individuals in our walk with Him. There are obviously other benchmarks not accommodated in this lesson. This framework should challenge us to understand ourselves better; know what to take on board and be increased in it. It also equips us to posture to receive more Grace and wisdom which Elohim gives liberally! It is all by His Grace – but we must yearn and take steps of faith to reveal inclination of our hearts!

Review Questions

1. Which of these 18 features of Remnant ministers the Lord has given you the grace to manifest clearly
2. Which of the 12 are you yearning for His Grace to manifest
3. How useful did you find this lesson?

Chapter 72

Manifesting the Kingdom Church: Key Purpose of Remnant

It has been said at various times during this study that Yeshua, Jesus did not come down from heaven to found Christian Religion. It was Rome that founded Christian Religion when it married off the larger wing of the Church which had got tired of the acute persecutions suffered while waiting for the return of Yeshua. Starting with Emperor Constantine's 'embrace of Christianity' at the battle of Milvian Bridge and the edict of Toleration he signed with Licinius in 311 AD, the deal was sealed by Emperor Theodosius in 381 when the union of Church and State became a legal and spiritual reality. The narrative of the gospel ever since has been organizational rather than organic as intended. That organizational narrative survived the Reformation flagged off by Martin Luther in 1517. With the benefit of hindsight and harsh judgment of history, it can be seen that but for pockets of smaller reform movements, the entire reformation simply produced the Protestant equivalent of institutionalized Christianity.

Chapter 26 of this Course 139: Completing the Unfinished Reformation is worth detailed study because it lays out what the Church is not and what it is in detail. We will build on that foundation to provide a framework through which Ministers and Ministries will have a Bible-based compass of how Yeshua, Jesus wants His One Kingdom Church of His One New Man in the earth realm to look like, function, and manifest His original purpose. The Church which was birthed at Pentecost was initially spontaneous. It was a brand new reality for the saints who had followed Yeshua for three and half years. During those years, Yeshua did not only teach and proclaim the Kingdom, He also demonstrated the operation of the Kingdom in the earth realm. Let us sketch what life was like for those who were in His company:

1. He preached the Kingdom and taught about the Kingdom.

Matthew 4:17, 23 (KJV) *17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

2. They were called out of the world system and responded in Faith to follow the Master. Encounter with Him often leads to a change of direction as well as lifestyle!

Matthew 4:18-22 (KJV) *18 And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. 19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. 20 And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. 21 And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. 22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.*

3. They came to be with Him in a real, intimate relationship to the extent He knew their names, visited homes of some, gave young and old, righteous and sinners access to Himself.

4. He demonstrated the Kingdom in several dimensions. It was not just about going to 'Church' as it were. It was about tapping into the realm of the Government of Elohim through which His sons can enjoy the full benefice of His powers. In that regard, various needs of people who followed or believed in Him were met. Let us review a few highlights:

4.1 Health Care: Whenever there was a health scare amongst the people, Yeshua healed them.

Matthew 4:24 (KJV) *24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.*

Matthew 12:15 (KJV) *15 But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all;*

Matthew 14:14 (KJV) *14 And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.*

Matthew 15:30 (KJV) *30 And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them:*

Matthew 19:2 (KJV) *2 And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there.*

Matthew 21:14 (KJV) *14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them.*

4.2 Education: The ministry of Yeshua was essentially a Teaching camp to provide Kingdom citizens with a detailed understanding of the Kingdom. The Sermon on the Mount was a detailed expose of what Kingdom life on earth should be like (Matthew 5,6, 7). The Parables were vivid illustrations of it as well as indications of how the Kingdom should be esteemed far above other pursuits (Matthew 13). Even when He died and rose again, Yeshua found it necessary to provide the now believing disciples further insights into the Kingdom through a 40 day teaching camp (Acts 1:1-4). Through the educational arm of His Ministry, Yeshua confirmed the Word as the bedrock on which everything else stood and should, therefore, be highly esteemed:

Matthew 7:24-27 (KJV) *24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: 25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. 26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.*

The Kingdom Educational model equipped its citizens for life. It enabled them to know Elohim, know themselves; understand the Kingdom, their rights, and privileges and equipped them for life. By diligent study of the Constitution of the Kingdom under unction of Holy Spirit, saints are equipped with the compass of life which ensures success in this world and the world to come.

4.3 Social Welfare: Yeshua did not just preach, teach and do miracles. He ensured practical needs of those who believed on Him were met. This includes:

Matthew 14:15-20 (KJV) 15 And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. 16 But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat. 17 And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes. 18 He said, Bring them hither to me. 19 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. 20 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.

4.4 Economics: The gospel of the Kingdom cared about the economic wellbeing of its citizens and ambassadors. The world system ruled by Rome, like all other worldly kingdoms, operate on a paradigm which basically says there are shrinking resources chased by an exploding population. This supply/demand equation leads to competition, strife for the stronger to get more resources for themselves and their unborn generations at expense of the weak and poor. Yeshua came with an opposite Kingdom economic model in which Elohim Who created all things has more than enough resources to meet the needs of all His sons in the earth realm. In this model, the issue was no longer the physical strength of saints and their ability to run around. Economic welfare would rather be based on accepting the all sufficiency of Elohim and release of Faith in His Name for receiving all that is necessary for wellbeing! While Money is the Currency of the world economic system, Faith is the currency of the Kingdom with which and through which all the treasures of heaven are accessed and downloaded. When Faith is put to work, great results are produced!

Mark 11:22-24 (KJV) 22 And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. 23 For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. 24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

4.5 Miracles, Signs, and Wonders: Yeshua routinely demonstrated the powers of the Kingdom over those of Satan and nature through the mighty miracles, signs, and wonders He did. They clearly validated His claims to Divinity and were regarded as the 'Finger of Elohim' in manifestation.

Matthew 4:23 (KJV) 23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

Luke 11:20 (KJV) 20 But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

Before He existed from time to eternity, Yeshua gave those who would be His Body in the earth realm the extraordinary and startling capacity to do all that He did and even much more! This was based on the reality that they would be filled with the same Holy Spirit Who planted Him in the womb of Mary and empowered Him for the extraordinary ministry the day He was baptized by John in River Jordan (Matthew 3:16; Acts 10:38).

Mark 16:17-18 (KJV) 17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

John 14:12 (KJV) *12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.*

5. The Kingdom was about the transformed people who were subjects of the Kingdom. They were part of His Dominion and lived within His domain. The Kingdom was not, therefore, a dry abstract construct. It was about humans whose spirit-man had been changed from dominion of Satan to be subject to Him (Ephesians 2:1-4). Their translation to His Kingdom was based on acceptance of the offer of the New birth which came by repentance (John 3: 1-19). The new birth (Salvation by Grace) was but entrance to the Kingdom and opened the door to deeper realms of spiritual experiences. It was designed to lead saints to see the necessity to die to self and allow Yeshua to reign as Sovereign in their hearts (Matthew 16:24-26).

In this way, they enjoy the present dimension of the Kingdom along with all other saints of like faith. Since they are all part of His dominion, Yeshua made it clear the best of the Kingdom is expressed when those who collectively constitute His Body loved one another and lived in unity.

John 13:34-35 (KJV) *34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

John 17:20-23 (KJV) *20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*

For Yeshua therefore, His Church is to be a case of 'Better Together'.

His desire was to birth in the earth realm, His Church as an agency of the Kingdom. What Churchianity and Christian Religion has done is to obscure the Kingdom so people 'come to church' to see an anointed preacher or participate in some sets of rituals that appeal to the senses but lack in true power of Holy Spirit. Because of this, multitudes are not able to enjoy true conversion and, change of their spiritual natures, though they are 'active' in Church. Even if they are born again, without submitting to the Sovereign rule of Yeshua, Christians will not be able to function as effective Ambassadors of the Kingdom.

The Alpha Church and the Kingdom Message

The Alpha Church was birthed on the Day of Pentecost in the Upper Room when 120 disciples – from the well-known apostles to the obscure youths; male and female assembled in the Upper Room as He instructed them. Waiting on the Lord in Prayer, they were endued with Holy Spirit on the appointed day.

Acts 1:4-8, 11-14 (KJV) *4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. 5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. 6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? 7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own*

power. 8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. 12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. 13 And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. 14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

Acts 2:1-4 (KJV) 1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Beyond the initial 120, other people who embraced the good news found acceptance in the company of the redeemed. Collectively, they became the Kingdom community distinct from the Roman-Jewish world around them.

Acts 2:37-41 (KJV) 37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? 38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. 40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. 41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

By preaching in power, sinners heard the gospel, were convicted, repented and came into fellowship with the others already in faith. Those who were saved knew and saw themselves as members of one organic community which was an expression of the Kingdom! Mindful of what Yeshua taught and modeled for them, the Alpha Church lived in a particular way – within the ambiance of the Kingdom which marked them out from the world around them. The content of their fellowship is telling:

Acts 2:42-47 (KJV) 42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. 44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common; 45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. 46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, 47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Acts 4:32-37 (KJV) 32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. 33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. 34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, 35 And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. 36 And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas,

(which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, 37 Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Holy Spirit used Paul the apostle to give further guidance concerning how brethren can pool resources to ensure none lacked and in so doing attract divine blessings:

2 Corinthians 8:9-15 (KJV) *9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. 10 And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago. 11 Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have. 12 For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not. 13 For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: 14 But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality: 15 As it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack.*

2 Corinthians 9:6-11 (KJV) *6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. 7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: 9 (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever. 10 Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;) 11 Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.*

Sincere brethren who are truly part of Fellowship (not false brethren) need to have the safety net of the Kingdom Church they are part of avail for them when issues arise that challenge their ability to take care. When brethren go to Conferences and retreats, those who have good pay should generously set aside more than what can take care of their own needs so provision is made for those who are financially challenged. When saints live this way, there will be no reproach on Yeshua and His Body. Rather, sinners want to draw near to inquire why we live the selfless way we do.

Growth Necessitated Basic Structure

By Acts 6, the great growth of the Alpha Church necessitated emergence of a basic structure to be in place to carry the Kingdom Church. In doing this, the brethren did not go to the Roman Empire or the Religious system of Judaism to borrow a working model. They rather emulated Yeshua and the way He functioned with the 12 disciples. As Yeshua focused on spiritual formation through Preaching, Teaching and leadership, He gave the disciples the responsibility of receiving gifts from the faithful women who ministered to Him as well as others who sowed into His ministry. Many tend to forget that Judas Iscariot was official Treasurer of the Church that Yeshua pastored:

John 12:4-6 (KJV) *4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, 5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? 6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.*

In all the miracles of feeding the multitudes, Yeshua concentrated on making the provision while distribution was left to the disciples. They seated and numbered the people as ushers; distributed the food and gathered the crumbs. In other words, while Yeshua functioned as the Chief Apostle; Chief Prophet; Chief Evangelist; Great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls (Pastor) and Chief Rabbi (Teacher), the 12 disciples were essentially His Deacons, serving as supportive ministers! When pressure came upon the early Church which could potentially take attention of the 12 Apostles from continuing the central work of spiritual formation and leadership, Holy Spirit reminded them of how Yeshua did it and they made adjustments:

Acts 6:1-7 (KJV) *1 And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. 2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. 3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. 4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. 5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: 6 Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. 7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.*

It is a critical part of Kingdom Church that the Fivefold should concentrate on forming Yeshua in the saints and empower them for their identities and assignments leaving Deacons – the other category of leaders – with the skills, calling, availability and passion to take care of the business affairs of the Church. Wherever this distinction in serving roles is made, there will be true Church growth. It is important to note that qualifications of Deacons were not less than that of the Fivefold or carnal in any way.

Acts 6:3 (KJV) *3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business*

From the revelation granted to Paul about the governmental system of the Kingdom Church, the work of the Fivefold – Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers – is so critical and strategic that they will definitely be distracted if issues like Money, materials and welfare of brethren were to shift their focus.

Ephesians 4:11-16 (KJV) *11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

The challenge of the end times is to see emergence of ministries and congregations which have sufficient room for both the Fivefold and those truly called as Deacons to function – as unto the Lord, serving the brethren with joy. In this way, the Kingdom is expressed in a holistic manner, manifested by sons of Elohim who are whole – spirit, soul and body. Congregations are today behaving like Gatherings, not Fellowships.

A true Fellowship is where hearts are knitted together in love to the degree the need of someone is supplied by the abundance or loving sacrifice of others. The world is tired of seeing Church folks grappling with life issues on their own and weighed down or crushed thereby. They will believe when they see caring, sharing, bonding and strengthening among people of different tribes, races, gender, ages and locations who are fundamentally bonded by Holy Spirit to be the very Body of Yeshua in the earth realm. Congregations and ministries which follow this Blue Print are His Remnant in the earth realm!

Furthermore, the Omega Church must avoid one of the main draw backs of Protestantism: Unleashing of the spirit of self which makes people want to run off with any anointing or grace to establish ministries with limited gifting. There are those who are called to supportive ministry. When they discover and walk in their callings alongside visionaries, there is such a symmetry/alignment which unleashes the fullness of Divine power. Each local congregation and ministry are therefore able to manifest the Kingdom when there is greater scope for all gifts and callings to manifest!

Review Questions

1. Which aspect of this lesson impacted you the most?
2. What is your personal take away from this lesson in terms of how the Church should be basically structured to make Kingdom impact?

Chapter 73

Recovering the Axe Head of Obedience

In Chapter 72, the Lord reminded us of the blueprint He left for His Church in the earth realm to look like in order to manifest the Kingdom. One of the reasons why Christian Religion stumbled, just like Israel of Old is in the determination of those who claim to be His Own to live by principles and patterns which represent systemic dis-obedience!

Obedience cannot be compromised!

For the purpose of this lesson, let us be reminded that from the beginning of the human age, Elohim positioned obedience to His Word and submission to His perfect will as the acid test for those He created in His Own image and likeness! The reason is simple: Elohim created humankind after His Own form and likeness and blessed them with His authority and power to represent the Kingdom of heaven as Ambassadors and regents.

Genesis 1:26-28 (KJV) *26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*

Right at the dawn of creation, Elohim balanced the awesome powers and privileges He conferred on humanity with a simple test or benchmark: Obedience.

Genesis 2:16-17 (KJV) *16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

It was in this context that we can understand the significance of why the fall of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:1-7 was such a terrible thing which attracted the life described in Genesis 3:16-19. Lest we forget, this is what Elohim demanded of Adam and Eve. What this means is that human kind has the inherent capacity to further the purpose of Elohim or to negate it. His purpose is furthered when the created is in full alignment with the Creator. When humans obey Elohim in love and out of respect and honor, they keep the balance of the Kingdom in order! That is why Obedience to the Word is such a powerful expression of Faithfulness and Loyalty to Elohim.

This is also why disobedience to the Word negates every claim to spirituality! Disobedience to the Word of Elohim or worse still, twisting His word to suit human preferences is the clearest indication of unfaithfulness! Those who disobey court damnation by eternal separation from Him.

As we saw in Scripture, Adam and Eve failed this vital Test. When Elohim found in Abraham a worthy vessel to headline a new racial identity on earth – Hebrews/Israel, He placed before him the burden of obedience

Genesis 17:1-2 (KJV) *1 And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. 2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.*

When Elohim gave Israel the Torah, the simple requirement for them to enjoy the full benefice of His Fatherhood was obedience.

Exodus 19:3-8 (KJV) *3 And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; 4 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. 5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: 6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. 7 And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him. 8 And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord.*

Deuteronomy 28 reveals that all the blessings of Elohim were hinged on obedience. In the same way, disobedience produced the fruit of suffering, pain and separation from Elohim. When Yeshua came, one of the profound things He emphasized is that Obedience was going to be the acid test to prove how saints love Elohim

John 15:10, 14 (KJV) *10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.*

14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you

As has been extensively shared in previous lessons, Yeshua Himself modeled obedience by leaving no chance to disobedience! He accomplished this reality by making His Father's will His dwelling place. He accomplished this by simply surrendering His will to that of the Father:

John 4:34 (KJV) *34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.*

All false doctrine can be known by one simple benchmark: How do they lead saints to obey or disobey express provisions of the Holy Scriptures? Using this benchmark, we can now see the tragedy which befell the Church from the beginning of the marriage with Rome (between 311 to 381 AD) – a clear act of disobedience regarding spiritual harlotry till today when Christian Religion desires Government patronage. As Paul stated variously in his epistles, the Gospel places a demand of obedience on saints.

Romans 6:16 (KJV) *16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?*

Romans 16:19 (KJV) *19 For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.*

Romans 16:26 (KJV) *26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:*

We do not need to go further than the Gospels, Epistles, and book of Revelation in order to see how the Church from the 4th Century till today has forsaken the Scriptures and rather followed the pathway of Israel regarding disobedience.

Romans 10:1-4 (KJV) *1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. 2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.*

The challenge of the Final Reformation can be summed up in one word: Obedience.

The Final Reformation is not about restoring one or some 'lost truths' or 'experiences' as was the case with various reformations/renewals. It is rather about whole hearted embrace of the Truth in the whole counsel of Elohim documented as the Holy Scriptures and living by same. It is about coming to the place of recognition that Elohim does not give us the luxury to:

- Cherry pick His Holy Word to determine which to obey and which to ignore or disobey
- Build 'churches' according to our cultural or personal fancies
- Make the Church our personal estates

Recovering the Lost Axe head

Those who claim to be Visionaries and leaders of the flock whose commission/mandate are from Yeshua must pause for a moment to ask themselves 'what am I building'? 'Which pattern am I following – Yeshua's or mine?' The strong words Holy Spirit released to the Kingdom Church through the pen of Paul the Apostle is worth consideration and forensic analysis:

1 Corinthians 3:10 (KJV) *10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.*

Commentary: Every minister must recognize that how we build the work of ministry is a window into state of our hearts: Are we obedient or disobedient? That is why we cannot afford to let a day go by before we pause to take heed how we are building!

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Commentary: Yeshua alone is the sole Foundation of His Church. That foundation is already laid. To build 'personal' ministries on our personalities, worldly culture or things we fancy is to deny such works the benefit of the foundation that is Him alone.

12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

Commentary: All those in ministry need to realize what we build with and how we build will fit into two broad categories of substances:

Precious: Gold, Silver, precious stones: These represent the right materials which can stand the test of time and fire.

Base: These represent patterns and substances of ministry which are combustible and alien to the King and His Kingdom. These include ABC Christianity/Churchianity where the focus is on growing attendance of people who are not in intimate relationship with Elohim but flock designated religious buildings on appointed days of the week to engage in rituals and bring tithes and offerings to enrich the 'Church' and leadership.

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

Commentary: Every pattern and act of ministry shall be tested and tried on the appointed day. Satan has deceived ministers' big time to think there are no consequences for what they do. This has hardened many to continue in religious exertions that are clearly unbiblical or even satanic.

14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

Commentary: A day is coming when those who have labored faithfully, doing ministry with the right resources and substances to enter the joy of their Lord! That is the Day they will hear things like these sweet words:

Matthew 25:23 (KJV) *23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.*

15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Commentary: We see something that is critical here. It is the reality that Ministers who maintain their faith in Yeshua till the end shall be saved from personal damnation but their works will be consumed by the fire of His Glory! Many sincere ministers will discover the danger of being sincerely wrong rather too late. This scripture is for ministers who will be saved but lose all rewards because their works are found imperfect. Unfortunately, there is a worse category: Those who will end up in eternal perdition because they were not saved or they backslid or entered into apostasy!

Matthew 7:13-23 (KJV) *13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. 15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. 16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? 17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. 19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. 21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and*

in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

The gifts and callings of Elohim are without repentance as Romans 11:29 says. Applied to ministry, the implications are that though a minister can fall out of the faith, some gifts given to him or her can still manifest. That is why saints are called to discern ministers by their fruits, not their gifts. Lifestyle will always count highly in the Kingdom! Those who will be used by Holy Spirit as part of the innumerable company of His elect remnant worldwide have their job cut out for them: The Divine Pattern of the Church is clearly articulated already in the Holy Word! All that is required is for us to accept the reality that it is the Divine Compass of Life through which our personal lives, ambassadorial assignments in the earth realm and the pattern of the Kingdom Church are already clearly articulated!

Return to School Paradigm

As individual ministers, each reformer needs to be humble enough to confess our inadequacy and seek help of Holy Spirit to breathe upon the Word, the breath of Life. He is our Teacher, Guide and Empower!

John 14:16 (KJV) *16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;*

John 14:26 (KJV) *26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

John 15:26 (KJV) *26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:*

The rapture ready Church is one washed by the Word so the beauty of holiness can shine forth!

Ephesians 5:25-27 (KJV) *25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

If this is so, we need to recognize that the Word is the Central thing we gather for! We gather to diligently study the Scriptures to understand and to prayerfully seek His Grace to be who He has ordained us to be. Our worship and Praises are good; our beautiful buildings are good; our various programs are good. But they all must proceed out of hearts, minds and wills which are totally in alignment with the will of Elohim in His Word.

John 4:23-24 (KJV) *23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*

The status of Yeshua as Head of the Church and King of the Kingdom must be clearly established in our hearts so we do not miss it. The reality of the Church as His Body: A Living, Loving organism rather than a dry religious organization needs to be radically restored also.

These Biblical Realities Need to Emerge in the Remnant Church

1. The Fivefold working together to bring the organic Body to pass. Visionaries need to humbly do spiritual audits to determine the fold they are and make room for other folds to emerge as co-laborers, not employees. The Fivefold are collective instruments of perfecting saints and empowering them for work of Ministry (Ephesians 4:11-16).

2. Deacons to be charged with management of assets and welfare needs of all (Acts 6:1-7). Visionaries need to be strongly invested in identifying by Holy Spirit, faithful saints and ministers who meet the qualifications in Acts 6:3 and empower them to step up the plate.

3. All saints to function as Royal Priesthood after Order of Melchizedek according to express purpose of the Lord manifested in the spiritual gifts given to them. For this to happen, saints need to be open to Holy Spirit to receive the spiritual gifts lifted with which to function as living parts of the same Body. They are listed mainly in Romans 12:1-8; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:7, 11; 1 Peter 4: 10-11 (Please study the Books Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts and Discover and Fulfil your ministry in the website kingdombooks.org). When saints are functionally alive, they can manifest the Kingdom right where they are! (Philippians 2:12-14; 1 Peter 2:9-12) Through spiritual gifts each member of the Body takes their appointed place. For this reason, the Lord does not want any saint to politick in the Church or seek undue advantage but to flow in service, using the gifts to edify and build up others.

4. But for effective service, all spiritual gifts and service to the Body need to be conducted in love 1 Corinthians 13.

5. The liberty saints have to exercise their spiritual gifts does not give any license to disorder. The Lord provides a remedy: The liberty to exercise spiritual gifts is balanced by the need to do so in an atmosphere of Order and submission to set authorities in the Church (1 Corinthians chapter 14; Romans 13:1-7; Hebrews 13:7, 17). Pentecostalism carried the negative baggage of Protestantism which is extreme individualism and disorder which dishonored Holy Spirit. That is why Pentecostalism failed as a denominational system. Holy Spirit is Spirit of Love and Order. When He is truly at work, there is a beautiful Kingdom Order which edifies and strengthens!

6. Beyond reformation of local congregations/assemblies, it is the desire of Elohim that no leader or part of His Body should function in isolation. The Lord has made provisions for framework of unity through two tracks:

- City Churches need to be nurtured to life through united actions and intense prayers by leaders of congregations in various cities. In the process, Holy Spirit will manifest Elders and Bishops gifted with collective responsibility to serve congregations, ministries and brethren city Churches (not rule them!)
- Ministerial networks which function as Kingdom Tribes will be birthed across the world. They will be safety nets of mutual accountability and support mechanism for ministers of the gospel. Just like Israel was made up of 12 Tribes, it is interesting that rather than pick just one disciple, Yeshua had 12. All ministerial networks are like Kingdom Tribes. Find one where you can fit in and faithfully engage with Elohim and fellow ministers.

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Review Questions

1. Please explain why Obedience is a critical proof of our love of Elohim
2. From this chapter, what aspect of the package of what the Kingdom Church should be like that you are yet to personally experience in operation?

Chapter 74

Faithfulness in the Ultimate Reformation of the Church

At this stage of our discourse in completing the Unfinished Reformation, it is necessary to connect Obedience to what should be its root: Faithfulness. This is because one can obey out of fear of punishment or out of a heart of love. Obedience can also be driven by hypocrisy (where one does not necessarily accept a need for change but does some external acts of obedience just to deceive others). On the other hand, one can obey Elohim out of a heart that is faithful. There are ministries that have, for instance, accepted the Fivefold in doctrine but not in practice. There are ministries which for instance ordain saints into ministry not as an act of empowerment so that they can function as the Royal Priesthood after the Order of Melchizedek but rather as a strategy to 'chain them'. Many Congregations and ministries have been known to plant 'churches', not necessarily to expand the Kingdom but rather to increase the membership roll of the denomination, increase revenue and expand the sphere of religious influence and prestige of the 'founder'. Wrong motives are functions of lack of Faithfulness.

What does it mean to be Faithful?

To be faithful is to be reliable, dependable and trustworthy. Faithfulness is a virtue which proceeds out of a sincere heart, free of humanistic agendas. People who are faithful are those who keep covenants with Elohim and fellow humans (Psalms 50:5).

Elohim Models Faithfulness

The Holy Scriptures present us with a clear picture of Elohim as a Faithful Being! Though He Is the All Sufficient One needing nothing external from Himself as motivation to do good, Elohim does good out of His nature.

Deuteronomy 7:9 (KJV) *9 Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;*

Among many revelations committed to his trust, David saw and understood the faithfulness of Elohim and gushed about it in several of the Psalms:

Psalm 36:5 (KJV) *5 Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.*

Psalm 40:10 (KJV) *10 I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.*

Psalm 89:1-2 (KJV) *1 I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. 2. For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.*

Psalm 89:5 (KJV) *5 And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.*

Psalm 89:8 (KJV) *8 O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?*

One of the greatest tragedies to befall the Church is that Faithfulness is now a lost virtue amongst saints. The Church has operated on a deficit of faithfulness and obedience. As we saw yesterday, the obedience of a larger wing of the Church has not happened. The eyes of Elohim scan the earth realm looking for faithful humans! He Who is Omniscient and Omnipresent knows the hearts, minds, will, and attitude of those who claim to be His!

2 Chronicles 16:9 (KJV) *9 For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.*

Psalm 5:9 (KJV) *9 For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue.*

Psalm 12:1 (KJV) *1 Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.*

Psalm 31:23 (KJV) *23 O love the Lord, all ye his saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.*

Faithfulness has two dimensions:

- Towards Elohim – Obedience is proof of faithfulness to Elohim. What this means is acts of disobedience – including outright ignoring provisions in His Word or the deliberate twisting of scriptures to serve preconceived fleshly motives – simply represent Unfaithfulness!
- Towards humans – Faithfulness manifests as Trustworthiness and ability to be a reliable member of a spiritual team Holy Spirit puts together for a specific Kingdom Purpose. When unfaithfulness is present, there can be no transparency, sincerity and true communication. People who He brings together for Kingdom purpose can drift apart because they allow their self-interests and personal perspectives to blind their eyes to the reality that The Kingdom is about The King.

The King has already set members in His Body, giving them specific assignments!

In the Kingdom Church, the reality must be restored that it is not a worldly or carnal organization which we can run by our ideas, fancies or personal perspectives. The Church is positioned in the earth realm as the Ground and Pillar of Truth for which we ought to know how to live and operate therein.

1 Timothy 3:15 (KJV) *15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*

If it is so, we need to begin to function with faithful mindsets which realize that as a spiritual reality, the Body of Yeshua was designed from heaven, in eternity past and we need to discover our specific places therein and faithfully occupy. That means we must be mindful to be the parts of the Body we were created to be, not the parts our ambitions drive us to aspire to!

Ephesians 2:18-22 (KJV) *18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. 19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*

1 Peter 2:5 (KJV) *5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*

When Faithfulness to Elohim rules the heart and mind, saints will beware of being driven by carnal ambitions to start religious organizations they essentially own and then have the temerity to present such idols to Elohim to bless. All who are born again ought to rest in Holy Spirit to manifest what parts of the Body they are. It is not by accident that the issue of spiritual gifts in the Church is referenced with the necessity of four preceding experiences:

- Death of the Self Life
- Renewal of the Mind
- Need to avoid Pride which leads to Gift Projection
- Recognition that we are a body designed to release and receive from each other.

Without these four preceding experiences, those who desire to use their spiritual gifts will be unfaithful to the Lord Who gave them and to the Church which should receive them!

Romans 12:1-8 (KJV) *1 beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. 3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. 4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.*

A careful examination of 1 Corinthians chapter 12 and Ephesians 4:1-16 and 1 Peter 4:10-11 show the design of the Church is organic, rather than organizational with Yeshua Himself as sole Head, requiring faithful submission to His person and His pattern (Ephesians 5:22-33).

When this divine perspective is understood, it will have this profound effect on the Church:

1. Our concern as saints is to discover our spiritual gifts and function by them for building up the One Single, Indivisible Church of Yeshua of which we are all members.
2. There will be no one seeking to 'found' or 'own' an organization and call people to 'join' to become members of same. This organizational mindset which proceeds from the flesh is the basis of the extreme instability which is a key feature of Protestantism generally and Pentecostalism in particular. This tendency has done serious damage to the Body of Yeshua in the earth realm. Elohim looks to His elect

remnant to stop the fleshly driven desire to 'own an organization', 'be recognized and hailed' because it has prevented the manifestation of true Kingdom Communities across the earth realm through which sinners could easily encounter the reality of Yeshua as Lord of all.

Let it be re-stated differently: What Saints need is not ownership of organizations to validate their claims to be anointed! What they need is space within the Body to release the gifts and graces within their spirit-man in service of other saints both where planted as well as wherever they go! They too are open to receive from other gifts and graces which will add value to them for spiritual growth and holistic wellbeing.

Saints, this is the heart beat of Yeshua!

John 17:21 (KJV) *21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*

How Unfaithfulness decimates the Body

The deficit of Faithfulness has led to insecurities and instabilities that have prevented ministers from doing what they know is right – because they will be taken advantage of by crafty colleagues who come to ministries with agendas!

Victims of Unfaithfulness

Some of these features of the true Kingdom Church have not been implemented by many ministers who know the truth because those they labor with tend to misuse the privileges given to undermine visionaries and Pastors to break up fellowships and carry off as many as they can seduce. This has driven many leaders who know the truth to be wary of implementing these 3 critical features of the Kingdom Church:

1. Fivefold

There are many 'Prophets' who on getting accepted in local congregations fail to discipline themselves to function in order as part of the Fivefold who accept the visionary as Elohim ordained. With a bloated sense of self-importance, they set about to project their gifts, corner saints they deem as wealthy and essentially break up the Church. Once they are challenged, they get offended and leave – with those who have been systematically reduced to a status of co-dependents. The result today is many congregations have shut down the Prophetic permanently. In that extreme reaction, they quench Holy Spirit! Both the Prophet who acted in a fleshly manner and the Congregation which shut down Holy Spirit are out of order and engaged in Christian Religion. Both sides cannot bring any saints to perfection as a son of Elohim! Yet, the Church landscape is filled with 'churches' which fit into this scenario.

When flesh is alive and carnality runs rife, ministers with various callings find it difficult to work together for the long haul. Yet this ought not to be! It is still the intention of Elohim to bring together Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers who labor together, under the leadership of Yeshua expressed through His appointed visionary!

Those who make this Divine Pattern impossible by breaking off to establish mono gift ministries they own are in self-deception of a dangerous sort. To deliberately work against the Supreme purpose of Head of the Church is akin to Seditious and the punishment can be severe! The truth is many of the multitudes of ministries on earth are built on Sand, not the Rock of the express words of Yeshua concerning His Church.

Matthew 7:26-27 (KJV) *26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: 27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.*

2. The Deaconate

The reason why many leaders are leery of raising the Deaconate and empowering them to run 'business affairs' of the Church is the fear of unfaithfulness of saints. There are many cases where the spirit that operated in Judas Iscariot to steal from the treasury has been found in people entrusted with managing ministry funds. In some cases, those appointed to serve as Deacons go rogue: Holding the Pastors hostage with the non-release of needed funds. In some cases, those given access to manage ministry funds allow their stingy mindsets to withhold resources which should have been deployed to take care of the Pastors that rule well, serving diligently. The same Word which required them to serve freely also speaks of their being taken care of by the ministry.

Unfortunately, to work around the issue of unfaithfulness, many Pastors end up looking for people who are personally loyal to them or family members to manage finances. The issue in the deaconate is faithfulness to manage Kingdom resources at leading of Holy Spirit, in all honesty, for the best interests of the ministry.

In other cases, the issue is rather more complex: Saints get the wrong notion that what constitutes 'ministry' is what is done from the Pulpit, with the Microphone! The result is many who are called to start their ministerial careers as Deacons who will like Phillip be later transitioned to the Fivefold allow that false narrative to make them shrink back from the Deaconate they deem as 'unfit' for them. This leads to a strange situation where there just are no deacons to serve. In this case, some Fivefold leader step in as stop gap while waiting for the right vessels to emerge.

3. Gift based ministry/Priesthood after order of Melchizedek

There are many Pastors and leaders who read 1 Peter 2:9-12 and even tell the saints they are the Royal Priesthood. Unfortunately, a Pastor can be so welded to the Pulpit or deem him or herself alone as an instrument of ministering the word that no space is created for Holy Spirit to manifest the saints in their gifting and membership-of-the-Body ministries.

It is necessary that all leaders put in place, as acts of faithfulness to the Lord and to saints, a Kingdom empowerment model based on the Teach>Train>Equip>Activate and Release paradigm. When Saints complete the cycle, they should be ordained to function, just as Yeshua ordained the 12 in Mark 4:13 and just as the Alpha Church did in Acts 13:1-4.

Saints should also realize that to be 'released' does not mean to 'run off' to do your own thing! It is rather an empowerment to function as an able minister of the New Testament. It is an empowerment primarily to effectively take your place in the organic Body that Holy Spirit is raising up as a Kingdom Community where as much of the Fivefold and all spiritual gifts are manifested in saints from different races; of different gender, ages, socioeconomic status who know each other by Holy Spirit. It is the synergy unleashed from such Kingdom communities who support each other in love and who invest in impacting their host communities which will draw sinners to come near, receive Yeshua into their hearts and take their places in the ever expanding presence of the Lord.

Where some need to be released for a fresh work

Surely there will be saints Elohim will call to extend the frontiers of the Kingdom from time to time. Where the call from Him requires a release to a fresh work, that should be handled with decency and in order. Nothing about the process should be done in strife or confusion if the motive is right. On their part, Leaders should not place impossible barriers before those who express the desire to be sent forth.

The Bottom Line: Faithfulness pays, in Time and in Eternity!

Many are called but few are chosen. Among the chosen few, many will fall by the way side out of offenses, ambitions that are unfulfilled; desire to be known or make money out of ministry. The saints who will last the distance are those who cling to He Who Is Faithful and become like Him: Faithful to Elohim both in small matters as well as to big issues. They are also faithful to leaders the Father puts in their lives and faithful to serve the brethren the right type of spiritual food which nurtures them to wholeness and fullness!

Luke 12:42 (KJV) *42 And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?*

Luke 16:10 (KJV) *10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.*

Luke 16:11 (KJV) *11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?*

Luke 16:12 (KJV) *12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?*

Luke 19:17 (KJV) *17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.*

Of this sort will King Yeshua find those who will return with Him to vanquish armies of the world led by the anti-Christ at the Battle of Armageddon! They will rule and reign with Him for a thousand years as priests and kings in the earth realm and enjoy eternity with Him forever!

Revelations 17:14 (KJV) *14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.*

Revelation 19:11-21 (KJV) *11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. 12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. 13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. 15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King Of Kings, And Lord Of Lords. 17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; 18 That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. 19 And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. 20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. 21 And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.*

The Word of Elohim is the Compass of Kingdom. Those who He will use to complete the unfinished reformation are vessels of honor who will not add or subtract from the divine Word.

Review Questions

1. Please discuss at least 3 main lessons you personally take away from this chapter
2. Why is it important that saints pay the price to work together as a team where the Fivefold is manifested along with many spiritual gifts?

Chapter 75

The Ultimate Purpose of Reformation: Concerns Time and Eternity

The reason why Elohim spared no word in the Holy Scriptures and the march of history to reveal the things we have received in this course is because of His high esteem for the Church of Yeshua. Of that high esteem, there are four things which we need to be reminded of so Complete Reformation of the Church can be empirically evaluated.

1. To complete the Mission of Yeshua which He began in His Incarnate State
2. To bring under subjection Satan and all powers of darkness so they do not hinder the divine program in the earth realm
3. Inherit the Manifest Kingdom
4. Inherit eternity – when the mystery of Elohim is accomplished and He becomes all in all.

Let us examine each of them in detail:

#.1. To complete the Mission of Yeshua, Jesus.

As we have seen in various sections of this study, Yeshua did not come to set up Christian Religion to compete for space and membership with other religions. That narrative of religion essentially reduces Him to the level of other human founders of religions and hides. It is what has fostered an emphasis on Church membership; emphasis on Buildings people go into on certain 'holy days' and the quantum of revenue derived from religious adherents.

He came to:

#.1.1. Cancel the disobedience of Adam by His Own Obedience. In so doing, Yeshua paid the price in full to reconcile lost humanity back to the Father (Romans 5:6-21).

John 1:29 (KJV) *29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*

Luke 19:10 (KJV) *10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*

2 Corinthians 5:21 (KJV) *21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

Knowing these truths at a heart level will enable saints to preach the truth of the new birth with full assurance which Holy Spirit can utilize to convict sinners to embrace the Love of the Father revealed in Yeshua's Incarnation, Sufferings, Death, Burial, and Resurrection.

Hebrews 10:9-18 (KJV) *9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. 10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for*

all. 11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: 12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; 13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. 14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. 15 Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, 16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; 17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. 18 Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (KJV) *17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

The New birth is indeed an exceptional manifestation of the Grace of Elohim which produces a special breed of humans in the earth realm who by Holy Spirit's work are in their spirit-man seated with Yeshua in heavenly places far above all principality and power.

Ephesians 2:1-6 (KJV) *1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:*

Saints who are redeemed in this way are members of the Body of Yeshua and citizens of the Kingdom. They are all part of one universal Body. To accept their division into denominational factions and deem them to be 'members' of fellow humans who happen to be ministers (a fact of Protestantism); is an affront to King Yeshua Himself. That is why it is evidently unacceptable for ministers to invite saints to come and encounter them and their 'anointing'! Holy Spirit does not lead saints into fellow humans but to Yeshua, the only Exalted One! As repeatedly stressed, it is the duty of all ministers to deliberately decrease by pointing saints to He Who Is their Head so they can know and grow up in Him!

To complete the Mission of Yeshua requires the Church to take the Go Ye principle very seriously. Whether as individuals or congregations, the foundational Kingdom business of reconciling the lost to our heavenly Father needs to take center stage again.

Romans 1:16 (KJV) *16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

2 Corinthians 5:18-20 (KJV) *18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. 20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

Of all the ways, we are to occupy until He returns, nothing matches the strategic assignment of reconciling the lost to their heavenly Father, disciplining them, empowering them to live as sons of Elohim who are trained, equipped, activated, and released to function as priests after the order of Melchizedek.

Collectively, they take the church from the building to the Community to release virtue for transformation!

#.1.2. He also came to ensure the earth realm is re-populated with sons of Elohim

The completed sacrifice of Yeshua is a done deal which when received by Faith makes the New Creation the reality that it is!

John 1:12 (KJV) *12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

When saints are well taught, they grow up spiritually to accept their identity in Yeshua

Hebrews 2:9-15 (KJV) *9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. 10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. 13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. 14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

The original purpose of Elohim for the earth realm was that it would be the portion of His sons, created to manage it on His behalf (Genesis 2 15; Psalm 115:16). The fall of Adam and Eve and their subsequent procreation of people of like fallen kind (Genesis 5:1-5) was not to last forever. However, it would take the sacrifice of the Ultimate Son as Seed of the Woman for the divine purpose to be realized. That is why the disciples could not be regarded as sons of Elohim and Yeshua's brethren until He went to the Cross and rose again the third day.

John 20:17 (KJV) *17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.*

By offering the world Christian Religion through the union of Rome and larger wing of the Church, the enemy effectively went for the jugular. That the Lutheran Reformation did not address this serious foundational error but continued with the leaven of Babylon effectively made it impossible for Protestantism to bring any believer to perfection. No wonder the Church in the past 500 years has seen the ugly face of Christian Religion just like in the days Rome had an exclusive religious mandate over Christendom.

We are the generation which will recapture the essence of Sonship! Sons do not seek to rule other saints. They rather incline their hearts to take responsibility for the Father's business. They serve with joy and gratitude!

#.2. To bring under subjection Satan and all powers of darkness so they do not hinder the divine program in the earth realm

Left alone, Satan would use his 3-fold mission of Stealing, Killing, and Destruction to waste the earth realm in diverse ways (John 10:10). This is more so since the Incarnation when Satan knew his time was almost up as ruler of the earth realm.

Revelation 12:7-10, 12 (KJV) *7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, 8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. 9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. 10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.*

12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

The Church was ordained to beam the light of Yeshua so brightly that it dispels the gross darkness the enemy uses to blanket the world. In the same way, the reformed Church releases virtue for preserving its environment from corruption and destruction. By its prayers and Kingdom endeavors, the Church brings forth the redemptive gifts of its communities to create a flavor of good taste (Matthew 5:13-16). The Reformed Church is the agency which heaven uses to keep Satan in his place until the fullness of Time.

The promise of dominion over Satan is a sure one! Unfortunately, the Protestant reformation has not produced the lasting fruit of saints who know their Elohim to the degree they take words like this as their mandate to exercise dominion in the earth realm, despite Satan's antics. Saints who will embrace the ultimate reformation that Holy Spirit is affecting in the universal Body of Yeshua will walk in the realities of the enormous authority they have in Him!

Mark 16:17-18 (KJV) *17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.*

Luke 10:19 (KJV) *19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.*

Romans 16:20 (KJV) *20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.*

The capacity of saints for spiritual warfare was clearly stated in Ephesians 6:10-18 which we discussed in a previous lesson. Unfortunately, there are multitudes of ministers who have kept those they lead in ignorance of the powers granted them. Some others prefer to keep saints captive to their manipulations.

Today, several churches consist of believers who are constantly manipulated to part with more money; buy anointing oil; 'anointed prayer cloths' and all kinds of rituals to ward off evil spirits. Some go through endless deliverance sessions - for various fees! The truth is when the Church walks in the

beauty of Holiness and is bound in unity by love, knowing its identity, powers of darkness take note and back off!

Ephesians 3:10 (KJV) *10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,*

Churchianity, the chief fruit of the Protestant movement today negates the emergence of a powerful Church which can deliver on these outcomes!

#.3. True sons will inherit the Manifest Kingdom

Yeshua came to promise all who would believe on Him a part in His Kingdom to come. Contrary to the ignorance of Christian Religion, the Kingdom is an existential reality where those who make it will live in a conscious state, able to eat, drink, and function as priests and Kings.

Matthew 25:34 (KJV) *34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:*

Matthew 26:29 (KJV) *29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.*

Yeshua will return on a day no one knows and after subduing the kings of this world at the Battle of Armageddon in Revelation 19; after Satan and all evil are bound, He will reign for a thousand years according to Revelation 20:1-6. There will be no terrorism, no wars, crises, sicknesses, or any negativity during this period. It is a time when we shall see how the world would have been like if Adam and Eve did not sin and fall away. The plan of Elohim is that the first coming of Yeshua was to secure the legal right over the earth realm as a son of man (Psalm 115:16) which will be consummated when He comes to physically rule with all His saints who overcame.

For sons of Elohim who embraced all the processes He laid before them, the end of the age is not an occasion for anxiety, worry, or fear. They clutch at nothing as they seek first the Kingdom and its righteousness, even if Yahweh decorates them with the good of this world. For them, the end of the age is something to be desired, yearned for and looked forward to, just like Paul did.

2 Timothy 4:6-8 (KJV) *6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*

Those who live with this mindset have no fear of death because of eternal life in them.

Revelation 12:11 (KJV) *11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.*

The Protestant Reformation and most renewals ever since have not placed sufficient emphasis on the end of our Faith. Understanding the glory and beauty of what lies ahead is enough motivation to press in and accomplish the Divine purpose while on this side of eternity.

Sons of Elohim will possess the Kingdom to come, ruling and reigning with Yeshua! The manifest Kingdom will not be left to other people! It is the portion of the faithful who will rule and reign with Him.

Daniel 2:44 (KJV) *44 And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.*

Revelation 1:5-6 (KJV) *5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, 6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

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

Revelation 20:6 (KJV) *6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*

For this reason, true Kingdom leaders labor ceaselessly to ensure those committed to their trust make it into the Manifest Kingdom, just like Paul

2 Corinthians 11:2 (KJV) *2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.*

They know the utilitarian gospel of those who use sweet words to gather crowds of milk drinking babes around their persons, buildings, and organizations create a terrible anomaly of believers who obtain the goods of this world but miss eternity.

1 Corinthians 15:19 (KJV) *19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.*

From Salvation by Grace to Gospel of the Kingdom

Unfortunately, the Protestant Reformation of 1517 did not lead to the discovery of the dimension of the gospel of the Kingdom which had been lost for at least 1100 years when Rome went into unholy marriage with the Church. What Protestantism recovered was the gospel of Salvation by Grace which is a direct outcome of believing on Yeshua as Saviour. The final reformation will be used by Elohim to correct this anomaly. Therefore, Yeshua tied the global proclamation of the gospel of the Kingdom to His return.

Matthew 24:14 (KJV) *14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*

#.4. At the cessation of Time, sons of Elohim will inherit and enjoy endless eternity.

Before Yeshua left the earth realm, He made it clear that one of His future assignments was to prepare eternal abodes for His own:

John 14:1-4 (KJV) *1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a*

place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. 4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

The mystery of Elohim will be accomplished one day!

Revelation 10:7 (KJV) *7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.*

In the same way, the Kingdom will one day be consummated when Yeshua will complete the assignment thereof and hand over to Yahweh His Father

1 Corinthians 15:24-25 (KJV) *24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.*

Many will wonder what lies ahead. The answer is an endless eternity of bliss with Elohim. We do not rely on fables and movies made by humans to gain the sneak peek into that world to come! It is for this reason the Holy Scriptures describe the type of saints who will live in the earth realm at end of the age as a fruit of the ultimate reformation.

The Holy Scriptures have enough light on what it is like:

Revelation 22:1-7, 12-15, 20-21 (KJV) *1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. 2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: 4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. 5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever. 6 And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. 7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.*

12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. 13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. 14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. 15 For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. 21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Watchfulness and Readiness: The keys to the next phase

The final reformation will see the manifestation of saints who take watchfulness and readiness seriously. They will neither be caught up with the spirit of the age nor will they be careless with their lives, sleeping when they should be awake! They will be Awake from sleep!

Romans 13:11-14 (KJV) *11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off*

the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. 13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. 14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Being awake is the key to redeeming time so nothing is lost!

Ephesians 5:14-17 (KJV) *14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. 15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, 16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. 17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.*

Watchful and engaged with Kingdom business

Matthew 24:42-51 (KJV) *42 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. 43 But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. 44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. 45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? 46 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. 47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. 48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; 49 And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; 50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, 51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

The ultimate reformation will produce saints who are so Vigilant and Watchful, like the wise Virgins of Matthew 25:1-13 that they cannot afford the luxury of unnecessary/unhealthy soul ties with the Political, Economic, and Social systems of this world. Those who are yoked to the world system are in danger of being prepared to embrace the anti-Christ when he ultimately manifests as part of Mystery Babylon! Unfortunately, many prophets are leading the church astray – in this direction.

Focused, with eye on the prize which is their part in the manifest Kingdom and eternal joy

They will cooperate with Holy Spirit to be Rapture ready always – giving Satan no room to seduce them or for any sin to rule their lives. They recognize the rapture and resurrection of the dead in Yeshua – which are the point of entry into the manifest phase of the Kingdom – will be swift and sudden as 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 says.

1 Corinthians 15:50-52 (KJV) *50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

Review Questions

1. Please share 3 main things which ministered to your heart in this chapter

Chapter 76

The Omega Church and Sin: A fresh emphasis

We need to continually remember, completing the unfinished reformation is about getting the Church to the place of radiant beauty and glory as it walks in the Holiness of its nature as the very Body of Yeshua, Jesus:

Ephesians 5:25-27 (KJV) *25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

The True Kingdom Church is, therefore, a supernatural organism of sons of Elohim united together as lively stones! That is why they are a holy people living in love and in unity with Yeshua and one another. Those whose theologies and practices lead to a culture of iniquity or division of the Body for sake of building their personal religious empires are fighting Yeshua, The Holy One, Who is Head of the Church.

As an agency of the Kingdom in the earth realm, the Church is given a Constitution to guide its conduct. The constitution is the Holy Scripture now documented for ease of reference as the Holy Bible. It is the will of the Head of the Church this Constitution is diligently studied by all saints, under the unction of Holy Spirit so they guard against presumptuous sins which war against the soul.

Psalms 119:9-11 (KJV) *9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. 10 With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. 11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.*

A Proper understanding of the Word has the net effect of:

1. Transforming hearts. The same way saints become the new creation of Elohim by the Word (1 Peter 2:23) is the same way their spirit-man is perfected by regular feeding on the word. Those who feed on the Word tend to have a lively conscience which does not give room for negative thoughts to become sinful words and actions.

2. Renewing the mind. The Word renews the mind and uproots strongholds of worldly culture, so the holy culture of the Kingdom is planted in their place. This leads to having the mind of Yeshua (Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:23; Philippians 2:5).

3. Positive attitude to life including challenges thereof. When the word is embedded in the spirit-man and mind of saints, they tend to see all things before them – including challenges and ‘difficulties’ through different lenses than others. They know like Paul all things will work together for their good because Elohim is with them always, never leaving or forsaking them (Romans 8:28-39; Hebrews 13:5-6).

4. Make saints live Holy lives. Lives that are well pleasing to the Father. With the hearts transformed, minds renewed, and attitudes stabilized, the saint discovers holiness is no longer a struggle to keep laws. Grace propels them to think, say, and do what is well pleasing to the Father out of a heart which loves, honors, and desires to be in perfect alignment with Him always (Philippians 1:6; Philippians 2:12-16).

Key to holiness is Love of Elohim and fellow humans!

When the Constitution of the Kingdom is properly understood as the guideline of life, saints do not need external motivation to live right. The seed of Elohim in them propels them to seek to please the Father always. This tendency to love Elohim with the whole heart propels saints to please Him also inclines the heart not to deliberately offend fellow humans – both the saved and unsaved – has the net effect of making righteousness and holiness a normal lifestyle of saints. When saints live this way, there is safety because no room will exist for them to sin against Elohim and fellow humans!

Romans 13:8-10 (KJV) *8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. 9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*

One of the most unfortunate features of the Protestant community is the way Sin is now treated as normal and without consequences in time and eternity. Fueled by effects of hyper grace teachings and lingering effects of Calvinism, many saints live as if they have no responsibility of diligence in drawing down the Grace of Elohim which He uses to undergird them. The result is even with end of the age unfolding in high definition, many saints and ministers live in covert and overt sins, relying on twisted words of scripture to feel safe and secure. Therefore, the Lord propels us today, as we continue to come down the wire, to apprehend again the reality that the call to Salvation is a call out of the world that is under the rule of Satan to a new world where righteousness and holiness, flowing from Yeshua becomes the lifestyle of all who are part of His Body!

1 Peter 1:15-16 (KJV) *15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; 16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.*

Understanding of Sin and Consequences must be restored in the final reformation!

Saints need to be taught the clear truth: Sin is a choice of the human will to disobey provisions of His Constitution which regulate life in the earth realm. In other words, a life of habitual sinning is akin to sedition!

1 John 3:4-10 (KJV) *4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. 5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. 6 Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. 7 Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. 8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. 9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he*

is born of God. 10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

Saints need to be taught until they understand: Sin is toxic, deadly, and punishable in time and in eternity! Those who sin against Elohim have the opportunity while the gates of Grace are open to repent, be justified and continue in fellowship with Him and their brethren.

1 John 2:1-2 (KJV) *1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

Those who sin, persist therein, become hardened and die therein have made the conscious choice to go into perdition of eternal damnation.

Hebrews 10:26-31 (KJV) *26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

Speaking of Sin, the New Covenant was clear certain behavior and lifestyle the world deems as normal part of culture is not just unacceptable to Elohim but can lead to eternal damnation. Some of such sins are specifically mentioned that only those who are ordained to damnation can continue therein after being taught the truth. Let us look at these two passages mentioned in an earlier lesson:

Galatians 5:13-21 (KJV) *13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. 14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 15 But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. 16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. 18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.*

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Corinthians 6:9-12 (KJV) *9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, 10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. 12 All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.*

Case Study of Specific Clauses Now Ignored

For those who cause disunity by gossips, backbiting or peddling of strange doctrines which entice some out of fellowship, the Word says:

Romans 16:17 (KJV) *17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.*

Paul was used by the Lord to state in clear terms to the Church immorality was not to be part of their holy Fellowship because it was a sin against Elohim, the body of the one who sinned and despised presence of Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 6:18-20 (KJV) *18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. 19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

He went on to emphasize the need for purity in the Body in his epistle to the Thessalonians:

1 Thessalonians 4:2-8 (KJV) *2 For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. 3 For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: 4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; 5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: 6 That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. 7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness. 8 He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.*

Role of spiritual authorities/Leaders in maintenance of a culture of holiness

One of the reasons Elohim allowed His Church to have the ministry of leaders placed in authority is to ensure standards of His Word are kept. For this reason, He gave them substantial authority to exercise discipline and keep His holy order (Romans 13:1-7; Hebrews 13:7,17).

Paul, the Apostle exercised this authority when dealing with the brother who committed incest with his father's wife. He ordered the brother to be handed over to Satan to torment his flesh so in anguish, he could cry to Elohim for mercy.

1 Corinthians 5:1-5 (KJV) *1 It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. 2 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. 3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, 4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

Though seemingly harsh, that level of punishment was the only thing which could save the sinning church goer who eventually repented and was restored.

The Church itself which had been polluted with immorality was purged by the act of discipline Paul had imposed:

2 Corinthians 7:8-12 (KJV) *8 For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. 9 Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. 10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. 11 For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter. 12 Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you.*

That is why those who are placed in authority owe it to the Lord and themselves to model true holy living, just like Paul did. Those who do not do so but allow their ambitions and flesh to determine their lifestyles risk losing it all on the last day!

1 Corinthians 11:1 (KJV) *1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.*

Philippians 3:17-21 (KJV) *17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. 18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.) 20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (KJV) *24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. 25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. 26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: 27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*

The time has come for those in ministry to realize with the privilege of leadership comes a matching responsibility to maintain holiness of life! To accept leadership and deny this responsibility is to court damnation on the last day.

Love and holiness

Even in matters where saints have liberty to do what their conscience approves, the organic nature of the Church as Body of Yeshua imposes a counter demand that no one should deliberately use same to cause offense to those of weaker faith. If saints walk by this rule, the unity of the Body will be preserved in the bond of peace!

1 Corinthians 8:8-13 (KJV) *8 But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse. 9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak. 10 For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; 11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? 12 But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. 13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.*

All saints are to desire eternity to the degree they choose wisely not to allow any Preacher of unrighteousness to cause them to lose their Crown. In the same way, saints are supposed to discern their environments to detect if Sin and Sinning are the ruling culture or Righteousness and Holiness define the environment. Since true Grace leads to righteousness and holiness, they will know whether the fellowship they are part of is heaven or hell bound! There is solid ground for saints to depart from a leadership or fellowship where sin is tolerated and excused!

1 Timothy 4:16 (KJV) *16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.*

Hebrews 3:12-13 (KJV) *12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. 13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*

Revelation 2:11 (KJV) *11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.*

Let us close the lesson with this Pastoral epistle of Paul to Timothy: Saints who sin in an overt sense need to be publicly reprimanded in love! To hide certain kinds of sin and do not reprimand the same may well mean handing the offender a passport to hell.

1 Timothy 5:20-22, 24-25 (KJV) *20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. 21 I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality. 22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.*

24 Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after. 25 Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.

The Father wants His end time saints to walk in Purity of Thought, Word, and Deed signifying alignment with His nature and lifestyle. This alignment is what makes saints His Omega Church, ready for the return of Yeshua, the Head, and Bridegroom!

Review Questions

1. Please mention and briefly explain 5 specific things you received from this chapter.
2. In terms of pressing into a state of purity and holy living, what is your resolution going forward?

Chapter 77

Resolving the Identity Issue: The True Church is not 'Protestant'

If we understand the true Church, no truly redeemed of the Lord shall have cause to accept the label of Religion called 'Protestant' that both Satan and Roman Catholicism have sought to attach to it. The reason is the term 'Protestant' fosters the false narrative that Roman Catholicism is the 'Mother Church' from which some people branched off in 1517 due to the work of Martin Luther. In other words, Christians who persist in identifying themselves with that label are simply manifesting a tacit admission their roots are in Rome. This tendency has set many Pentecostal, Evangelical, and 'Independent' ministers and ministries up to embrace the errors of the Lutheran Church which has been in talks with The Roman Catholic Church for re-union based on shared values.

Danger when saints are not watchful

Our Head and King gave the Church an important charge that has been largely ignored: The necessity to combine prayer and watching.

Matthew 26:41 (KJV) *41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*

Mark 13:33 (KJV) *33 Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.*

Mark 14:38 (KJV) *38 Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.*

Luke 21:36 (KJV) *36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.*

Interestingly, two of the leading apostles of all time Paul and Peter in different ways issued the same warning to the Church:

Ephesians 6:18 (KJV) *18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;*

Colossians 4:2 (KJV) *2 Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;*

1 Peter 4:7 (KJV) *7 But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.*

These two spiritual disciplines when practiced diligently will enable saints to discern unfolding events and situate them within their proper biblical and prophetic context. This tendency will, in turn, enable saints to pray more effectively. No time in history is it necessary for the True Church, even the Elect Remnant to be proactively aware of the currents of unfolding prophecy than at this time.

Enter the Prince Charming

Many adults of this generation are aware of how Roman Catholicism seemed to be under threat of collapse due to seemingly self-inflicted mortal wounds: Sexual impropriety on a large scale by priests who seemed especially drawn to young people. The pedophile crises almost shuttered Roman Catholic dioceses and parishes in many parts of the United States and Europe as victims of historical abuses won huge monetary awards from sympathetic Judges and jurors. Not a few Protestants seemed to savor the impending downfall of Rome which they blamed on its policy of forced celibacy.

Suddenly, a series of events led to a turning of the tide. Without warning, Pope Benedict XVI on February 11, 2013 announced his resignation, effective on 28th of that same month giving Princes of the Roman Catholic Church – the Cardinals a short window of time to elect a successor. To understand this issue in proper context, let us get a proper insight into the background of this very doctrinaire personality, the 8th German of all time to sit on top of the Church of Rome. Wikipedia notes:

“Ordained as a priest in 1951 in his native Bavaria, Ratzinger established himself as a highly regarded university theologian by the late 1950s and was appointed a full professor in 1958. After a long career as an academic and professor of theology at several German universities, he was appointed Archbishop of Munich and Freising and Cardinal by Pope Paul VI in 1977, an unusual promotion for someone with little pastoral experience. In 1981, he was appointed Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, one of the most important dicasteries of the Roman Curia. From 2002 until his election as Pope, he was also Dean of the College of Cardinals. Prior to becoming Pope, he was "a major figure on the Vatican stage for a quarter of a century"; he had an influence "second to none when it came to setting church priorities and directions" as one of John Paul II's closest confidants.

He taught the importance of both the Catholic Church and an understanding of God's redemptive love. Pope Benedict also revived a number of traditions, including elevating the Tridentine Mass to a more prominent position. He strengthened the relationship between the Catholic Church and art, promoted the use of Latin, and reintroduced traditional papal garments, for which reason he was called "the pope of aesthetics". He has been described as "the main intellectual force in the Church" since the mid-1980s.

On 11 February 2013, Benedict announced his resignation in a speech in Latin before the cardinals, citing a "lack of strength of mind and body" due to his advanced age. His resignation became effective on 28 February 2013. He is the first pope to resign since Pope Gregory XII in 1415, and the first to do so on his own initiative since Pope Celestine V in 1294. As pope emeritus, Benedict retains the style of His Holiness, and the title of Pope, and continues to dress in the papal colour of white.”

It was nothing short of the supernatural this move came at a time Roman Catholicism had fallen on bad ways with persistently negative press coverage of sexual scandals.

The Cardinals who constituted the Conclave had just 17 days to elect a successor. As they went into their world-famous conclave, the earth realm waited in bated breath for who would be elected as the new Bishop of Rome and Pope of Roman Catholic Church world-wide. For the first time in history, Rome did the unthinkable: They opted for a Pope, a man who was an active member of the Jesuits. Founded by Ignatius of Loyola in the Basque region of Spain, the Jesuits were set up as an effective ‘Delta Force’ of Roman Catholicism who would lay down their lives to counter the Reformation on all levels and ensure

Roman Catholicism prevails as the face of Christianity under the Pope. It is believed, most of the severest persecutions Protestants over the past hundreds of years faced were executed by Jesuits. Publicly however, the Jesuits seemed the perfect order of priests. Let us consider this entry in Wikipedia:

“The Society of Jesus (S.J. – from Latin: Societas Iesu) is a male religious congregation of the Catholic Church which originated in Spain. The members are called Jesuits. The society is engaged in evangelization and apostolic ministry in 112 nations on six continents. Jesuits work in education (founding schools, colleges, universities, and seminaries), intellectual research, and cultural pursuits. Jesuits also give retreats, minister in hospitals and parishes, sponsor direct social ministries, and promote ecumenical dialogue.

Ignatius of Loyola, a Basque nobleman from the Pyrenees area of northern Spain, founded the society after discerning his spiritual vocation while recovering from a wound sustained in the Battle of Pamplona. He composed the Spiritual Exercises to help others follow the teachings of Jesus Christ. In 1534, Ignatius and six other young men, including Francis Xavier and Peter Faber, gathered and professed vows of poverty, chastity, and later obedience, including a special vow of obedience to the Pope in matters of mission direction and assignment. Ignatius's plan of the order's organization was approved by Pope Paul III in 1540 by a bull containing the "Formula of the Institute".

Ignatius was a nobleman who had a military background, and the members of the society were supposed to accept orders anywhere in the world, where they might be required to live in extreme conditions. Accordingly, the opening lines of the founding document declared the society was founded for "whoever desires to serve as a soldier of God[a] to strive especially for the defence and propagation of the faith and for the progress of souls in Christian life and doctrine." Jesuits are thus sometimes referred to colloquially as "God's soldiers", "God's marines", or "the Company", which evolved from references to Ignatius' history as a soldier and the society's commitment to accepting orders anywhere and to endure any conditions. The society participated in the Counter-Reformation and, later, in the implementation of the Second Vatican Council.

The Society of Jesus is consecrated under the patronage of Madonna Della Strada, a title of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and it is led by a Superior General. The headquarters of the society, its General Curia, is in Rome. The historic curia of St. Ignatius is now part of the Collegio del Gesù attached to the Church of the Gesù, the Jesuit mother church.

In 2013, Jorge Mario Bergoglio became the first Jesuit Pope, taking the name Pope Francis

They did not elect Superior General of the Order but a Priest in Argentina – Jorge Mario Bergoglio - whose roots are in the Italy where his father was born. He promptly took the name Francis. He was enthroned as Pope on March 19, 2013. According to Wikipedia, “Some 132 states and international organizations sent delegations to the inauguration. The delegations included 6 sovereign rulers, 31 heads of state, 3 princes, and 11 heads of government.”

Those who thought Roman Catholicism was finished were mistaken! A highly charismatic man with proper understanding of gestures and public relations with a media savvy presence, in just 4 years he

has revived fortunes of the Roman Catholic Church and effectively inserted it into world consciousness as the greatest Religious entity in the world with 1.2 billion adherents! Its main rival in terms of numbers – Islam has a problem of the schism between Sunni and Shia versions of the faith. In Roman Catholicism, all orders are organized to achieve one end. Pope Francis has used his training as a Jesuit priest to restore respect for Roman Catholicism. The simplicity with which he carries himself, mingling with commoners, washing the feet of Muslims and Prisoners opting to live in a simple abode and many other gestures has shamed Protestant leaders, especially Pentecostal leaders with their extreme ostentation and flaunting of wealth.

Pope Francis did not waste time to launch a bid to re-unite Roman Catholics and Protestants. He called up his old friend from days in Argentina, Bishop Tony Palmer. Here is how Wikipedia presents its entry on the man who was to play a major role in re-union of Roman Catholicism and the ‘Protestant’ Movement before his unexpected death in July 2014:

“Anthony Joseph "Tony" Palmer (February 4, 1966 - July 20, 2014) was a British-born South African bishop with the Communion of Evangelical Episcopal Churches, a communion of dioceses and ministries that are inspired by the "middle way" of classical Anglicanism and count themselves as part of the Convergence Movement. They were originally inspired by Bishop Lesslie Newbigin, a British theologian, missiologist, missionary and author.

Palmer was born in the UK and moved to South Africa when he was 10 years old. He and his wife maintained a website, called the Ark Community, which is described as "an internet-based, Inter-denominational Christian Convergent Community, drawing our spirituality from the “Early Church” (33-600AD) Celtic Christian spirituality." On the Ark Community website, he was known as "Father Tony Palmer" instead of using the style The Right Reverend or the title "Bishop".

In January 2014, Palmer was sent by Pope Francis as a special envoy to a Charismatic Evangelical Leadership Conference hosted by Kenneth Copeland. During the conference, Palmer presented a short video message from the Pope. Palmer and Pope Francis were personal friends. The message was recorded when the two met a week prior to the Kenneth Copeland Ministries leaders' conference. Pope Francis suggested the recording and it was recorded on Palmer's iPhone. The message is one of brotherhood, unity and love. A declaration that the Reformation protest has ended. At the end of the presentation and video message, Copeland prayed for the Pope and recorded his own message back to the Pope.

Palmer died on 20 July 2014 after injuries sustained in a motorbike accident.

Tony Palmer continued the message of unity and released a video on February 28, 2014 titled – Bishop Tony Palmer & Pope Francis" on the Ark Community website with the apparent approval of Pope Francis. In this video, he said "The real gift of communion is finding our brother. For those of us who have ears to hear, let us hear because this is both profound and revolutionary. Pope Francis is calling us into an authentic communion based on the fact that we are brothers and sisters in Christ, not communion through our common traditions. This is a new way forward."

It is important to get to know that over the past hundreds of years, the Roman Catholic Church had effectively nursed the hope that one day, what it considered its 'Protesting' children would return home. That dream received a major impetus when it reached an agreement with the Lutheran Church. Here is how British Broadcasting Corporation described advances made in that direction.

"Catholics and Lutherans end centuries-old rift

Leading clerics from the Roman Catholic and Lutheran Churches are meeting in the German city of Augsburg for a ceremony of reconciliation ending theological disputes that triggered the Protestant Reformation almost five centuries ago.

The Churches are to sign a document tomorrow on one of their key doctrinal disputes -- the means to salvation. The signing coincides with the anniversary of Martin Luther's protest against the Papacy in 1517 -- the event that began the Reformation.

The Churches are keeping distinct positions but will emphasize their shared views as a means of promoting contacts and cooperation between some one billion Catholics and sixty million Lutherans worldwide. Luther's protest involved his nailing ninety-five dissenting theses to a church door opposing the Catholic doctrine that salvation could be bought through indulgences or earned through good works.

Luther held that salvation could only be gained through faith in Christ.

From the newsroom of the BBC World Service Saturday, October 30, 1999 Published at 15:54 GMT 16:54 UK

Leading Protestant ministers like Benny Hinn, Kenneth Copeland, Joel Osteen, James Robinson have all been in touch with Rome exploring ways to cooperate and have a united platform.

Buyer Beware

What the Lord has done through this course of study can be summed up thus:

1. Reveal with clarity the Roman Catholic Church was founded as a union between the Roman Empire and larger wing of the Church between 311 and 381 AD. Roman Catholicism, by its very nature and focus is in systemic rebellion from Yeshua and Truth. Its doctrines and practices are based on humanistic twisting of the Holy Scriptures to fit into a pre-determined agenda which is to deny as many humans as possible, the Salvation Elohim offers freely by His Grace to Sinners.
2. We also saw Elohim preserved His elect remnant from that union and ever since has kept those truly called by His Name away from the clutches of Religion
3. The Lord has shown us Yeshua did not come to found Christian Religion and in any case, the tenets of Roman Catholicism are based on repudiation of the Gospel of the Kingdom and its entry point, the gospel of Salvation by Grace. Roman Catholicism is based on two main pillars: Salvation by works marked by numerous rituals as well as elevation and potential deification of Mary as 'Mother of God'.

4. The true gospel and Roman Catholicism as a Religion are opposite each other and run on parallel lines which cannot meet.

5. Saints of the true Church are called to respect Roman Catholicism as a major religion in the world just as they recognize Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and other religions.

6. Saints must respect the right of people who prefer to follow the Roman Catholic Religion. There is no basis to quarrel with or insult such people. They are exercising their right to reject the gospel of the Kingdom in its entirety and Salvation by Grace.

7. Christians who call themselves 'Protestants' are in error of an identity crises. That is why some 'Protestant' churches and ministries have allowed some of the features of Rome – its identity to be found in them. This includes emphasis on Attendance, Buildings and Cash. It also includes all Nicolaitane tendencies in which ministers 'own' the flock and treat them like 'conquered' people. This also includes tendencies to the Levitical priesthood evidenced in continuation of Clergy-Laity divide; wearing of distinct robes; engagement in rituals of religion and several of the leaven of Roman Catholicism. Such ministers and ministries have no basis to refuse the invitation of Rome to 'come home'!

Our True Identity has no religion in it nor any leaven of Babylon!

The point needs to be made repeatedly true saints of Elohim are not and cannot be 'Protestants'. Saints have a spiritual identity which shows them to be:

#.1. The new creation of Elohim the day they received Yeshua, Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (KJV) *17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

The New birth is a spontaneous experience, not the fruit of any religious ritual.

John 3:3-6 (KJV) *3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*

That is the day one accepted the Love of Elohim and one's name entered the Lamb's book of life

John 3:16-18 (KJV) *16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

#.2. Sons of Elohim.

We are simply sons of Elohim, not members of religious organizations.

John 1:12 (KJV) *12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

That is what Yeshua came to do: Bring many sons to glory!

Hebrews 2:10 (KJV) *10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*

1. Citizens and Ambassadors of His Kingdom mandated with authority of heaven – in the Person of the same Holy Spirit Who empowered Yeshua - to reconcile sinners back to the father and expand sphere of the Kingdom in the earth realm

Acts 1:8 (KJV) *8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

2. The Body of Yeshua in the earth realm

3. The Bride of Yeshua He Is preparing for the Day of Days: The Marriage Supper

4. The habitation of Elohim by Holy Spirit – lively stones that make up the whole

5. A royal priesthood and one indivisible Kingdom nation called out of the world system

1 Peter 2:9-12 (KJV) *9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; 10 Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. 11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; 12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

For this reason, saints, the true Church, function as a living, loving organism in the earth realm. Because this organism is spiritual, all saints are individually connected to the Head, Yeshua and to each other. Labels of human religions cannot define the true Church.

It must be reiterated our Identity is in and with Yeshua alone, not religious organizations and entities:

Colossians 1:12-23 (KJV) *12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: 13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: 14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: 15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. 19 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; 20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. 21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled 22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: 23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;*

Colossians 2:6-15 (KJV) *6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: 7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. 8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. 9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. 10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: 11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: 12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

For this reason, saints need to stand on their guard, be watchful and prayerful concerning religions of all types including Roman Catholicism and their numerous rituals that weary the flesh:

Colossians 2:8, 16-23 (KJV) *8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.*

16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: 17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. 18 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, 19 And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. 20 Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, 21 (Touch not; taste not; handle not; 22 Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? 23 Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body: not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

There is just no way the True Church can 'return' to Rome because it never was part of it. This Course has been used by the Lord to remind us of the Truth which liberates from the yoke of ignorance.

John 8:32, 36 (KJV) *32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

The onus is now on us to spend and be spent in the sacred Kingdom duty of making sure all people within our loops of influence are not ensnared by Mystery Babylon!

Revelation 17:1-6 (KJV) *1 And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: 2 With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. 3 So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. 4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: 5 And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon The Great, The Mother Of Harlots And Abominations Of The Earth. 6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.*

As was shared during this study, Mystery Babylon is the outcome of the union of Church and state to create a pathway to 'spirituality' which is not centered on the Incarnation, Death, and Resurrection of Yeshua as the ONLY way to the Father. It is about humanistic attempts to 'worship God' that are outside of His prescribed way. The result is sin and sinning become a prevalent lifestyle with no certainty of access to the world to come and eternity. It is not just about Roman Catholicism but also about all the Pentecostal, Evangelical, Charismatic, and Independent 'Church' groups and denominations which accept or foster variations from the simplicity of the gospel. In effect, Mystery Babylon has caused the gospel to be obfuscated, confused many and led many astray. The good thing is Yahweh has appointed to use those who know the truth to reach His remnant that are still within the belly of the system which looks so much like it is part of Yeshua, Jesus yet is essentially hostile to Him and His True Kingdom Church!

2 Timothy 2:1-2 (KJV) *1 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

Review Questions

1. Please share 3 things you learned from this chapter.
2. What shall you do with this course on Completing the Unfinished Reformation?

Chapter 78

Responsibility for Revelation Deliverance and Distribution

Christian Religion which is the official face of Christendom is a deadly diversion from the gospel of the Kingdom because all the rituals associated with it lead to a form of godliness but has no power to transform lives since it is not based on the liberating truth of the true gospel centered on the efficacious sacrifice of Yeshua which redeems those who believe.

2 Timothy 3:5 (KJV) *5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.*

Christendom has foisted on humanity the same spirit which Yeshua denounced in Judaism. It is the tendency for heaping up tomes of religious instructions. These instructions have no foundation in the Holy Scriptures. The instructions proceed from the mind of human religious leaders and institutions and are designed to control 'members'. Members who are programmed to 'go to church' as flocking into particular religiously designed or decorated buildings where they are supposed to 'encounter God' for a few hours of plastic piety only to go back to their sinning ways for rest of the week until the next day of 'Church service'. For Yeshua, the act of deceiving people with a false religiosity was deserving of only one reward: Woe!

Matthew 15:1-9 (KJV) *1 Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, 2 Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. 3 But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? 4 For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. 5 But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; 6 And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. 7 Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, 8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. 9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*

Matthew 23:15, 23-28 (KJV) *15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.*

23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. 24 Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. 25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. 26 Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. 28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

The result is out of nearly 3 billion or more people who are supposed to be Christians, less than 20 percent are living a life of vibrant personal relationship with the Lord. What this means is those in a personal relationship with Elohim as a function of an experiential personal encounter with Yeshua is probably less than 10 percent of the world population that exceeds 7-billion. If that 10 percent can be enabled to know the full truth which sets free and begin to function as the Royal Priesthood after the Order of Melchizedek, it is only a matter of time and the whole earth realm shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Yeshua. In such a scenario, there will be greater potential for those appointed to Salvation to hear the Truth; be convicted to repent and embrace the awesome love of Elohim and His Grace.

Knowing the correlation of preaching of the whole Truth in the word to the end time harvest of souls, Satan has fought the Reformation movement since 1517 with the spirit of self-centeredness. Armed with the Elijah complex, many of the remnant are more comfortable with preservation of their own Salvation and founding their personal ministry platforms and religious brands than the overall heartbeat of Elohim which is to bring in as much of the remnant who are preserved by Grace into His family and Kingdom (Romans 11:1-6).

Truth makes the difference

As said in various chapters, Christendom is based on lies, traditions of humans and manipulations of truth to the degree many 'go to church' simply to practice Religion, engaging in endless rituals. For those who claim to be in Yeshua but do not walk in the light of the full counsel of Elohim, they are not able to live the quality of life which glorifies Elohim. Because the light they have in the Word is rather weak and grossly imperfect. When this is compounded with an absence of zeal to know the whole counsel of Elohim, we can now see why saints are falling short of the glory of Elohim.

Hosea 4:6 (KJV) *6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.*

The tendency of the post-Reformation Church to stay at the Mount of truths discovered by Martin Luther and other reformers of old has delayed manifestation of the Omega Church in brilliant beauty, ready for the return of the Lord. Therefore, the picture painted in Ephesians 5:25-27 seems to be unattained till now.

The reality is the Mind of Elohim is vast and limitless. But, He has graciously codified the fundamentals of it for us in what is now the Holy Bible. When Holy Spirit is given right of way to illuminate the Word, Truth jumps off the pages of the Holy Bible that transmit Life and Light as well as wash the Church clean from all the spots of Sin, wrinkles of traditions of humans and other such things such as the spirit of systemic disunity which plague the Body. The Church is better off and prospers holistically when it walks in Love and Truth.

3 John 1-4 (KJV) *1 The elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth. 2 Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. 3 For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren*

came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. 4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

Delivered to be an instrument of delivering others from lies, errors and half-truths!

John 8:32, 36 (KJV) *32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Whenever Elohim delivers the remnant of any errors, misconceptions, and traditions, it is for enablement to become His appointed instruments for delivering their other brethren who are still bound in religiosity or errors and lies! Just as we were saved to be instruments of saving the lost, when we are illuminated with the Truth in our hearts and minds, the greater purpose of Elohim is to use us to reach our brothers and sisters with those same truths! The words Yeshua spoke to Peter are instructive:

Luke 22:31-32 (KJV) *31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: 32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*

‘What shall this man do?’ Don’t compare!

The Lord calls all who receive the Truth about the real church and who are called to locate and root out the leaven of Mystery Babylon to look beyond themselves. They are also to avoid the temptation of seeking to compare their assignments with that of other people. It is needful therefore to receive and run with the assignment of been instruments through which the whole Body of Yeshua can walk in the fullness of its appointed glory. If some receive the same truths and choose not to carry the burden of Yeshua for His Whole Body, no one should be swayed by the choices they made.

John 21:19-22 (KJV) *19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me. 20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? 21 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? 22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.*

Those who compare themselves with assignments of others are not wise as Paul told the Corinthian saints.

2 Corinthians 10:12 (KJV) *12 For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.*

At the end of the day, the state of our hearts will determine how much fruit the words sowed therein through this Course will bear.

Matthew 13:18-23 (KJV) *18 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. 19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. 20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; 21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while:*

for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. 22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. 23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

Negative Responses need to be avoided

Paul, the apostle exhorted the Galatian saints to avoid offense at him because of the Truth he shared with them.

Galatians 4:16-20 (KJV) *16 Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? 17 They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them. 18 But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you. 19 My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, 20 I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.*

May we urge all who truly receive the witness of Holy Spirit concerning the truths shared in this Course not to act selfishly and sit on the revelation while multitudes march down the broad way of religious exertions Mystery Babylon has spawned in the earth realm!

Positive responses

For those who have witness of Holy Spirit these revelations are vital instruments of perfecting them and the whole Church which was purchased by the precious Blood of Yeshua, the most profitable course of action will be these:

1. Receive and internalize them as persuaded. The truth needs to be made flesh and allowed to abide in us. This internalized appropriation of truth empowers them to walk in full truth.
2. Out of their bellies should flow Rivers of Living Water as Holy Spirit quickens the internalized words and makes them a lifestyle. This affects their worldview, making them radical, fiery instruments of Grace.
3. Intentional connection with others of like persuasion so collectively, we can use these same truths to empower the greatest number of sinners and victims of the lies of Christendom. Holy Spirit is raising an army of very empowered Ambassadors of the Kingdom who have a dual mandate:

Within their loops of Kingdom Influence in real life and on social media, they speak the Truth as a lifestyle for intentional discipling of those who are saved:

2 Timothy 2:1-2 (KJV) *1 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

Collectively, we strategize as led by Holy Spirit and pool human and material resources to ensure the Gospel of the Kingdom is preached and taught all over the world for a witness – using all available

means to create powerful synergy as our own collective contribution to preparing the earth realm for return of the King of Kings.

Matthew 24:14 (KJV) *14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*

Acts 1:8 (KJV) *8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

In the first Reformation of 1517 and subsequent years, the Lord raised solo warriors who towered in stature and their 'Big' names became synonymous with what the Lord was doing (Lutheranism/Lutheran Church in Germany: Calvinism in Geneva) and several cities and such like. The final reformation will not be about solo acts of great names! It will be about a company of the remnant who are empowered with corporate Grace, each in His Own order, yet aligned to walk in unity with singleness of purpose: To prepare the Church for the return of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords! Because they act as a united corporate Body of mutually edifying Body parts, the only Superstar ultimately seen is King Yeshua, the Head. That way, Satan cannot resist their advance, neither can powers of darkness side track them! The collective grace they carry is powerful!

Psalms 68:11 (KJV) *11 The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it.*

Saints, it is time both at the Local Assembly level as well as in networks for all of us to join hands in this fashion to be used by Holy Spirit to close out the final chapter of the human age. We all have various graces, spiritual gifts, skills, professional training which can be deployed to great effect when melded together and unleashed!

Isaiah 65:8 (KJV) *8 Thus saith the Lord, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all.*

Collectively, we face the future and eternity with confidence, knowing we played our part in doing all that is necessary to ensure the widest spectrum of those appointed to Salvation hears and know the Truth which sets free.

2 Corinthians 5:10 (KJV) *10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

Finally, please remember the truth Elohim unveiled to us about the Roman Catholic Church is not a license to speak down or hate on them. It is to arm us with the Truth which enables us to have a burden for them, pray and war in the spirit-realm and minister to them with love and compassion. Many are in the system not by choice but by birth. When the truth is shared with them in love, they are unable to refuse the Love of Elohim in Yeshua!

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Review Questions

1. Please share 3 major revelations in this chapter which grip your heart.
2. Are there some special abilities or skills you have which can be brought to the table to make the final Reformation a reality?

Chapter 79

Feed Back from Mentors and Students

As we close out this ground-breaking Course for the 2017 Master Class, it is needful to gain a feedback of how it has impacted the Mentors and Students who will take it further to the wider Body of Yeshua. Two scriptures provide the biblical context of why it is necessary to ensure that those Elohim will use to equip the remnant have grasped the essence of the Course.

Psalm 68:11 (KJV) *11 The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it.*

2 Timothy 2:1-2 (KJV) *1 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

Apostle Candace Star (Fort Pierce, FL), Director of Studies:

Course 139 is vast and is filled with needful revelation of Elohim's truth [past, present and future] that shakes and crumbles every imaginary and simulated foundation that resembles that of King Yeshua (1 Corinthians 3:11). To frame one thought from Course 139, it would come from Lesson 67: Recovering the Lost Axe Head of Kingdom Life. My words would be directed to the local assembly. For in the earth, there are numerous assemblies in our communities – on boulevards, streets, avenues, courts, roads and drives.

It is vital to Church life (its power, authority and maturity) to live, serve and bind together in the authenticity of the gospel without any mixture or alteration of the Word. When this occurs in our local assemblies [the recovery of the lost axe head], our communities are impacted with Kingdom culture.

Diligence to the Word, effective communication, holy living, pure agape, faithful works, unity with Elohim and of the Brethren, having a lifestyle of prayer, serving one another, releasing the Kingdom from within, impacting society and being Eternity conscious will cause a great awakening in territories [domestic and foreign]. We become instruments of change within our communities, an effective tool to demonstrate Kingdom Life: Romans 12:1; 1 Corinthians 4:20; Romans 14:17.

To the LOCAL ASSEMBLIES, let Elohim arise and His enemies be scattered! Recover the Lost Axe Head.

Minister Stephanie Foster (Chicago, IL), Registrar:

Saints level of effectiveness in teaching the gospel to all nations is directly correlated to their understanding of its inception and history. This course is a must, as it covers it all!

Prophet Kandis Carney (Houston, TX), Principal Officer/Mentor:

Wake up and discern the times! This is a season unlike what the world has seen before. The Lord is giving His church specific instructions and taking lots of time to perfect us so that we can be ready for

His return. The BEST things we can do right now are to posture ourselves in worship constantly, be consecrated unto Him and learn to hear His voice by spending time with Him and studying His Word. STEER CLEAR OF DISTRACTIONS! He is thoroughly processing His saints so instead of pushing these lessons aside and being slack in application, we must be diligent to sow this Word into our hearts, meditate on it and pray it through. Stay in His vein and don't be surprised how He moves in these coming days. Take heed!"

Apostle Brenda Jamison (Pennsylvania), Principal Officer/Mentor:

Throughout this course and with the revelation released from the Father we can certify that the falsification of the Truth, which Yeshua, Jesus came to fulfill and bring us into the understanding and restoration of has been compromised, misrepresented and altered by the alliance of Satan, the Roman Catholic Church and the State. It is the alliance of the spirit of distortion working strongly to foster that which Yeshua, Jesus did not come to establish and that is "Religion".

Yeshua, Jesus came to restore that which Adam and Eve lost to Satan through his sly craftiness.

Deception is a mask that Satan used and continues to use to impede the movement forward to be reformed by the truth of Elohim's Word and the coming of His Kingdom on earth; however, the Father has caused deception through the vehicle of Religion to be identify that we would repent, reject, renounce and root out no longer walk after religion, the form of godliness nor its deceptive rituals, dogmas or doctrinal ways that are to edify the flesh by works thereof. The Word let us know he who hungers and thirst after righteousness, they shall be filled (Matthew 5:6); as a result, we will not finish in Religion, but rather be delivered to complete the reformation movement by leading of Holy Spirit in our lives. Just as I recognized religion is not what Yeshua, Jesus called me to, but rather relationship with him. Also, I recognized religion is not restoration of my rightful position with the Father through and by Yeshua, Jesus but rather a position away from the Father. In closing, several years ago I spoke at a mega Baptist congregation and the message was "I thirst, will you?" In that message, the Father brought of three things and relationship was one of the three. This course has not only opened our eyes, but positions us to assist in the completion of the reformation bringing many into truth of Yeshua's Kingdom and His righteous that we may be a ready bride for the return of King Yeshua at the set time.

Galatians 5:6-9 (KJV) *6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. 7 Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? 8 This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. 9 A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.*

Matthew 5:17-18, 20 (KJV) *17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18 For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. 20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

Apostle Denise Williams (Greensboro, NC), Mentor:

Grace and Peace!!!! I can say that for me, from the very beginning with Lesson #1, The Introduction and Synopsis, even unto Lesson # 76, The Omega Church And Sin, it has been packed with wisdom and

knowledge. The revelatory information contained in this course has the propensity to transform minds and reshape perspectives as it identifies, reveals, uproots, and helps provide a clean and clear canvas of the events critical to understanding not only what happened in the history of Christianity, but also world history as it relates to the issues, and its impact on Christianity both then and now. Our people are destroyed for (because of) lack of knowledge. Enabled by right information and truth, we can earnestly go forward in our pursuit to complete the "Reformation Movement" that Martin Luther began, and be true vessels of restoration of the kingdom on Earth intended by Yahweh, as the Omega Church emerges.

As for what I have received from this course that I would share with the church, an individual, the corporate Body, a local assembly or networks that is going to be of the End Time Church: In my spirit I am first of all, pressed to share the truth about the erroneous foundations that we the church have operated from and continue to do so. I know that the intention of Satan was to disable the church and it may appear that he has done just that. However, the TRUTH is that he has not won, and he will not win! We are the people of Elohim, who are called by His name and once we have repented of our disobedience, wickedness, and error; once we have bowed down before our Holy King and sought Him in humility and sincerity, He will hear us and heal our land.

Secondly, I would share the awesome news that we are all important to Yahweh and that He has given unto all of us the ability to become His sons and to be a part of what He is doing in this end time season. There are no laity sects or groups that are considered less who have little or no power to accomplish our kingdom mandate; to "GO YE!" We are all "Priests after the Order of Melchizedek."

Also, I would emphatically share the significance and absolute necessity of the implementation of the Five Fold Leadership Model outlined in Ephesians 4, and how it is truly the way to the one mind, one spirit, and one body kingdom family as well as the Master Plan for the effective and perpetual kingdom strategy to Teach, Train, Equip, Activate, and Release. So that all of the brethren, all of the remnant family of Elohim will align, "12. For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." (Ephesians 4:12-13)

Finally, my heart plea would be: People, seek the Lord while He can be found...time out for all of the excuses, foolishness, and issues that have caused us to sway.

"THE KING IS COMING!" Make sure that your lamps are full with oil!!"

I am strongly convicted to these aforementioned objectives, and I am dedicated to use every opportunity given me in my time remaining here on planet Earth, to share through teaching, preaching, engaging; by my speech, my walk, and my actions; as an Ambassador of Elohim and His kingdom... to the best of my ability with the help of Yeshua Ha Mashiach through Rauch Ha Chodesh, I will accomplish it.

Minister Ann Watson (Maryland) Mentor:

The thing that I received from this course is that as a remnant we have the responsibility to convey to the Omega Church, the Body of Christ, is that we have the responsibility to tell everyone we know that

we have lost our way, to repent and turn back to the Father, and be ever so focus on Yeshua Jesus and the warning He gave in this course, to not compromise your faith for anything, or anyone. Don't let anyone or thing have so much power over you that you lose your crown. ABIDE, GET CLOSE, AND SAY CONNECTED TO THE VINE. THIS WAS A WARNING. THE FULL INSTRUCTIONS ARE YET TO BE REVEALED. AMEN.

Minister LaToshia Banks (Kilgore, TX), Mentor:

Church - We are to be living stones proclaiming the Word of the Father.

Individuals- We are sent with a purpose and everyone has value. Jesus came and died for us so that we may have everlasting life.

Corporate Body- We are to be unified not fighting against one another because we all are to have the heart of the Father. No one is greater than the other and we are to be a living organism bringing souls into the Kingdom.

A local assembly or networks that is going to be of the End Time Church- the Father is coming back for a church without spot or wrinkle. Don't be tossed to and fro by every wind and doctrine. Also, we have the Word to measure our lives by and it is food to or spiritual man. Don't be malnourished, lacking nutrition of the Word!

Minister Taylor McCarty (Kilgore, TX), Mentor:

What I would share with those that are going to be of the end time Church is this: the key to Holiness is love of Elohim and fellow humans. That when we properly understand the constitution of the Kingdom as the guideline of life, we as saints do not need anything external to prompt us to live right. That having the seed of Elohim in us gives us the Grace we need to please the Father at all times. When we love Elohim with our whole heart we will not offend our fellow humans. Both saved and unsaved. In doing this Righteousness and Holiness will become a normal lifestyle of saints. Teach that sinning is a choice willfully made by humans to neglect the constitution of the Kingdom.

Evangelist Janis Crew (Ohio), Student-Mentor:

- 1) I believe the one thing to take away from this class is: The reformation is not finished until His Bride is perfect without spot or blemish.
- 2) Studying the mistakes in the reformation make it more plausible not to repeat the same mistakes and to understand HOW we got to the sad shape we are in as the body of Christ.
- 3) The Truths! Of the Alpha and Omega Church are fully clarified in this course. Thank you, Apostle George and Pastor Grace and all the supporting persons for this revelation and teaching!!

Minister Brandon McCarty (Kilgore, Texas), Mentor:

One thing that I would say to the church, an individual, the corporate Body, a local assembly or networks that is going to be of the End Time Church is that we must embrace the fact that our body is the mobile

Holy Temple of Holy Spirit! We do not need to get caught up in worldly affairs! Our life is not our own, for we were bought with a price (the blood of Yeshua)! The Word tells us to "occupy til I come". We must remember that the only way we can do this effectively is to give up our will for the will of the Father and allow Holy Spirit to dwell in us. When Holy Spirit is housed in our temple, wherever we go and whatever we do, Holy Spirit can have free course to do or say whatever is needed to bring deliverance and reconciliation to the lost!

Minister Brittney Rene McCarty (Kilgore, TX), Mentor:

I would charge the End Times Church to allow the Word of Elohim to process you, so when you minister to others there's no leaven of Babylon or the Levitical priesthood that taints the truth. The grace from Elohim that He allows us to operate in for His purpose is free. We just have to allow Elohim by Holy Spirit to come in and process us so we can truly be converted, consecrated, and committed to the call to commune with our Father. Embracing that understanding connects us to Him. This is when His will for our lives becomes our ultimate focus. Self has no choice but to get out of the way. We have to also live by the glorious truths because these help us to understand our identity in Yeshua. This course truly explained the reformation in the beginning, but also showed us how we need to reform our hearts to Elohim, our first love and shed the things that put a wedge between our relationships with Him.

Prophet Rolanda Byrd (Fort Pierce, FL), Mentor:

If I were to sum up the lessons with a few words it would be: Obedience, lovers of truth, and mortifying the flesh (with its ideals and comprehension of what/who the church is and how it is to be built) is essential basis for the Remnant to be catalyst for Reformation.

Apostle Sharon Thomas (Pottstown, PA), Mentor:

Many things have become apparent after partaking of this course. After 500 years the compromise and cold love mottling the church world at around 60 AD continues. There always has been a remnant and through intentional training, the emergence of the Omega church represents a remnant within a remnant. . . Those who live the truth and make disciples.

The reformation declared as Protestant gives a misleading and false label to the Bride of Christ, the true reformers indeed. Martin Luther's Reformation was the shock and awe of his day- rocking the false theology behind indulgences and purgatory.

Modern reformers must place the emphasis on renewal of the mind by the washing of the water of the word. The necessary challenge of excising the soul from the traumas of schisms, denominationalism, spirits of religion and competition must be boldly presented to new believers and those seasoned but have yet to prove salt and light.

It will take a unified body operating in love to prepare the saints to be blameless before Yeshua at the judgement seat. The main objective in the reformation is to prepare the saints to be blameless before Yeshua at the judgement seat. Lord open the spiritual eyes and ears of those who may feel they have attained acceptance into the kingdom by works. Many of these must actually come to the knowledge of

truth. The reformation training, we have received is a restored axe head. Help each to take all restraints of delay away, as time is short.

Teacher Reginald Phillips (Kilgore, TX), Mentor:

The thing that I would say is focus. Our assignments are critical to the effectiveness of the omega church's call. Also realize who we are and the function we provide to the lost and those that seek truth about Yahweh Elohim.

Minister Karen Phillips (Kilgore, TX), Mentor:

One thing that impacted me in this course is how urgent it is for the body of Yeshua to consistently seek the heart of the Father because of the times we live in. In seeking His heart, the body of Yeshua will have a greater burden for those who are lost all over the world.

Minister La Tamera Fry (Kilgore, TX), Mentor:

1) Lesson 66 & 67- The Father has put His value in us through Yeshua. As Sons and Kingdom Ambassadors we are to carry and add value wherever we are. Whether it be the Word, gifting, our walk, or Love, that place should be better through the grace of Yeshua that flows from us.

2) Lesson 10- The name of Yeshua, when spoken in pure faith, gives full access to Yahweh. Many, especially the church, has been desensitized to the name of Yeshua because of its use in vanity. I had to repent for the same, and understand the power that the name of Yeshua holds.

3) To speak plainly out of the things that I have received, that I would want others to know it would be: We as the end times church are more than just attendance, buildings, and cash. The Kingdom isn't about those things at all, but about being available for the Father to use to bring souls back to Him. Yeshua died so that undeserving people such as ourselves could live.

We are to pray and stand in the gap for each other and those who are yet lost. The gifts Yeshua has invested in us are not for our own glory, but for the glory of Elohim, Who uses them as He pleases. We are not to be dormant, but to use all Elohim has invested into us to stand and live in such a way that leads souls back unto Him. We are to follow the Word of Yahweh in its entirety and allow it to cut away pride, sin, and acts of the flesh from us so that we can live holy and consecrated lives unto Yahweh, with the full understanding that Yeshua is coming.

Minister Dionne Maxwell (Indiana), Mentor: What I take away from this course is a self-assessment, apply it to my life and release/share with others with urgency/911 emergency!

What I will say to individual saints who are to be the Omega and New Testament church have not discovered gifts/callings; if not being through the Teach; Train; Equip; Activate and Release process according to Acts 1:8, Matt. 28:18-20, Eph. 4:11-16 and the apostle's doctrine, they are living beneath their privileges and are spiritually malnourished. You need to talk to your leader about this ASAP, then tell me what the response was. If negative, I would be willing to teach them.

I would say to the rest the same thing: this is time for reformation of the church. It's time to come out of Babylonian, Nimrodic, and Nicolaitans lifestyles/tendencies. It is time to repent and return to Yeshua. To obey the Word of Elohim to be the church he called her to be: a living organism, not an organization. All believers have gifts/callings they should be functioning in, not just leaders!

Minister Taria Dean (Pennsylvania), Mentor:

This lesson is certainly a 'spiritual awakening' for the true Church of Yeshua Jesus who are called to represent Him in the earth realm. This course is a profound unfolding truth which liberates us from erroneous teaching concerning the Church and its foundation and affiliation with the roots of Roman Catholicism. This truth is revelation heart knowledge that Yeshua Jesus did not come to the earth to establish a "religious" system or entity (a temporal world kingdom), but He came to raise up (from spiritual death) a Living Organism (a spiritual eternal Kingdom) representing His Body as a royal priesthood as ordained by Elohim.

Shelby Anderson-Johnson (Texas), Student:

What I have receive from this course is a deeper understanding. It helped me to get out of my religious way I didn't even know I had. It's helping me with correction to live a life pleasing to Elohim. It humbles me and helps me to be the bride awaiting Elohim. Its meat also in a loving way.

Riquito Adelino Pedro (Mozambique, Africa), Student:

A coisa mais importante que recebi através deste curso é sobre o amor incondicional que o nosso Pai celestial tem para comigo.

The most important thing I've received through this course is about the love that our heavenly father has for me.

Jaron Shepherd (Tyler, TX), Student:

One thing I've learned in this courses about the end time church I would speak on is to get back to the pure word of God and his plan for his people! Throughout 2017 Masterclass it really puts in contrast how far the church has fallen away from the true purpose of God. It is important now to dig into Gods word and be steadfast because Satan is ramping it up and even the elect will be deceived in the end times. So, it is critical and highly important to stay focused on him!

Kendra Shepherd (Tyler, TX), Student:

I would say this has opened my eyes to the deeper meaning of what the Kingdom is and what we're called to do here in the Earth realm. It has revealed the truth by way of Holy Spirit and not man's theology. I'm grateful for all that it's exposing in these End Times and glad that the Father is pouring out His Grace upon His people. It's preparing us for the time we live in and the things we'll encounter. The Father has definitely not left us ignorant to Satan or his devices. I'm thankful for all that I'm learning.

Minister Cookie James Bias (Kilgore, TX), Student:

What I have received from this course so far is that it has really stretched me and it has made me realize even more just how important and serious ministry really is. I have also found it to be very knowledgeable, fulfilling and encouraging, it is also very challenging for me because of my work schedule but I'm still going forth and even though I'm behind I thank Elohim for His Grace!

Mario Sandoval (Texas), Student:

One thing I would take away from this course is the importance of diligently studying the word and putting 2 Timothy 2:15 into effect. There is so much to know about the word and things in history that had major impacts that I had no clue about, I was blinded without knowing! I thank the Lord for the 2017 Master Class especially concerning revelation of the Roman Catholic Church and all in general because it trained and equipped me for a much better understanding on what it means to truly seek the kingdom first! One thing I would say to the church today is to never get to a point to where you have "made it", feeling comfortably trapped in denominationalism. Diligently seek the kingdom first to become priest after the order of Melchizedek to function and occupy properly until the return of Yeshua!

Lesley Sanders (Orlando, FL), Student:

We are the generation which will recapture the essence of Sonship. Sons of Elohim will possess the Kingdom to come, ruling and reigning with Yeshua!

Glenn Wyrick (Texas), Student:

Maturity, ground breaking truth, walking into humility, new heart desires and destiny.

Andrea Gillis (Pennsylvania), Student:

What I would say to an individual that I received from this course is convicting (of the heart), empowering (to walk in identity) preparing (for the end times) and transforming (renewed mind).

Isela Guerrero (Texas), Student:

As a new student to Masters Class, Holy Spirit has already been able to minister to me in various ways. But the main thing in which I have received from Masters Class so far is that it allows flesh to die and to gain full understanding of who you are in His will and to whom you belong. This course is like a blindfold being removed from ourselves and to view us, others, as vessels in the manifestation of His purpose.

Brant Cooper (Texas), Student:

Here are some of the things that I have received from Master Class: one that the original church was to be an organism, not an organization, ever growing by Holy Spirit empowering through the Word. Secondly, I now have begun to understand that forgiveness is so important. To be forgiven by Elohim and to forgive those who hurt me in the past. I recognize that those painful things, words, or actions allow me to have sympathy for others. It creates a willingness to help, to serve, and to love people and their circumstances that I've already been through. Knowing that I didn't do anything of myself, but Yeshua Jesus gave himself for me!

Jessica Shepherd (Kilgore, TX), Student:

Course 139 completing the unfinished reformation has been a course I have thoroughly enjoyed. One thing I would take away and would say to the body is to make sure that we as a remnant people make sure we are doing our due diligence to be of service to Elohim's people and to the lost in this last hour. Everything we have been learning is to make sure we are effective ministers functioning in Elohim's organism with each other as brothers and sisters. As we are living in the last days we want to make sure we do our part in Elohim's holy reformation.

Minister Jacqueline McCarty (Kilgore, TX), Student:

The church in the end times will be one without spots and blemishes. The people of Yeshua will know their purpose in the earth realm; taking their rightful places as Saints of Elohim. The end time church will also be those who realize that he came so that we all will be reconciled back to him.

Elijah Jawon Banks (Texas), Student:

The one thing that I learned from this course that I would share with brethren, is that the church is not a dry programmed organization that gather up together to hear one man hoop and holler. Everyone who has accepted the call of Elohim have a valuable Kingdom assignment and are expected to be His hands and feet on earth in order to reach out to those who are lost. The only way to complete this assignment is through obedience to the Father which is fueled by love.

Lisa Gray (Kilgore, TX), Student:

The whole course of 139 was very powerful but the word that stands out to me is consecration. It is important for them that are living in the last days need to realize that the only place safe will be if they are consecrated and totally immersed as well as hidden in Elohim. And by doing that they will not fall for the anti-Christ.

Minister Rebecca English (Columbia, SC), Student:

The Master Class was God sent. I prayed a prayer and asked Yeshua for more spiritually than just "church as usual." I wanted to experience a different and a fresh move of God. When I started taking the Master's Class I knew Yeshua had answered my prayer. The Master's Class teaches biblical content where some pastors and leaders dare not to teach or tread. The Master's Class challenges me on a daily basis to reevaluate my spiritual relationship with Yeshua and my sisters and brothers in Him. The Master's Class holds me accountable to studying the Word of God, praying without ceasing and living a holy life on a daily basis. Finally, the Master's Class affords me the opportunity to meet other pastors and leaders with the same vision and passion for building the kingdom in the earth realm during these last days.

Pastor Janda Shepherd (Kilgore, TX), Student:

Whether by the written word of Elohim or by His spoken word, He never leaves us ignorant of the plan of the enemy for the end times church. Let us lend our ears and hearts to hear what Elohim is saying to

the church. Let us walk in obedience and remain diligent to what He has already spoken. Let us all be willing vessels for the father's use as we continue to spread the "Good News".

Dionne Chinyanga (Zimbabwe), Student:

These are some of my observations on Course 139:

- Enlightenment through fresh and uniquely delivered revelations.
 - It is clear to me from the lessons studied so far that the saints must take seriously the study of the Holy Scriptures under unction of Holy Spirit. There is so much error and half-truths in the church that have been left unchallenged or un-corrected for centuries; perhaps because no one or not enough people have taken time to actually put the truth out there or because there is actually no one noticing the errors because of ignorance. In this season, I have most valued the truths I have received here that expose or point error, challenge and replace it with Biblical truth empowering and equipping saints to take a stand for truth and teach same as Father makes opportunities to do so wherever He has placed each saint.
 - The lessons have set the Holy Scriptures as the standard for all truth and have proved beyond doubt the dependability and relevance of scriptures for all generations and these are they that point to Yahshua the ultimate Son and our Savior and spell out clearly what is to come and what is expected of the body of Yahshua we await His return.
 - The truth serves to realign all saints to walk in divine purpose and will of Yahweh.

Cleopatra Thindwa Kwenda (Zimbabwe), Student: This is what I took away from the series of the Lessons I have learnt so far in Master Class:

(1) Elohim has so much for humans and the body of Christ and He does not want His people/ the body of Christ to walk in error. That is why He has raised people like Apostle George and Pastor Grace to help with His Reformation, Restoration and Revival. He wants things done right.

(2) I have also learnt the Kingdom of Elohim is not about titles, Buildings and Ministries with ambitious desires. It's all about souls, it's about people knowing their Creator, serving Him and walking in their purposes. No Minister should suppress the people they lead but rather empower them to discover their gifts and callings so that they walk into their destinies.

I have also learnt that as a Minister, Character is very crucial and also ignorance is not an excuse. As a Minister one need to have a right foundation, one need to get rid of religion and Babylonian practices, one needs to preach the Gospel of Truth without fear. One should be able to recognise error and correct it.

Brenda Rossum Westmoreland (Kilgore, TX), Student:

My main take away is the concept of Clinging: I feel clinging to Yeshua is very important to our walk. We are called to abide in Yeshua. Loving him trusting him allowing Our Lives to cling to him. In him we live outside of him we are nothing but with him we can do all things. When we go through things if we just hold on to him he will bring us through.

Pastor Rodney Davis (Florida), Student:

The Master Class studies have opened my spiritual eyes to understand Yeshua in a more intimate way. It has given me greater depth of understanding in the Word of God. The lessons have provided me a new outlook on who I am, who's I am and what is required of me in ministering the Word of God to the people of God. The studies have reaffirmed my love for Elohim and continues to give me a deeper desire to serve Him. The selfish ways and tendencies that I had are no more! Listening to Daybreak as a part of the studies has provided truth, life and liberty in the Word of God in me. The Holy Spirit is leading and guiding me in all truth. The friendship and fellowship in the Word and with my new family has given me strength, love, and a sense of empowerment. The teachings have been given in love allowing me to come more knowledgeable about Elohim and Yeshua, Jesus, providing me strength giving me more faith in the Word of Elohim. I am even more equipped and more excited to be a part of the remnant willing to say and do the Will of Elohim!

Pastor Gay Williams (Cocoa, FL), Student:

The Master Class has been empowering, enlightening, understandable and life changing!!! Unlike any course work of study that I have undertaken this has been the most impactful! I could not have received this type of encounter with myself as related to where I was in God, what I thought I understood, where I need to be and how I accomplish the journey. I have never been exposed to the manner of teaching nor the quality and quantity of free materials, that helps enhance and further your knowledge in the Kingdom of Elohim.

The class requirement of being transparent, not for the sake of class, but for the sake of yourself, as a means to complete the course with success is mind-blowing! This requirement and the freedom that comes with being transparent as we discover through the lessons allows Holy Spirit to minister at the point of your needs, without guilt and shame which allows repentance for wrongs that are uncovered as you study ☐☐.

This journey has reaffirmed some of what I was doing, providing the why Holy Spirit was leading me to do it the way it was being done. Along with affirmation came redirection, rebuke and repentance. The Master Class provided the WORD along with explanation and application of the same. It has changed my heart and my mind!

The Master Class provides important historical information concerning all areas (spiritual, social, political and economic) that were impactful and had bearing on the Kingdom; what it was meant to be, what has been the stumbling blocks of the enemy to keep it from being realized to day in our lives and what the future holds for us as the Omega Church, remnant.

Finally, the Master Class experience is replete with jewels, nuggets and treasures that has helped me and would help others to grow up in Elohim obtaining maturity in Christ Jesus. It equips you to go out to reach others inside and outside of your sphere of influence, teaching the truth of the gospel, obtaining an intimacy with Elohim like never before.

Review Questions

1. In 1 word, how would you describe these insights from Mentors and Students?

Chapter 80

Feedback from Mentors and Students Part 2

We will close out the teaching and training by receiving the inputs of some mentors and students of the 2017 Master Class on Course 139 Completing the Unfinished Reformation. Even as a 12- year old child, Yeshua engaged the learned men of Judaism with questions through which the depth of their understanding of Elohim was assessed:

Luke 2:46 (KJV) *46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.*

One of the ways Yeshua ensured proper understanding and learning of Kingdom principles He taught truly took place was by asking questions which generated feedback. We recall the famous exchange at Caesarea Philippi:

Matthew 16:13 (KJV) *13 When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?*

By asking Principal Officers, Mentors and Students in the 2017 Master Class to share their thoughts on Course 139 Completing the Unfinished Reformation and how it impacted them, we gain a number of important strides:

Feedback is provided which when analyzed will reveal if the mark was hit or missed in terms of transmission of truth

1. Gain insight into some important details which registered in the hearts of those who studied the course
2. We are enabled to gain better understanding of what Holy Spirit is doing so far in the hearts and minds of those in the class
3. We can track how Elohim is equipping the vessels He has earmarked for the final reformation.
4. We will be able to assess those who need extra help so additional support can be marshalled towards them.

Let us now receive the final set of feedback from the Mentors and Students:

Apostle Dr. Katherine Jones (San Diego, California) – Principal Officer/Mentor:

Course 139 Completing the Unfinished Reformation is a valuable aid for all Saints for imparting to others historical truths relative to the history and plight of the church. The execution of the course takes you back through history providing the when, how, and why the church drifted away from Elohim’s intended design. The course detailed discussion of the vessel Elohim used, Martin Luther, to spark a reformation to begin the restoration of the church back to what Elohim ordained it to be, was both enlightening and

instructive. The truths taught when correctly understood help saints embrace their position as part of the remnant who are fully persuaded to take their position in completing the Reformation.

Pastor Judith Butler “Joyful Judy” (Illinois, USA) – Mentor:

What I have received from the lessons in Course 139 has been uplifting, refreshing, and rewarding. My view of Christian religion and church membership is not the same. It has been challenging stepping into the role of mentor. But, it has been a blessing learning from the teaching as well as learning from the student. What I've learned from the lessons has opened opportunities to witness and share the love of Yeshua. As well a hunger and thirst for more godly wisdom and knowledge.

Minister Tim Young (Texas, USA) – Mentor:

Course 139 is an in-depth teaching that opens the eyes and heart of an individual, if they are willing to receive truth, to know history of Yeshua's church and walk in the order of Melchizedek. Crucifying flesh to hear from Holy Spirit and not rely on a man standing behind a pulpit to dictate our walk in Christ. Yeshua is the way, the truth, and the life. No man can get to the Father except through Him. Now we take these truths to whomever Yeshua sends us to or He leads to us. Thank You Ap. George for allowing Holy Spirit to reveal these truths through you and teaching us.

Evangelist Ekwunife Augustina (Padova, Italy) – Mentor:

Course 139 = what I can say on this topic...

To individual:

The new birth is manifested in responsible Sons of Elohim who by the power of the Holy Spirit working in their spirit-man, are there-in seated in heavenly places and are not afraid of principalities and powers of darkness. When Saints endure the process NOW, then they will rule and reign with Yeshua at his return. More reason all leaders should endeavor to ensure that those committed to their care/trust make it to the MANIFEST KINGDOM.

To corporate body:

God is raising an army, 'the remnants' in all parts of the earth realm. He is right now pouring out his Holy Spirit on many people- people are receiving fresh anointing/revelations. These are the ones that will mentor, support and produce more leaders. Their hearts are being transformed, minds renewed, and attitudes stabilized. These saints struggle no more with sin. They live by grace! They THINK, SAY and DO what they see their Father, Elohim doing. -As Jesus said; '...I and my Father are one! '

To the local assembly.

'SONS' are not church goers rather members of Yeshua. They're in various congregations and in the market place too, they are there for empowerment, for building the Saints and are there also to ensure stewardship.

To do this, they need grace which is supplied to them by the Holy Spirit in their spirit-man. It shouldn't be a struggle rather we should flow in the anointing and also in the blessings that will follow. More reason to commit ourselves as a body of Christ in seeking first the kingdom and His righteousness!

Deacon Eddie Gatson (Detroit, MI), Mentor:

I have received that Truth sets people free from the bondage of ignorance and nothing matters more than to examine the nature and power of Foundation on which we stand as saints enabling us to discern truth vs error. What I would say to the Church, an individual, the corporate body, a local assembly or network that we that are saved are guaranteed liberty when our lives are built on truth. Furthermore, if we accept Salvation as being personal into Yeshua, Jesus and the hidden truths are revealed to us, we should not only Preach the gospel of Salvation by Grace, but also discover and embrace the Gospel of the Kingdom and wade our way out of the muck and mire of Christian Religion and Denominationalism. Again, Salvation is personal, into Yeshua, Jesus and His Kingdom, not organizational into a Religious group.

Lakaedria Clayton (Texas, USA) – Student

This course has been very powerful and has thought me many things I really didn't know. It has also opened my eyes and heart to know what a true relationship with Elohim is.

Pastor Reyes Torres, Jr. (New York, USA) – Student:

Course 139 has been quite a journey. The classes have been enlightening and affirming in some cases. Yet at the same time they have challenged me in some other areas. I am grateful for the opportunity to have enrolled in the 2017 Master Class and look forward to the classes that are to come. Thank you all for your dedication and hard work.

Leandra Gilbert (Texas, USA) – Student:

Waters are bursting forth in the wilderness, streams are being made in the desert. It is time for the Body of Christ to strengthen the feeble hands and steady the knees that give way. Through Course 139 I see the Father purifying each individual heart on an intimate level, even as He is bringing us together as a whole in unity to fulfill His Divine will in this earth realm. The revelations concerning Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation has done its role in giving us strategic insight to birth forth the movement of the Final Reformation which is to bring us back to the whole truth. For the Bride, there shall be no DNA of Rome lingering around.

Therefore, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily besets us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

Evangelist Rasheeda Armour (Maryland, USA) – Student:

In describing a few aspects that I have received from Course 139, I would say that it has been revealed as a work truly in need of being completed. I see this course as an unfolding of the original plan of Yeshua to redeem His people from what He knew would eventually become hidden areas of bondage by

leaders who served the god of their bellies. These leaders operate under vain deceit, cunning craftiness, and philosophies of men and strive on bamboozling the innocent, while rejecting Truth seekers from entering into Christ's Fullness.

What I would say to the Church is, Rev.2:7 – Receive the “ear to hear what The Spirit is saying”

The people don't belong to you! Teach, Train, Equip, Activate and Release them to be about the Father's business.

What I would say to the individuals is, Philippians 2:12 – “Wherefore, my Beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.”

What I would say to the corporate Body, a local assembly or networks that is going to be of the End Time Church is, Hebrew 12:14 “Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord! AND to take a conscious decision to (2 Timothy 2:1) lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us now run with patience the race that is set before us.”

In The Love of Christ Yeshua

Cynthia Sibongile Mupotsa (Zimbabwe, Africa) – Student:

1. Here are some of the things I received from course 139: Yeshua (Jesus) did not come to earth to establish a religion, to compete for space and membership, otherwise he would have been no better than other founders of other religions. Instead Yeshua came to cancel the disobedience of Adam by His own obedience and by so doing He paid the price in full to reconcile lost humanity to the Father.
2. Our concern as saints is to discover our spiritual gifts and function by them for building one indivisible Church of Yeshua where we are all members.
3. Yeshua (Jesus) came to inaugurate the Royal Priesthood in the order of Melchizedek where all saints are called to be priests. By so doing, He phased out the old Aaronic /Levitical priesthood. However, we still find some saints still operating in these abolished priesthood; and you find the priests wearing the priestly robes performing rituals where the saints passively seat in the pews which is a very big error.

Folayan “FJ” Morehead (Georgia, USA) – Student:

The 2017 Master Class (particularly Course 139) has impacted my life in a wonderful way. I am now spending more time in the Word of God and exploring many foundational aspects that I once disregarded and brushed off as just “history.” I am grateful to have learned so much from a Kingdom perspective. I believe that since beginning Master Class that my relationship with Elohim has gotten deeper, more intimate, and overall better. I am learning to break away from the worldly and religious outlook of life and see it more now from a Kingdom point of view and mainly from the eyes of Yeshua. I am also stomping out all fears to do mission and ministry work as a result. To learn to preach and teach with boldness regardless of backlash is the way of an overcomer and Master Class thus far has helped me to reach that point. I know that there is still far to go and so much more to learn. I am excited to look

back on my growth and advancement, but for now will spend time enjoying the ride and blessing my Lord for the new Kingdom family and connections!

Pastor Norbert Ceejay Ekeogu (London, UK) – Student:

One of things I found extremely profound about Course 139 of the Master Class is that the Lord used the course to resolve the identity crises that had plagued the Body of Yahshua over the years. Now the true child of Elohim can be clear about the fact that he/she is not a 'Protestant' as there is nothing he /she needs to protest about the Religion of Rome. Lack of this knowledge is a foundational error of the Protestant Reformation which the Lord has used this awesome Course 139 to correct because Ps 11:3 says, 'If the foundation be destroyed what can the righteous do? 'Now that the axe is laid at the root of the matter, the remnants can press in to be all the Father ordained them to be in the earth realm - sons of Elohim, heirs and ambassadors of the Kingdom and royal priests after the order of Melchizedek manifesting His power, purpose, presence, character and glory without traces of the leaven of Babylon! This is an awesome revelation and what every true child of Elohim needs at this critical moment. I thank Father Yahweh for this and am grateful for the Vessels of honour He used to this available to His Remnant Church.

Uzoamaka Adiele, MD (Nigeria, West Africa) – Student:

It's been an amazing course. Completing the unfinished reformation. I've been so enlightened about Babylon / Roman Catholicism and its attendant continued influence on the modern day church, the effects of ABC Christianity, Religion versus Relationship with Elohim and finally, the lesson that blew my mind.....the truth that Yeshua did not come to establish a religion, but restore a relationship gone awry. I can confidently say that Yeshua is not a Christian and to do so would be to box Him into a religious sect. Yeshua is God and cannot be confined to any religion, He came to establish His Kingdom and His citizens (who believe in Him and have ceded control of their lives to Him cut across every race and religious denomination. Thank you.

Valerie Caraotta (Georgia, USA) – Student:

This course had much to say about the present church, Elohim's original plan for the church, and how we as Saints and Ministers need to posture ourselves as the remnant.

I will focus my feedback on what impacted me the most which is responsible, holy living. I am thankful for this course because it did not blow by casually the importance of right living and sin. Many ministry circles today assume that sin is dealt with at the root which is the major misconception today. The fact is ministers and church leaders have dulled their sensitivity to the severity of sin and therefore are not walking in the fullness of Elohim's plan.

This course put a spotlight on my heart and Holy Spirit convicted me of things I long buried. By dealing with them I have felt more freedom and clarity along with have been more sensitized going forward to my heart issues. This is no small matter in the body of Christ!!! The enemy has us believing we are fine and looking at helping others while we carry baggage that needs to be dealt with. It touched my heart in some lessons where I realized that sin breaks the heart of God. "Be holy for I am holy" is not something

to brush over. This is a clarion call to examine ourselves FIRST before we proceed in reaching out to others.

When the church grasps this in a revelatory way no demon in hell will stand against the power and anointing that will break yokes, destroy strongholds, and set the captives free regionally.

Bassey Patrick (Nigeria, Africa) – Student:

Course 139, I dare say, is the best thing that has ever happened to me in my quest to walk with, work for God and render services to humanity in the spirit of servanthood and in His own way. The total package encapsulated in Course 139 is a tremendous tool of transformation and a treasure of translation from the Religiosity/Churchianity mindset and norms; into Yeshua, Jesus' Omega Church Paradigm. The contents have caused a complete revolution, revival, reformation, transformation, and unexplainable turnaround in my life and pursuit of doing the right things rightly!

My eyes have been opened to real gospel truth on a platter of gold with awesome inspiration that makes me spurred and soar into the next level of Elohim's assigned task as one of the catalyst in The End-Time agenda to herald the return of our Lord and Savior Yeshua/Jesus. Course 139 has practically released me into the realities of The Realm of The Remnants!

To The Church, the contents and context of Course 139 should form a veritable and valuable reference material for corrective pursuit in the efforts to get His Church aligned to His Will, Purpose and Picture – The Omega Church Structures

To an individual, it is factual that a man cannot give what he does not have. Also, one would never have unless it is given to him. On this note, no stone should be left unturned in broadcasting or advertising The Master Class Programme to whosoever cares to listen and reason. No individual, especially we that are privileged to experience this programme should take the task of communicating it to others lightly.

To The Corporate Body, the message of Yeshua/Jesus must be taken to the utmost parts of the earth. So, there should be neither boundaries nor barriers in our quest to get the right Word, the right way to wherever sinners are.

To The Local Assembly, it is said, to whom much is given, much is also expected! Yeshua/Jesus has given us enormous responsibility of working towards the fulfillment of His heart cry in John Chapter 17. The Church and her Leadership should take the responsibility of returning His Church to His structures and pattern. Nothing should be considered too much to dislodge all the monsters that have plagued The Church of Jesus Christ up to this moment - The spirit of Babylon, Nimrodic structures, the ABC manipulative methods and all other human interferences and anomalies! The Church Yeshua/Jesus died for should be returned to His Spirit to guide and lead.

To The Networks, the bond of unity, oneness, brotherhood, true togetherness, unalloyed love, communion and sincere fellowship should be consciously entrenched into all systems. These must be seen, practiced, felt and benefitted by all. Indeed, the middle wall of partition in Networks must be

completely dislodged to make our Net-worth both fruitful, profitable and enviable by those outside the Common-Wealth of Yeshua/Jesus!

Mazvida Umera (Zimbabwe, Africa) – Student:

Wow! This course was a tool of empowering a weapon to wipe away every form of religion in my life and ministry. What I am teaching and sharing with the local assembly is that time for religion is over. Yeshua dwells in our hearts, and He wants to use us. Also, I have grasped this in my heart that we are to work for the Kingdom of God and to move away from churchianity and know that we belong to the Body of Christ and every part is necessary and important. Thank you.

Olunfunke Aliu (London, UK) – Student:

The impact of course 139- Completing the unfinished Reformation has indeed been great in my life. I have been taken through a course of history both secularly and biblically - so enlightening and emancipating!! Deep truths have been revealed to me which have changed my mindset on the gospel of our Lord Jesus, on Christian religion and on the great difference between both.

I have learned that I am a remnant and I have a role to play in completing the reformation started in 1517 by Martin Luther, furthered by a few more people but failed miserably to deliver the people from the stronghold of Mystery Babylon, Christian religion and denominationalism. It is now my duty together with the other remnants to whom I must connect where ever we find each other to urgently take this truth to individuals, the church of God and the world at large whenever the opportunity presents itself to deliver many people who are still stuck in the lies and half-truths and errors because the coming of our Lord Jesus is imminent!!

In addition, the course has done a lot of work on me, putting me in a state of preparedness not only for the work but also for the coming of Yeshua in His glory. Thank you, Jesus, for using Apostle George so mightily. It has been well worth it!! Praise God!!

Pastor Kyazze Paul (Uganda, East Africa) – Student:

Course 139 of Master Class 2017 has been very revealing, teaching and equipping in all the lessons. There is a need therefore to encourage friends and church leaders to enroll as it digs deep and enlightens where possible questions can arise.

Completing the Unfinished Reformation

Impact Assessment

Now that you have completed reading this eBook, we proceed to close out the lessons by undertaking a fuller assessment of its impact on our lives. The idea is to determine how far we can learn the main thesis which flowed through the book. When we undertake this assessment sincerely, we will be at a place where not by ritual but truly a proof that we have learnt enough from the Lord to entrust us with responsibility to teach others.

Explaining the Gradings. For purpose of transparency, here is what each of the 7 Grades you are expected to use mean:

- Excellent** means you received the full measure of understanding of what was taught
- Very Good** means you understood the main thesis quite well but short of excellent grade
- Good** means you had a more than average understanding of the Main thesis
- Average** is the lowest grade in the Pass category. It simply means what you gained was not much: The barest minimum
- Poor** is the first of the 'Fail grades'. You did not really understand the lessons as related to the main thesis. The best thing to do is to study the eBook all over again. Thereafter, you can do the Impact Assessment again
- Very poor** is the second level of the 'Fail grades'. You did not really understand the lessons as related to the main thesis. The best thing to do is to study the eBook all over again. Thereafter, you can do the Impact Assessment again
- Need help** is the category where you may have been stuck regarding some specific lessons or concepts. If you would like a Mentor to walk you through those areas you did not really understand after which you can do the Course Impact Assessment. Please contact us at visionarymail7@gmail.com

Expected Span of Time to complete the Course Impact Assessment. On the average we estimate 45-60 minutes will be sufficient to complete the Assessment.

Please answer these questions honestly with these grades in view:

1. Overall, how would you rate this eBook in terms of understanding of the nature and pattern of the True Church which Yeshua established in the earth realm?

Answers: Excellent Very Good Good Average Poor Very Poor Need help

2. To what extent would you say this eBook has enabled you to distinguish between Gospel of the Kingdom and Christian Religion?

Answers: Excellent Very Good Good Average Poor Very Poor Need help

3. To what extent did this eBook enable you to understand the Alpha or early Church?

Answers: () Excellent () Very Good () Good (Average () Poor () Very Poor () Need help

4. To what extent did this eBook enable you to understand the main reasons why the larger wing of the Church was ready to embrace the 'Peace' and Marriage offered by the Roman Empire?

Answers: () Excellent () Very Good () Good (Average () Poor () Very Poor () Need help

5. To what extent did you understand the reality that union of State (Rome) and larger wing of the Church represented a divorce of Yeshua as Head of the Church and that fruit of that union was creation of Christian Religion?

Answers: () Excellent () Very Good () Good (Average () Poor () Very Poor () Need help

6. To what extent did you understand what Mystery Babylon means?

Answers: () Excellent () Very Good () Good (Average () Poor () Very Poor () Need help

7. To what extent did this eBook enable you to understand Martin Luther and his role in the Reformation?

Answers: () Excellent () Very Good () Good (Average () Poor () Very Poor () Need help

8. To what extent did this eBook enable you to understand the strategic role of the Ninety-Five Thesis in the Protestant Reformation?

Answers: () Excellent () Very Good () Good (Average () Poor () Very Poor () Need help

9. To what extent did this eBook help you to understand the other reformers in the 16th & 17th centuries?

Answers: () Excellent () Very Good () Good (Average () Poor () Very Poor () Need help

10. To what extent did this eBook help you to understand the shortcomings and baggage of the Protestant Reformation?

Answers: () Excellent () Very Good () Good (Average () Poor () Very Poor () Need help

11. To what extent did this eBook help you to understand that though successful in terms of breaking away from the grips of Rome, the Protestant Reformation could not bring the Church to the state of perfection intended?

Answers: () Excellent () Very Good () Good (Average () Poor () Very Poor () Need help

12. To what extent did you understand that Yeshua did not come to establish Christian Religion but to restore relationship of The Father with humans; restore the Kingdom lost by Adam and re-populate the earth realm with sons of Elohim

Answers: () Excellent () Very Good () Good () Average () Poor () Very Poor () Need help

13. To what extent did the eBook enable you to understand who the Elect Remnant of Elohim are and indicators that identify them?

Answers: () Excellent () Very Good () Good (Average () Poor () Very Poor () Need help

14. To what extent did this eBook enable you to understand how to recognize ministries and congregations which are have Kingdom operating systems and structures?

Answers: () Excellent () Very Good () Good (Average () Poor () Very Poor () Need help

15. To what extent did you understand concepts like Priesthood after Order of Melchizedeck Versus Nimrodic and Levitical Priesthood patterns?

Answers: () Excellent () Very Good () Good (Average () Poor () Very Poor () Need help

16. To what extent did this course enable you to understand the influence of Nicolaitanes on Roman Catholic Bishopric and priesthood systems

Answers: () Excellent () Very Good () Good (Average () Poor () Very Poor () Need help

17. To what extent did this course help you to understand that the True Kingdom Church is not a 'Protestant' church

Answers: () Excellent () Very Good () Good (Average () Poor () Very Poor () Not sure

18. To what extent did this eBook enable you to appreciate the ministry of the Word in perfecting the Church to be ready for ready for return of her Head and King?

Answers: () Excellent () Very Good () Good (Average () Poor () Very Poor () Need help

19. To what extent did the eBook inspire you to lay down your life and all endowments in consecration to the Lord to be an instrument of reforming saints within your sphere of influence?

Answers: () Excellent () Very Good () Good (Average () Poor () Very Poor () Need help

20. To what extent did the Lord use this eBook to challenge you to connect with other remnant with a burning zeal for completion of the Ultimate Reformation on a global scale and take your place therein.

Answers: () Excellent () Very Good () Good (Average () Poor () Very Poor () Need help

We wish you the best and a successful conclusion of Course 139: Completing the Unfinished Reformation

With agape,

Apostle George & Pastor Grace

Postscript

This download from the Throne Room is made available, free of charge as the King instructed us for training those He will use to reform His Church and make her ready for His soon return. There is no Babylonian copyright restriction to limit your ability to use the material to study, pray it in and apply it in your life and ministry. This will enable you to build according to the Master Plan of the King, so you may be bold at His appearing! 1 Corinthians 3:10-15.

Please share this and all materials of the Global School of Ministry freely with friends, family and other saints. Please do not use them to print books! The right to do so has been granted to Kingdom agency.

How to be involved

If you would like to be part of the elect who Elohim will use to impact and transform the Church worldwide with this revelation, there are various ways you can be involved, depending on your skills:

- i. Promote these revelations to the wider Body through Electronic or Print means or via Facebook and other Social Media
- ii. Be part of those who will use revelations in this course to train other leaders and saints within your loop of Kingdom influence;
- iii. You have the skills/capacity to edit or proofread these materials, Please send a note to: visionarymail7@gmail.com;
- iv. You can support in any other way: financially at paypal.me/kingdombooksclub

Masterclass Curriculum

The curriculum includes 41 courses and is divided into five modules consisting of basic and advanced courses. The basic courses are foundational Christian doctrines and beliefs, based entirely and completely on the bible as well as practical principles and practices concerning Ministry and how to fulfil same.

Module 1: Christian/Kingdom Foundation – 8 Courses

Course 100: Constitution of the Kingdom – The Holy Scriptures as sure foundation of our Faith

Course 101: Understanding Elohim

Course 102: Understanding Yeshua Ha Mashiach, Jesus the Messiah

Course 103: Holy Spirit: Who He Is and What He does

Course 104: The 16 Fundamental Glorious Truths

Course 105: The 6 Fundamental C's (responses of the Truly Redeemed)

Course 106: The Ultimate Three: Faith, Hope and Charity

Course 107: Grace

Module 2: The Kingdom and the Church – 10 Courses

Course 108: The Church

Course 109: Kingdom Oriented Church Growth

Course 110: The Church of His Vision

Course 111: The Kingdom of Elohim

Course 112: The Ascension Office – Gifts (Fivefold Leadership Gifts)

Course 113: Spiritual Gifts: What, Why, How

Course 114: Leadership in the Household of Faith

Course 115: Authority

Course 116: The Great Commission

Course 117: Ministerial Ethics

Module 3: Kingdom Citizen and Ambassador – 9 Courses

Course 118: The Call, Cost, and Rewards of Discipleship

Course 119: Ministry: Discover, Pursue and Fulfilling

Course 120: Personal Spiritual Growth and Maturity

Course 121: Market Place Ministry

Course 122: Women in Ministry

Course 123: Rewards of the Faithful

Course 124: Christian Marriage & Family Life

Course 125: Finances and Stewardship in Elohim's House

Course 126: Introduction to Christian Counselling

Module 4: Dominion Mandate of the Redeemed – 4 Courses

Course 127: Signs, Wonders, and the Miraculous

Course 128: Understanding the Human Nature

Course 129: Critical Adversaries

Course 130: Prayer & Spiritual Warfare

Course 131: Dispensations, Seasons and Times

Module 5: Digging Deep – 9 Courses

Course 132: Doctrines of the Bible

Course 133: All that Yeshua, Jesus Said and Did

Course 134: Apostasies, Heresies, Errors and the Pseudo-Gospel

Course 135: Priesthood and the Kingdom Church

Course 136: Divine Perspective of Purpose

Course 137: 7 Letters from Heaven

Course 138: Legacies of Yeshua

Course 139: Completing the Unfinished Reformation

Course 140: Strategic Kingdom Leadership

The curriculum is released free of charge to saints worldwide who are willing to utilise the courses to empower other saints by training them to function as the Royal Priesthood after the Order of Melchizedek. In some parts of the world, Bible Schools have requested and received the curriculum which they use for training. A great company of saints have been trained and ordained through the process worldwide and serve as mentors to saints participating in the Master Class.

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Minister Fombah Archie – Valdarno, Italy
Minister Mary Armstead – Columbia, South Carolina
Minister LaToshia Banks – Kilgore, Texas
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Apostle George & Pastor Grace are visionaries of The Global Advanced Mentorship Program and Global School of Ministry www.globalschoolofministry.info as well as Vision holders of other ministries that serve the Kingdom Church, including Arise Metropolitan Assembly in Elm Park, Hornchurch, London, England where the fivefold are emerging to work together in activating a gift based congregation.

From the base, in London, England, the couple is used by the Holy Spirit to feed the flock of Jesus in over 120 nations. As revelation is received, a stream of resources will be made available free of charge. These resources are instrumental for teaching, training, equipping, activating and releasing saints into the royal priesthood in the order of Melchizedek.

As International President, the couple coordinates the global operations of International Ministers Fellowship www.internationalministersfellowship.org. In this regard, networking the remnant is a passionate engagement of the couple as received from the King of Kings.

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