

A REVELATION OF.....

**THE TABERNACLE
OF DAVID**

A picture of God's end time church.

**ONE OF A SERIES OF REVELATIONS ON VARIOUS
ASPECTS OF SCRIPTURE, AS INSPIRED BY THE
HOLY SPIRIT.**

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A NOTE FROM DAVID.....

As a relatively young Christian, I participated in a course called 'Word of Life', in which we studied both Moses' and David's Tabernacles. I was fascinated by Moses Tabernacle and 'underwhelmed' by that of David!

Over the years since the Lord has given me much revelation on the 'tent in the desert' and none on the 'town tent'.

However, I noticed greater interest being shown by others, in more recent years, in the Tabernacle of David, particularly in relation to worship. But still nothing for this David!

This changed however, last night, as I was reading the chapter in Chronicles where David's Tabernacle is mentioned, the Lord started to reveal new meanings for me, showing me that it truly is a picture, a representation of the end time church. I was so excited that I hardly slept! For I now know another 'missing link' in the teaching the Lord has given me! Of course, in God, there is always more revelation to come! And will continue to be until the day Jesus returns.

So, as I write, and you read this teaching, we will be learning together! I trust you will be looking forward to it and as excited about it as I am!

So let's not waste any more time, but get right into it!

May God bless you, and you bless God.

His servant and yours,

David Tait

PART 1: THE BACKGROUND

Included specifically for theological students and teachers. General readers may prefer to proceed directly to PART 2: A REVELATION OF..

DEFINITION OF TERMS

DAVID — beloved, the eighth and youngest son of Jesse, a citizen of Bethlehem. His father seems to have been a man in humble life. His mother's name is not recorded. Some think she was the Nahash of 2 Sam. 17:25. As to his personal appearance, we only know that he was red-haired, with beautiful eyes and a fair face (1 Sam. 16:12; 17:42).

His early occupation was that of tending his father's sheep on the uplands of Judah. From what we know of his after history, doubtless he frequently beguiled his time, when thus engaged, with his shepherd's flute, while he drank in the many lessons taught him by the varied scenes spread around him. His first recorded exploits were his encounters with the wild beasts of the field. He mentions that with his own unaided hand he slew a lion and also a bear, when they came out against his flock, beating them to death in open conflict with his club (1 Sam. 17:34, 35).

While David, in the freshness of ruddy youth, was thus engaged with his flocks, Samuel paid an unexpected visit to Bethlehem, having been guided thither by divine direction (1 Sam. 16:1–13). There he offered up sacrifice, and called the elders of Israel and Jesse's family to the sacrificial meal. Among all who appeared before him he failed to discover the one he sought. David was sent for, and the prophet immediately recognized him as the chosen of God, chosen to succeed Saul, who was now departing from the ways of God, on the throne of the kingdom. He accordingly, in anticipation, poured on his head the anointing oil. David went back again to his shepherd life, but "the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward," and "the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul" (1 Sam. 16:13, 14).

Not long after this David was sent for to soothe with his harp the troubled spirit of Saul, who suffered from a strange melancholy dejection. He played before the king so skilfully that Saul was greatly cheered, and

began to entertain great affection for the young shepherd. After this he went home to Bethlehem. But he soon again came into prominence. The armies of the Philistines and of Israel were in battle array in the valley of Elah, some 16 miles south-west of Bethlehem; and David was sent by his father with provisions for his three brothers, who were then fighting on the side of the king. On his arrival in the camp of Israel, David (now about twenty years of age) was made aware of the state of matters when the champion of the Philistines, Goliath of Gath, came forth to defy Israel. David took his sling, and with a well-trained aim threw a stone “but of the brook,” which struck the giant’s forehead, so that he fell senseless to the ground. David then ran and slew him, and cut off his head with his own sword (1 Sam. 17). The result was a great victory to the Israelites, who pursued the Philistines to the gates of Gath and Ekron.

David’s popularity consequent on this heroic exploit awakened Saul’s jealousy (1 Sam. 18:6–16), which he showed in various ways. He conceived a bitter hatred toward him, and by various stratagems sought his death (1 Sam. 18–30). The deep-laid plots of the enraged king, who could not fail to observe that David “prospered exceedingly,” all proved futile, and only endeared the young hero the more to the people, and very specially to Jonathan, Saul’s son, between whom and David a life-long warm friendship was formed.

A fugitive. To escape from the vengeance of Saul, David fled to Ramah (1 Sam. 19:12–18) to Samuel, who received him, and he dwelt among the sons of the prophets, who were there under Samuel’s training. It is supposed by some that the sixth, seventh, and eleventh Psalms were composed by him at this time. This place was only 3 miles from the residence of Saul, who soon discovered whither the fugitive had gone, and tried ineffectually to bring him back. Jonathan made a fruitless effort to bring his father to a better state of mind toward David (1 Sam. 20), who, being made aware of the fact, saw no hope of safety but in flight to a distance. We accordingly find him first at Nob (21:1–9) and then at Gath, the chief city of the Philistines. The king of the Philistines would not admit him into his service, as he expected that he would, and David accordingly now betook himself to the stronghold of Adullam (22:1–4; 1 Chr. 12:8–18). Here in a short time 400 men gathered around him and acknowledged him as their leader. It was at this time that David, amid the harassment and

perils of his position, cried, “Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem;” when three of his heroes broke through the lines of the Philistines and brought him the water for which he longed (2 Sam. 23:13–17), but which he would not drink.

In his rage at the failure of all his efforts to seize David, Saul gave orders for the massacre of the entire priestly family at Nob, “persons who wore a linen ephod”; to the number of eighty-five persons, who were put to death by Doeg the Edomite. The sad tidings of the massacre were brought to David by Abiathar, a son of Ahimelech, the only one who escaped. Comp. Ps. 52.

Hearing that Keilah, a town on the western frontier, was harassed by the Philistines, David with his men relieved it (1 Sam. 23:1–14); and then, for fear of Saul, he fled to the strongholds in the “hill country” of Judah. Comp. Ps. 31. While encamped there, in the forest in the district of Ziph, he was visited by Jonathan, who spoke to him words of encouragement (23:16–18). The two now parted never to meet again. Saul continued his pursuit of David, who narrowly escaped from him at this time, and fled to the crags and ravines of Engedi, on the western shore of the Dead Sea (1 Sam. 23:29). Here Saul, who still pursued him with his army, narrowly escaped, through the generous forbearance of David, and was greatly affected by what David had done for him. He returned home from pursuing him, and David betook himself to Maon, where, with his 600 men, he maintained himself by contributions gathered from the district. Here occurred the incident connected with Nabal and his wife Abigail (1 Sam. 25), whom David married after Nabal’s death.

Saul again went forth (1 Sam. 26) in pursuit of David, who had hid himself “in the hill Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon,” in the wilderness of Ziph, and was a second time spared through his forbearance. He returned home, professing shame and penitence for the way in which he had treated David, and predicting his elevation to the throne.

Fighting against Israel. Harassed by the necessity of moving from place to place through fear of Saul, David once more sought refuge among the Philistines (1 Sam. 27). He was welcomed by the king, who assigned him Ziklag as his residence. Here David lived among his followers for some time as an independent chief engaged in frequent war with the Amalekites and other tribes on the south of Judah.

Achish summoned David with his men to join his army against Saul; but the lords of the Philistines were suspicious of David's loyalty, and therefore he was sent back to Ziklag, which he found to his dismay may had been pillaged and burnt during his brief absence. David pursued after the raiders, the Amalekites, and completely routed them. On his return to Ziklag tidings reached him of Saul's death (2 Sam. 1). An Amalekite brought Saul's crown and bracelet and laid them at his feet. David and his men rent their clothes and mourned for Saul, who had been defeated in battle near Mount Gilboa. David composed a beautiful elegy, the most beautiful of all extant Hebrew odes, a 'lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son' (2 Sam. 1:18–27). It bore the title of "The Bow," and was to be taught to the children, that the memory of Saul and Jonathan might be preserved among them. 'Behold, it is written in the book of Jasher' (q.v.).

David king over Judah. David and his men now set out for Hebron under divine direction (2 Sam. 2:1–4). There they were cordially welcomed, and he was at once anointed as king. He was now about thirty years of age.

But his title to the throne was not undisputed. Abner took Ish-bosheth, Saul's only remaining son, over the Jordan to Mahanaim, and there crowned him as king. Then began a civil war in Israel. The first encounter between the two opposing armies, led on the one side by Abner, and on the other by Joab, took place at the pool of Gibeon. It resulted in the defeat of Abner. Other encounters, however, between Israel and Judah followed (2 Sam. 3:1, 5), but still success was on the side of David. For the space of seven and a half years David reigned in Hebron. Abner now sided with David, and sought to promote his advancement; but was treacherously put to death by Joab in revenge for his having slain his brother Asahel at Gibeon (3:22–39). This was greatly to David's regret. He mourned for the death of Abner. Shortly after this Ish-bosheth was also treacherously put to death by two Canaanites of Beeroth; and there being now no rival, David was anointed king over all Israel (4:1–12).

David king over all Israel (2 Sam. 5:1–5; 1 Chr. 11:1–3). The elders of Israel now repaired to Hebron and offered allegiance to David in name of all the people, among whom the greatest enthusiasm prevailed. He was anointed king over all Israel, and sought out a new seat of government,

more suitable than Hebron, as the capital of his empire. At this time there was a Jebusite fortress, “the stronghold”, on the hill of Zion, called also Jebus. This David took from the Jebusites, and made it Israel’s capital, and established here his residence, and afterwards built for himself a palace by the aid of Tyrian tradesmen. The Philistines, who had for some time observed a kind of truce, now made war against David; but were defeated in battle at a place afterwards called, in remembrance of the victory, Baal-perazim. Again they invaded the land, and were a second time routed by him. He thus delivered Israel from their enemies.

David now resolved to bring up the ark of the covenant to his new capital (2 Sam. 6). It was in the house of Abinadab at Kirjath-jearim, about 7 miles from Jerusalem, where it had been for many years, from the time when the Philistines had sent it home (1 Sam. 6; 7). In consequence of the death of Uzzah (for it was a divine ordinance that only the Levites should handle the ark, Num. 4), who had put forth his hand to steady the ark when the cart in which it was being conveyed shook by reason of the roughness of the road, David stayed the procession, and conveyed the ark into the house of Obed-edom, a Philistine from Gath. After three months David brought the ark from the house of Obed-edom up to Jerusalem. Comp. Ps. 24. Here it was placed in a new tent or tabernacle which David erected for the purpose. About seventy years had passed since it had stood in the tabernacle at Shiloh. The old tabernacle was now at Gibeah, at which Zadok ministered. David now (1 Chr. 16) carefully set in order all the ritual of divine worship at Jerusalem, along with Abiathar the high priest. A new religious era began. The service of praise was for the first time introduced into public worship. Zion became henceforth “God’s holy hill.”

David’s wars. David now entered on a series of conquests which greatly extended and strengthened his kingdom (2 Sam. 8). In a few years the whole territory from the Euphrates to the river of Egypt, and from Gaza on the west to Thapsacus on the east, was under his sway (2 Sam. 8:3–13; 10).

David’s fall. He had now reached the height of his glory. He ruled over a vast empire, and his capital was enriched with the spoils of many lands. But in the midst of all this success he fell, and his character became stained with the sin of adultery (2 Sam. 11:2–27). It has been noted as characteristic of the Bible that while his military triumphs are recorded in a few verses, the sad story of his fall is given in detail, a story full of

warning, and therefore recorded. This crime, in the attempt to conceal it, led to another. He was guilty of murder. Uriah, whom he had foully wronged, an officer of the Gibborim, the corps of heroes (23:39), was, by his order, “set in the front of the hottest battle” at the siege of Rabbah, in order that he might be put to death. Nathan the prophet (2 Sam. 7:1–17; 12:1–23) was sent by God to bring home his crimes to the conscience of the guilty monarch. He became a true penitent. He bitterly bewailed his sins before God. The thirty-second and fifty-first Psalms reveal the deep struggles of his soul, and his spiritual recovery.

Bathsheba became his wife after Uriah’s death. Her first-born son died, according to the word of the prophet. She gave birth to a second son, whom David called Solomon, and who ultimately succeeded him on the throne (2 Sam. 12:24, 25).

Peace. After the successful termination of all his wars, David formed the idea of building a temple for the ark of God. This he was not permitted to carry into execution, because he had been a man of war. God, however, sent Nathan to him with a gracious message (2 Sam. 7:1–16). On receiving it he went into the sanctuary, the tent where the ark was, and sat before the Lord, and poured out his heart in words of devout thanksgiving (18–29). The building of the temple was reserved for his son Solomon, who would be a man of peace (1 Chr. 22:9; 28:3).

A cloudy evening. Hitherto David’s career had been one of great prosperity and success. Now cloudy and dark days came. His eldest son Amnon, whose mother was Ahinoam of Jezreel, was guilty of a great and shameful crime (2 Sam. 13). This was the beginning of the disasters of his later years. After two years Absalom terribly avenged the crime against Tamar, and put Amnon to death. This brought sore trouble to David’s heart. Absalom, afraid of the consequences of his guilt, fled to Geshur beyond Jordan, where he remained for three years, when he was brought back through the intrigue of Joab (2 Sam. 14).

After this there fell upon the land the calamity of three years’ famine (2 Sam. 21:1–14). This was soon after followed by a pestilence, brought upon the land as a punishment for David’s sinful pride in numbering the people (2 Sam. 24), in which no fewer than 70,000 perished in the space of three days.

Rebellion of Absalom. The personal respect for David was sadly lowered by the incident of Bathsheba. There was a strong popular sentiment against the taking of the census, and the outburst of the plague in connection with it deepened the feeling of jealousy that had begun to manifest itself among some of the tribes against David. Absalom, taking full advantage of this state of things, gradually gained over the people, and at length openly rebelled against his father, and usurped the throne. Ahithophel was Absalom's chief counsellor. The revolt began in Hebron, the capital of Judah. Absalom was there proclaimed king. David was now in imminent danger, and he left Jerusalem (2 Sam. 15:13–20), and once more became a fugitive. It was a momentous day in Israel. The incidents of it are recorded with a fulness of detail greater than of any other day in Old Testament history. David fled with his followers to Mahanaim, on the east of Jordan. An unnatural civil war broke out. After a few weeks the rival armies were mustered and organized. They met in hostile array at the wood of Ephraim (2 Sam. 18:1–8). Absalom's army was defeated, and himself put to death by the hand of Joab (9–18). The tidings of the death of his rebellious son filled the heart of David with the most poignant grief. He "went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept" (33), giving utterance to the heart-broken cry, "Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" Peace was now restored, and David returned to Jerusalem and resumed the direction of affairs. An unhappy dispute arose between the men of Judah and the men of Israel (19:41–43). Sheba, a Benjamite, headed a revolt of the men of Israel. He was pursued to Abelbeth-maachah, and was there put to death, and so the revolt came to an end.

The end. After the suppression of the rebellion of Absalom and that of Sheba, ten comparatively peaceful years of David's life passed away. During those years he seems to have been principally engaged in accumulating treasures of every kind for the great temple at Jerusalem, which it was reserved to his successor to build (1 Chr. 22; 28; 29), a house which was to be "exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries" (22:5). The exciting and laborious life he had spent, and the dangers and trials through which he had passed, had left him an enfeebled man, prematurely old. It became apparent that his life was now drawing to its close. A new palace conspiracy broke out as to who should be his successor. Joab favoured Adonijah. The chiefs of his party met at the

“Fuller’s spring,” in the valley of Kidron, to proclaim him king; but Nathan hastened on a decision on the part of David in favour of Solomon, and so the aim of Adonijah’s party failed. Solomon was brought to Jerusalem, and was anointed king and seated on his father’s throne (1 Kings 1:11–53). David’s last words are a grand utterance, revealing his unfailing faith in God, and his joyful confidence in his gracious covenant promises (2 Sam. 23:1–7).

After a reign of forty years and six months (2 Sam. 5:5; 1 Chr. 3:4) David died (B.C. 1015) at the age of seventy years, “and was buried in the city of David.” His tomb is still pointed out on Mount Zion.

Both in his prophetic and in his regal character David was a type of the Messiah (1 Sam. 16:13). The book of Psalms commonly bears the title of the “Psalms of David,” from the circumstance that he was the largest contributor (about eighty psalms) to the collection. (See PSALMS.)

“The greatness of David was felt when he was gone. He had lived in harmony with both the priesthood and the prophets; a sure sign that the spirit of his government had been thoroughly loyal to the higher aims of the theocracy. The nation had not been oppressed by him, but had been left in the free enjoyment of its ancient liberties. As far as his power went he had striven to act justly to all (2 Sam. 8:15). His weak indulgence to his sons, and his own great sin besides, had been bitterly atoned, and were forgotten at his death in the remembrance of his long-tried worth. He had reigned thirty-three years in Jerusalem and seven and a half at Hebron (2 Sam. 5:5). Israel at his accession had reached the lowest point of national depression; its new-born unity rudely dissolved; its territory assailed by the Philistines. But he had left it an imperial power, with dominions like those of Egypt or Assyria. The sceptre of Solomon was already, before his father’s death, owned from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates, and from the Orontes to the Red Sea.”; Geikie’s Hours etc., iii. 1

DAVID, CITY OF — (1.) David took from the Jebusites the fortress of Mount Zion. He “dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David” (1 Chr. 11:7). This was the name afterwards given to the castle and royal palace on Mount Zion, as distinguished from Jerusalem generally (1 Kings 3:1; 8:1), It was on the south-west side of Jerusalem, opposite the temple mount, with which it was connected by a bridge over the Tyropoeon valley.

(2.) Bethlehem is called the “city of David” (Luke 2:4, 11), because it was David’s birth-place and early home (1 Sam. 17:12). 1

DAVID (Heb. *dāwīd*, sometimes *dāwīd*; root and meaning doubtful, but see *BDB in loc.*; the equation with a supposed Old Bab. (Mari) *dawīdum*, ‘chief’, is now discounted (*JNES* 17, 1958, p. 130; *VT Supp* 7, 1960, pp. 165ff.); cf. Laesoe, *Shemsharah Tablets*, p. 56). The youngest son of Jesse, of the tribe of Judah, and second king of Israel. In Scripture the name is his alone, typifying the unique place he has as ancestor, forerunner and foreshadower of the Lord Jesus Christ—‘great David’s greater son’. There are 58 NT references to David, including the oft-repeated title given to Jesus—‘Son of David’. Paul states that Jesus is ‘descended from David according to the flesh’ (Rom. 1:3), while Jesus himself is recorded by John as saying ‘I am the root and the offspring of David’ (Rev. 22:16).

When we return to the OT to find who this is who occupies a position of such prominence in the lineage of our Lord and the purposes of God, the material is abundant and rich. The story of David is found between 1 Sa. 16 and 1 Ki. 2, with much of the material paralleled in 1 Ch. 2-29.

I. Family background

Great-grandson of Ruth and Boaz, David was the youngest of eight brothers (1 Sa. 17:12ff.) and was brought up to be a shepherd. In this occupation he learnt the courage which was later to be evidenced in battle (1 Sa. 17:34-35) and the tenderness and care for his flock which he was later to sing of as the attributes of his God. Like Joseph, he suffered from the ill-will and jealousy of his older brothers, perhaps because of the talents with which God had endowed him (1 Sa. 18:28). Modest about his ancestry (1 Sa. 18:18), David was to father a line of notable descendants, as the genealogy of our Lord in Matthew’s Gospel shows (Mt. 1:1-17).

II. Anointing and friendship with Saul

When God rejected Saul from the kingship of Israel, David was revealed to Samuel as his successor, who anointed him, without any

ostentation, at Bethlehem (1 Sa. 16:1-13). One of the results of Saul's rejection was the departure of the Spirit of God from him, with a consequent depression of his own spirit, which at times seems to have approached madness. There is an awesome revelation of divine purpose in the providence by which David, who is to replace Saul in the favour and plan of God, is selected to minister to the fallen king's melancholy (1 Sam. 16:17-21). So the lives of these two men were brought together, the stricken giant and the rising stripling.

At first all went well. Saul was pleased with the youth, whose musical skill was to give us part of our richest devotional heritage, appointed him his armour-bearer. Then the well-known incident involving Goliath, the Philistine champion, changed everything (1 Sa. 17). David's agility and skill with the sling outdid the strength of the ponderous giant, whose slaughter was the signal for an Israelite repulsion of the Philistine force. The way was clear for David to reap the reward promised by Saul—the hand of the king's daughter in marriage, and freedom for his father's family from taxation; but a new factor changed the course of events—the king's jealousy of the new champion of Israel. As David returned from the slaying of Goliath, the women of Israel greeted him, singing, 'Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands'. Saul, unlike his son *Jonathan in a similar situation, resented this and, we are told, 'eyed David from that day on' (1 Sa. 18:7, 9).

III. The hostility of Saul

Saul's dealings with David declined progressively in amity, and we find the young national hero escaping a savage attack on his life by the king, reduced in military honour, cheated of his promised bride and married to Saul's other daughter, Michal, after a marriage settlement which was meant to cause David's death (1 Sa. 18:25). It would appear from 1 Sa. 24:9 that there was a group at Saul's court which deliberately fomented trouble between Saul and David, and the situation deteriorated steadily. Another abortive attempt by Saul at slaying David with his spear was followed by an attempted arrest, foiled only by a stratagem of Michal, David's wife (1 Sa. 19:8-17). A marked feature of this period in David's life is the way in which Saul's two children, Jonathan and Michal, allied themselves with David and against their own father.

IV. Flight from Saul

The next stages in the story of David are marked by a constant flight from the relentless pursuit of Saul. No resting-place is safe for long; prophet, priest, national enemy—none can give him shelter, and those who help him are cruelly punished by the rage-maddened king (1 Sa. 22:6-19). After a narrow escape from destruction by the Philistine war-lords, David eventually established the Adullam band, at first a heterogeneous collection of fugitives, but later an armed task-force which harried the foreign invaders, protected the crops and flocks of outlying Israelite communities, and lived off the generosity of the latter. The churlish refusal of one of these wealthy sheep-farmers, Nabal, to recognize any indebtedness to David is recorded in 1 Sa. 25, and is interesting in introducing Abigail, later to become one of David's wives. Chs. 24 and 26 of the same book record two instances when David spared the life of Saul, out of mingled piety and magnanimity. Eventually David, quite unable to curb the hostility of Saul, came to terms with the Philistine king, Achish of Gath, and was granted the frontier town of Ziklag in return for the occasional use of his warrior band. When the Philistines went out in force against Saul, however, the war-lords demurred at David's presence in their ranks, fearing a last minute change of loyalty, so he was spared the tragedy of Gilboa, which he later mourned in one of the loveliest elegies extant (2 Sa. 1:19-27).

V. King in Hebron

Once Saul was dead, David sought the will of God and was guided to return to Judah, his own tribal region. Here his fellow-tribesmen anointed him king, and he took up royal residence in Hebron. He was then 30 years old, and he reigned in Hebron for 7 1/2 years. The first 2 years of this period were occupied by civil war between the supporters of David and the old courtiers of Saul, who had set up Saul's son Eshbaal (Ishbosheth) as king in Mahanaim. It may be doubted whether Eshbaal was more than a puppet, manipulated by Saul's faithful captain, Abner. With the death of these two by assassination, organized opposition to David came to an end, and he was anointed king over the 12 tribes of Israel in Hebron, from which he was soon to transfer his capital to Jerusalem (2 Sa. 3-5).

VI. King in Jerusalem

Now began the most successful period in David's long reign, which was to last for another 33 years. By a happy combination of personal bravery and skilled generalship he led the Israelites in such a systematic and decisive subjugation of their enemies—Philistines, Canaanites, Moabites, Ammonites, Aramaeans, Edomites and Amalekites—that his name would have been recorded in history quite apart from his significance in the divine plan of redemption. The contemporary weakness of the powers in the Nile and Euphrates valleys enabled him, by conquest and alliance, to extend his sphere of influence from the Egyptian frontier and the Gulf of Aqabah to the upper Euphrates. Conquering the supposedly impregnable Jebusite citadel of Jerusalem, he made it his capital, whence he bestrode the two major divisions of his kingdom, later to become the divided kingdoms of Judah and Israel. A palace was built, highways opened, trade routes restored, and the material prosperity of the kingdom secured. This, however, could never be the sole, nor yet the main, ambition of 'a man after Yahweh's own heart', and we soon see evidence of David's religious zeal. He brought back the ark of the covenant from Kiriath-jearim and placed it in a special tabernacle prepared for it in Jerusalem. It was during the return of the ark that the incident occurred which led to the death of Uzzah (2 Sa. 6:6-8). Much of the religious organization which was to enrich the later Temple worship owes its origin to the arrangements for the service of the tabernacle made by David at this time. In addition to its strategic and political importance, Jerusalem thus acquired the even greater religious significance, with which its name has been associated ever since.

It is all the more to be wondered at and remembered in godly fear, that it was in this period of outward prosperity and apparent religious fervour that David committed the sin referred to in Scripture as 'the matter of Uriah the Hittite' (2 Sa. 11). The significance and importance of this sin, both for its intrinsic heinousness and for its consequences in the whole ensuing history of Israel, cannot be overestimated. David repented deeply, but the deed was done, and stands as a demonstration of how sin spoils God's purpose for his children. The poignant cry of anguish with which he greeted the news of the death of *Absalom was only a feeble echo of the heart's agony which knew that death, and many more, to be but part of the reaping of the harvest of lust and deceit sown by him so many years before.

Absalom's rebellion, in which the N kingdom remained loyal to David, was soon followed by a revolt on the part of the N kingdom, led by Sheba, a Benjaminite. This revolt, like Absalom's, was crushed by Joab. David's dying days were marred by the scheming of Adonijah and Solomon for his throne, and by the realization that the legacy of internecine bloodshed foretold by *Nathan had still to be spent.

In addition to David's standing army, led by his kinsman Joab, he had a personal bodyguard recruited mainly from warriors of Philistine stock, whose loyalty to him never wavered. There is abundant evidence in the historical writings to which reference has already been made of David's skill in composing odes and elegies (see 2 Sa. 1:19-27; 3:33-34; 22; 23:1-7). An early tradition describes him as 'the sweet psalmist of Israel' (2 Sa. 23:1), while later OT writings refer to his direction of the musical worship of Israel, his invention of and skill in playing musical instruments, and his composition (Ne. 12:24, 36, 45-46; Am. 6:5). Seventy-three of the psalms in the Bible are recorded as 'David's', some of them in ways which clearly imply authorship. Most convincingly of all, our Lord himself spoke of David's authorship of at least one psalm (Lk. 20:42), using a quotation from it to make plain the nature of his Messiahship.

VII. Character

The Bible nowhere glosses over the sins or character defects of the children of God. 'Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction' (Rom. 15:4). It is part of the task of Scripture to warn by example, as well as to encourage. The sin of David in the matter of Uriah the Hittite is a cardinal instance of this. Let this blot be seen for what it is—a stain on a character otherwise fair and wondrously to the glory of God. It is true that there are elements in the experience of David which seem foreign and even repugnant to the child of the new covenant. Yet 'he . . . served the counsel of God in his own generation' (Acts 13:36), and in that generation he stood out as a bright and shining light for the God of Israel. His accomplishments were many and varied; man of action, poet, tender lover, generous foe, stern dispenser of justice, loyal friend, he was all that men find wholesome and admirable in man, and this by the will of God, who made him and shaped him for his destiny. It is to David, not to Saul, that the Jews look back with pride and affection as the establisher of

their kingdom, and it is in David that the more farsighted of them saw the kingly ideal beyond which their minds could not reach, in the image of which they looked for a coming Messiah, who should deliver his people and sit upon the throne of David for ever. That this was not idealistic nonsense, still less idolatry, is indicated by the NT endorsement of the excellences of David, of whose seed Messiah indeed came, after the flesh. BIBLIOGRAPHY. G. de S. Barrow, *David: Shepherd, Poet, Warrior, King*, 1946; A. C. Welch, *Kings and Prophets of Israel*, 1952, pp. 80ff.; D. F. Payne, *David: King in Israel*, forthcoming. For a concise estimate of the 'Davidic' psalms, see N. H. Snaith, *The Psalms, A Short Introduction*, 1945, where Ewald's rearrangement is cited with approval. For an important and interesting appraisal of David's official role as divine representative and the significance of Jerusalem in the religious life of the monarchy, see A. R. Johnson, *Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel*, 1955. 2

JERUSALEM — called also Salem, Ariel, Jebus, the "city of God," the "holy city;" by the modern Arabs el-Khuds, meaning "the holy;" once "the city of Judah" (2 Chr. 25:28). This name is in the original in the dual form, and means "possession of peace," or "foundation of peace." The dual form probably refers to the two mountains on which it was built, viz., Zion and Moriah; or, as some suppose, to the two parts of the city, the "upper" and the "lower city." Jerusalem is a "mountain city enthroned on a mountain fastness" (comp. Ps. 68:15, 16; 87:1; 125:2; 76:1, 2; 122:3). It stands on the edge of one of the highest table-lands in Palestine, and is surrounded on the south-eastern, the southern, and the western sides by deep and precipitous ravines.

It is first mentioned in Scripture under the name Salem (Gen. 14:18; comp. Ps. 76:2). When first mentioned under the name Jerusalem, Adonizedek was its king (Josh. 10:1). It is afterwards named among the cities of Benjamin (Judg. 19:10; 1 Chr. 11:4); but in the time of David it

1 Easton, M. G., M. A. D. D., *Easton's Bible Dictionary*, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1996.

2 *The New Bible Dictionary*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1962.

was divided between Benjamin and Judah. After the death of Joshua the city was taken and set on fire by the men of Judah (Judg. 1:1–8); but the Jebusites were not wholly driven out of it. The city is not again mentioned till we are told that David brought the head of Goliath thither (1 Sam. 17:54). David afterwards led his forces against the Jebusites still residing within its walls, and drove them out, fixing his own dwelling on Zion, which he called “the city of David” (2 Sam. 5:5–9; 1 Chr. 11:4–8). Here he built an altar to the Lord on the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite (2 Sam. 24:15–25), and thither he brought up the ark of the covenant and placed it in the new tabernacle which he had prepared for it. Jerusalem now became the capital of the kingdom.

After the death of David, Solomon built the temple, a house for the name of the Lord, on Mount Moriah (1010). He also greatly strengthened and adorned the city, and it became the great centre of all the civil and religious affairs of the nation (Deut. 12:5; comp. 12:14; 14:23; 16:11–16; Ps. 122).

After the disruption of the kingdom on the accession to the throne of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, Jerusalem became the capital of the kingdom of the two tribes. It was subsequently often taken and retaken by the Egyptians, the Assyrians, and by the kings of Israel (2 Kings 14:13, 14; 18:15, 16; 23:33–35; 24:14; 2 Chr. 12:9; 26:9; 27:3, 4; 29:3; 32:30; 33:11), till finally, for the abounding iniquities of the nation, after a siege of three years, it was taken and utterly destroyed, its walls razed to the ground, and its temple and palaces consumed by fire, by Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon (2 Kings 25; 2 Chr. 36; Jer. 39), 588. The desolation of the city and the land was completed by the retreat of the principal Jews into Egypt (Jer. 40–44), and by the final carrying captive into Babylon of all that still remained in the land (52:3), so that it was left without an inhabitant (582). Compare the predictions, Deut. 28; Lev. 26:14–39.

But the streets and walls of Jerusalem were again to be built, in troublous times (Dan. 9:16, 19, 25), after a captivity of seventy years. This restoration was begun 536, “in the first year of Cyrus” (Ezra 1:2, 3, 5–11). The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah contain the history of the re-building of the city and temple, and the restoration of the kingdom of the Jews, consisting of a portion of all the tribes. The kingdom thus constituted was for two centuries under the dominion of Persia, till 331; and thereafter, for about a century and a half, under the rulers of the Greek empire in Asia, till

167. For a century the Jews maintained their independence under native rulers, the Asmonean princes. At the close of this period they fell under the rule of Herod and of members of his family, but practically under Rome, till the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, 70. The city was then laid in ruins.

The modern Jerusalem by-and-by began to be built over the immense beds of rubbish resulting from the overthrow of the ancient city; and whilst it occupies certainly the same site, there are no evidences that even the lines of its streets are now what they were in the ancient city. Till 131 the Jews who still lingered about Jerusalem quietly submitted to the Roman sway. But in that year the emperor (Hadrian), in order to hold them in subjection, rebuilt and fortified the city. The Jews, however, took possession of it, having risen under the leadership of one Bar-Chohaba (i.e., "the son of the star") in revolt against the Romans. Some four years afterwards (135), however, they were driven out of it with great slaughter, and the city was again destroyed; and over its ruins was built a Roman city called Aelia Capitolina, a name which it retained till it fell under the dominion of the Mohammedans, when it was called el-Khuds, i.e., "the holy."

In 326 Helena, mother of the emperor Constantine, made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem with the view of discovering the places mentioned in the life of our Lord. She caused a church to be built on what was then supposed to be the place of the nativity at Bethlehem. Constantine, animated by her example, searched for the holy sepulchre, and built over the supposed site a magnificent church, which was completed and dedicated 335. He relaxed the laws against the Jews till this time in force, and permitted them once a year to visit the city and wail over the desolation of "the holy and beautiful house."

In 614 the Persians, after defeating the Roman forces of the emperor Heraclius, took Jerusalem by storm, and retained it till 637, when it was taken by the Arabians under the Khalif Omar. It remained in their possession till it passed, in 960, under the dominion of the Fatimite khalifs of Egypt, and in 1073 under the Turcomans. In 1099 the crusader Godfrey of Bouillon took the city from the Moslems with great slaughter, and was elected king of Jerusalem. He converted the Mosque of Omar into a Christian cathedral. During the eighty-eight years which followed, many

churches and convents were erected in the holy city. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre was rebuilt during this period, and it alone remains to this day. In 1187 the sultan Saladin wrested the city from the Christians. From that time to the present day, with few intervals, Jerusalem has remained in the hands of the Moslems. It has, however, during that period been again and again taken and retaken, demolished in great part and rebuilt, no city in the world having passed through so many vicissitudes.

In the year 1850 the Greek and Latin monks residing in Jerusalem had a fierce dispute about the guardianship of what are called the ‘holy places.’ In this dispute the emperor Nicholas of Russia sided with the Greeks, and Louis Napoleon, the emperor of the French, with the Latins. This led the Turkish authorities to settle the question in a way unsatisfactory to Russia. Out of this there sprang the Crimean War, which was protracted and sanguinary, but which had important consequences in the way of breaking down the barriers of Turkish exclusiveness.

Modern Jerusalem ‘lies near the summit of a broad mountain-ridge, which extends without interruption from the plain of Esdraelon to a line drawn between the southern end of the Dead Sea and the southeastern corner of the Mediterranean.’ This high, uneven table-land is everywhere from 20 to 25 geographical miles in breadth. It was anciently known as the mountains of Ephraim and Judah.

‘Jerusalem is a city of contrasts, and differs widely from Damascus, not merely because it is a stone town in mountains, whilst the latter is a mud city in a plain, but because while in Damascus Moslem religion and Oriental custom are unmixed with any foreign element, in Jerusalem every form of religion, every nationality of East and West, is represented at one time.’

Jerusalem is first mentioned under that name in the Book of Joshua, and the Tell-el-Amarna collection of tablets includes six letters from its Amorite king to Egypt, recording the attack of the Abiri about 1480. The name is there spelt Uru-Salim (‘city of peace’). Another monumental record in which the Holy City is named is that of Sennacherib’s attack in 702. The ‘camp of the Assyrians’ was still shown about 70, on the flat ground to the north-west, included in the new quarter of the city.

The city of David included both the upper city and Millo, and was surrounded by a wall built by David and Solomon, who appear to have

restored the original Jebusite fortifications. The name Zion (or Sion) appears to have been, like Ariel (“the hearth of God”), a poetical term for Jerusalem, but in the Greek age was more specially used of the Temple hill. The priests’ quarter grew up on Ophel, south of the Temple, where also was Solomon’s Palace outside the original city of David. The walls of the city were extended by Jotham and Manasseh to include this suburb and the Temple (2 Chr. 27:3; 33:14).

Jerusalem is now a town of some 50,000 inhabitants, with ancient mediaeval walls, partly on the old lines, but extending less far to the south. The traditional sites, as a rule, were first shown in the 4th and later centuries, and have no authority. The results of excavation have, however, settled most of the disputed questions, the limits of the Temple area, and the course of the old walls having been traced. 1

JERUSALEM.

I. Introduction and general description

Jerusalem is one of the world’s famous cities. Under that name, it dates from at least the 3rd millennium BC; and today is considered sacred by the adherents of the three great monotheistic faiths, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The city is set high in the hills of Judah, about 50 km from the Mediterranean, and over 30 km W of the N end of the Dead Sea. It rests on a none-too-level plateau, which slopes noticeably towards the SE. To the E lies the ridge of Olivet. Access to the city on all sides except the N is hampered by three deep ravines, which join in the Siloam Valley, near the well Bir Eyyub, SE of the city. The E valley is Kidron; the W is now called the Wadi al-Rababi, and is probably to be equated with the Valley of Hinnom; and the third cuts the city in half before it runs S, and slightly E, to meet the other two. This latter ravine is not mentioned or named in Scripture (although Maktesh, Zp. 1:11, may well have been the name of part of it), so it is usually referred to as the Tyropoeon Valley, *i.e.*, the Valley of the Cheesemakers, after Josephus.

Eminences rise each side of the Tyropoeon Valley, and the city can at once be divided into W and E halves. Ignoring lesser heights, we may subdivide each of these two sections into N and S hills. When considering the growth and development of the city (see **IV**) it will be important to

visualize these details. In discussing the respective heights and depths of these hills and valleys, it must be realized that they have changed considerably over the centuries. This is inevitable in any city continuously inhabited for centuries, and particularly when periodic destructions have taken place. Layer after layer of rubble and debris piles up, amounting here and there to more than 30 m in parts of Jerusalem. In the case of Jerusalem there is also the factor that deliberate attempts have been made at various periods to fill in valleys (especially the Tyropoeon) and diminish hills.

Jerusalem's water-supply has always presented problems. Apart from Bir Eyyub, the well mentioned above, there is only the Virgin's Spring, which is connected by an aqueduct with the Pool of Siloam. There are, and have been, other reservoirs, of course, such as Bethesda in NT times and Mamilla Pool today, but they all depend on the rains or else on aqueducts to fill them. Bir Eyyub and the Virgin's Spring are in all probability the biblical En-rogel and Gihon respectively. Bir Eyyub lies SE of the city, at the junction of the three ravines mentioned above. The Virgin's Spring is due N of Bir Eyyub, E and a little S of the Temple area. Thus it is evident that only the SE part of Jerusalem has a reliable water-supply. (See A. Mazar, 'The Aqueducts of Jerusalem', in Y. Yadin, *Jerusalem Revealed*, pp. 79-84.)

II. Name

The meaning of the name is not certain. The Heb. word is usually written $y^{\text{e}}r\ddot{u}\ddot{s}\ddot{a}laim$ in the OT, but this is an anomalous form, since Heb. cannot have two consecutive vowels. The anomaly was resolved in later Heb. by inserting the letter 'y', thus giving $y^{\text{e}}r\ddot{u}\ddot{s}\ddot{a}layim$; this form does in fact occur a few times in the OT, *e.g.*, Je. 26:18. This may well have been understood to be a dual (for the ending -ayim is dual), viewing the city as twofold. (Similarly, the Heb. name for 'Egypt', *miṣrayim*, appears to be dual.) But there can be little doubt that the original form of the word in Heb. was $y^{\text{e}}ru\ddot{s}\ddot{a}l\ddot{e}m$; this is evidenced by the abbreviation *šālēm* (Eng. 'Salem') in Ps. 76:2, and by the Aramaic form of the name $y^{\text{e}}r\ddot{u}\ddot{s}l\ddot{e}m$, found in Ezr. 5:14, *etc.*

The name is pre-Israelite, appearing in the Egyp. Execration Texts (19th-18th century; the form appears to be *Rushalimum*) and in later Assyrian documents (as *Urusalim* or *Urisalimmu*). The name also occurs

in the *Ebla archive, c. 2500 BC. The first part of the name is usually thought to mean ‘foundation’; the second element, though cognate with the Heb. word for ‘peace’, probably originally referred to a Canaanite deity Shalem. Thus ‘foundation of Shalem’ is probably the original sense of the name; in course of time, however, the second element will have been associated with ‘peace’ (Heb. šālôm) in Jewish minds; cf. Heb. 7:2.

In NT Greek the name is transliterated in two different ways, *Hierosolyma* (as in Mt. 2:1) and Hierousalēm (as in Mt. 23:37). The latter is evidently a close approximation to the Heb. pronunciation, and incidentally an additional evidence for an ‘e’ as the original final vowel in Hebrew. The former is deliberately Hellenized, to make a Greek-sounding word; the first part of the word at once recalls the Greek word hieros, ‘holy’, and probably the whole was understood to mean something like ‘sacred Salem’. LXX has only the form Hierousalēm, whereas Greek classical writers use Hierosolyma (e.g. Polybius; so too Latin, e.g. Pliny).

Jerusalem is described in Is. 52:1 as the holy city, and to this day it often receives this title. The Heb. phrase is ʾîr-haq-qōdeš, literally ‘the city of holiness’. Probably the reason for this title was that Jerusalem contained the Temple, the shrine where God deigned to meet his people. Hence, the word qōdeš came to mean ‘sanctuary’ as well as ‘holiness’. To Judaism, then, Jerusalem was the holy city without a rival. It was natural for Paul and John, seeing that the earthly city was far from perfect, to designate the place where God dwells in true holiness as ‘Jerusalem which is above’ (Gal. 4:26) and ‘new Jerusalem’ (Rev. 21:2).

For other names the city has borne, see **III**, in historical sequence.

III. History

Traces of prehistoric settlement at Jerusalem have been found, but its early history cannot be traced. After a bare mention in the Egyptian Execration Texts early in the 2nd millennium, it reappears in the 14th-century el-Amarna letters, ruled by a king named Abd Khiba. At that time it was under the suzerainty of Egypt, and was probably little more than a mountain fortress. Possible pentateuchal references to it are as Salem (Gn. 14:18) and the mountain in the ‘land of Moriah’ of Gn. 22:2. According to very ancient tradition, the latter was the place where later the Temple was built, but there is no possible proof of this. As for Salem, it is almost

certainly to be identified with Jerusalem (*cf.* Ps. 76:2); if so, it was ruled in Abraham's day by an earlier king, Melchizedek, who was also 'priest of God Most High' ('ēl 'elyôn).

When the Israelites entered Canaan they found Jerusalem in the hands of an indigenous Semitic tribe, the Jebusites, ruled over by a king named Adoni-zedek. This ruler formed an alliance of kings against Joshua, who soundly defeated them; but Joshua did not take the city, owing, doubtless, to its natural strength of position. It remained in Jebusite hands, bearing the name Jebus. Comparing Jdg. 1:8 with Jdg. 1:21, it appears that Judah overcame the part of the city outside the fortress walls, and that Benjamin occupied this part, living peaceably alongside the Jebusites in the fortress.

This was the situation when David became king. His first capital was Hebron, but he soon saw the value of Jerusalem, and set about its capture. This was not only a tactical move but also a diplomatic one, for his use of a city on the Benjamin-Judah border would help to diminish the jealousy between the two tribes. The Jebusites felt confident of their safety behind the fortress walls, but David's men used an unexpected mode of entry, and took the citadel by surprise (2 Sa. 5:6ff.). In this passage we meet a third name, 'Zion'. This was probably the name of the hill on which the citadel stood; Vincent, however, thinks the name originally applied rather to the fortress building than to the ground it occupied.

Having taken the city, David improved the fortifications and built himself a palace; he also installed the ark in his new capital. Solomon carried the work of fortification further, but his great achievement was the construction of the Temple. After his death and the subsequent division of the kingdom, Jerusalem naturally declined somewhat, being now capital only of Judah. As early as the 5th year of Solomon's successor, Rehoboam, the Temple and royal palace were plundered by Egypt. troops (1 Ki. 14:25f.). Philistine and Arab marauders again plundered the palace in Jehoram's reign. In Amaziah's reign a quarrel with the king of the N kingdom, Jehoash, resulted in part of the city walls being broken down, and fresh looting of Temple and palace. Uzziah repaired this damage to the fortifications, so that in the reign of Ahaz the city was able to withstand the attacks of the combined armies of Syria and Israel. Soon after this the N kingdom fell to the Assyrians. Hezekiah of Judah had good reason to fear

Assyria too, but Jerusalem providentially escaped. In case of siege, he made a conduit to improve the city's water-supply.

Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon captured Jerusalem in 597 and in 587 BC destroyed the city and Temple. At the end of that century the Jews, now under Persian rule, were allowed to return to their land and city, and they rebuilt the Temple, but the city walls remained in ruins until Nehemiah restored them in the middle of the 5th century BC. Alexander the Great ended the power of Persia at the end of the 4th century, and after his death his general Ptolemy, founder of the Ptolemaic dynasty in Egypt, entered Jerusalem and included it in his realm. In 198 BC Palestine fell to Antiochus II, the Seleucid king of Syria. About 30 years later, Antiochus IV entered Jerusalem, destroying its walls and plundering and desecrating the Temple; and he installed a Syrian garrison in the city, on the Akra. Judas the Maccabee led a Jewish revolt, and in 165 BC the Temple was rededicated. He and his successors gradually won independence for Judaea, and the Hasmonaean dynasty ruled a free Jerusalem until the middle of the 1st century BC, when Rome intervened. Roman generals forced their way into the city in 63 and 54; a Parthian army plundered it in 40; and 3 years after that Herod the Great had to fight his way into it, to take control. He first had to repair the damage created by these various incursions; then he launched a big building programme, erecting some notable towers. His most renowned work was the rebuilding of the Temple on a much grander scale, although this was not finished within his lifetime. One of his towers was Antonia, commanding the Temple area (it housed the Roman garrison which came to Paul's aid, Acts 21:34).

The Jewish revolt against the Romans in AD 66 could have but one conclusion; in AD 70 the Roman general Titus systematically forced his way into Jerusalem, and destroyed the fortifications and the Temple. He left three towers standing; one of them, Phasael, still remains, incorporated in the so-called 'Tower of David'. But further disaster awaited the Jews: another revolt in AD 132 led to the rebuilding of Jerusalem (on a much smaller scale) as a pagan city, dedicated to Jupiter Capitolinus, from which all Jews were excluded. This was the work of the emperor Hadrian; he called the newly constructed city Aelia Capitolina (the name even found its way into Arabic, as Iliya). It was not until the reign of Constantine (early 4th century) that the Jews were again permitted to enter the city. From his

reign on, the city became Christian instead of pagan, and many churches and monasteries were built, notably the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Jerusalem has suffered many vicissitudes since the 2nd century, and has been captured and held at various times by Persian, Arab, Turkish, Crusader, British and Israeli troops and administrations. The most important building developments in the Old City (as opposed to the rapidly growing modern suburbs) were due to the early Muslims, the Crusaders and finally the Turkish sultan Suleiman the Magnificent who in 1542 rebuilt the city walls as they can be seen today. The Israelis give the city its ancient Heb. name, *y^erûšālayim*; the Arabs usually call it *al-Quds* (*al-Sharîf* ‘the (noble) Sanctuary’.

IV. Growth and extent

It must be stated at the outset that there is a good deal of uncertainty about the physical history of Jerusalem. This is, of course, partly due to the periodic disasters and destructions, and to the layers upon layers of rubble that have piled up over the centuries. These factors have caused difficulty elsewhere, of course, but archaeologists have often been able to surmount them to a large extent. The particular problem with Jerusalem is that it has been continuously inhabited and still is, so that excavations can be made only with difficulty. Archaeologists here have to dig where they can, not where they think it might be profitable. On the other hand, there is an abundance of traditions, Christian, Jewish and Muslim; but in many cases it is not easy to evaluate them. So uncertainty and controversy remain; however, much valuable archaeological work has been done during the last century, and it has solved some problems.

Scripture nowhere gives a systematic description of the city. The nearest approach to such a description is the account of the rebuilding of the walls by Nehemiah. But there are a great number of references giving some information. These have to be pieced together, and fitted in with the picture we get from archaeology. Our earliest description of the city is that of Josephus (*BJ* 5. 136-141); Josephus is here laying a background for his account of the gradual capture of the city by Titus and the Roman armies. This too has to be fitted into the picture.

Excavations have conclusively shown that the earliest city was on the SE hill, an area now wholly outside the city walls (the S wall was retracted

N in the 2nd century AD). It must be clearly borne in mind that the original Zion lay on the E ridge; the name was by the time of Josephus already erroneously attached to the SW hill.

Few traces remain from the pre-Jebusite period, but it may be inferred that a small town grew on the SE ridge, within easy reach of the spring Gihon in the valley to the E. The Jebusites enlarged the city to a limited extent, most notably by the construction of terraces E, so that their E wall lay well down the slope towards the spring. This terracing and E wall seem to have needed frequent maintenance and repair till their final destruction by the Babylonians in the early 6th century BC, after which the E wall was again retracted to the ridge. Present opinion is inclined to consider the word *'Millo' (e.g. 2 Sa. 5:9; 1 Ki. 9:15), which derives from a Heb. root meaning 'fill', to refer to this terracing.

In times of peace it was common practice for houses to be built outside the walls, which from time to time necessitated new walls and fortifications. David's and Solomon's city extended N, in particular, the Temple being built on the NE hill; the royal palace was probably situated in the area between the older city and the Temple area.

This intermediate area is probably the 'Ophel' of such passages as 2 Ch. 27:3 (the name means 'swelling', and was used of the citadel of other cities too, e.g. Samaria, cf. 2 Ki. 5:24, NEB); but some scholars apply the term to the whole E ridge S of the Temple. The Jebusite city, or perhaps more strictly the central fortress of it, already bore the name 'Zion' (the meaning of which is uncertain, perhaps 'dry area' or 'eminence') at the time of David's capture, after which it was also called 'the city of David' (cf. 2 Sa. 5:6-10; 1 Ki. 8:1). The name 'Zion' became, or remained, synonymous with Jerusalem as a whole.

It was in the prosperous days of the 8th century BC that the city first spread to the W ridge; this new suburb seems to have been called the Second Quarter or Mishneh (2 Ki. 22:14). A wall later enclosed it, built either in Hezekiah's reign (cf. 2 Ch. 32:5) or somewhat later. It is certain that this extension included the NW hill, but whether the SW hill was now occupied is as yet unresolved. Israeli archaeologists conclude that it was, and that the Pool of Siloam was inside the city walls in Hezekiah's reign; but K. M. Kenyon still maintains otherwise.

Jerusalem was sacked by Nebuchadrezzar's troops in 587 BC; most of the buildings were destroyed, and the city walls were demolished. The Temple was rebuilt at the end of the century, and Jerusalem had a small population once again; but it was not until the mid-5th century that the Persian authorities permitted the rebuilding of the city walls, by Nehemiah.

No doubt Nehemiah rebuilt earlier walls so far as was practicable but it is clear from excavations that the W ridge was abandoned, and also the E slopes of the SE hill. The Jebusite terracing had been too thoroughly demolished for repair, and Nehemiah therefore retracted the E wall to the ridge itself.

Nehemiah's description of contemporary Jerusalem unfortunately presents numerous problems. For one thing, it is not clear which gates were in the city wall and which led into the Temple. For another, there are numerous textual difficulties in the relevant passages of Nehemiah. Again, Nehemiah gives no indication of direction or changes of direction. Add to that the fact that names of gates changed from time to time. Earlier attempts to interpret Nehemiah's data now all require revision in the light of recent excavations. It is fairly clear, however, that the circuit described in Ne. 3 is in an anti-clockwise direction, and begins at the N of the city.

There is little evidence that the city spread to the W ridge again until the 2nd century BC. After the Maccabean revolt, the city began to grow once more. Herod the Great was responsible for a major building programme in the late 1st century BC, and the city continued to develop until its destruction at the end of the Jewish War (AD 66-70). Our major literary source for this whole period is Josephus; but his information leaves us with a number of problems as yet unresolved.

The first of these problems is the position of the 'Akra', the Syrian fortress set up in Jerusalem in 169 BC. Its purpose was plainly to keep the Temple courts under close surveillance, but neither Josephus nor 1 Maccabees makes it clear whether the garrison was located N, W or S of the Temple. Opinions remain divided, but the most recent excavations tend to support the third of these possibilities. (See *BASOR* 176, 1964, pp. 10f.)

A second problem concerns the course of the 'Second Wall' and the 'Third Wall' mentioned by Josephus, who tells us that the Romans penetrated Jerusalem in AD 70 by progressively breaching three N walls. Josephus describes the termini of the three walls, but he does not give

information as to the line followed by any of them. Excavations have supplemented his information here and there, but many uncertainties remain.

Thus, the remains of an ancient wall at the present-day Damascus Gate have been identified by K. M. Kenyon as part of the Third Wall, but by Israeli archaeologists as part of the Second Wall; and finds considerably further N have been linked with the Third Wall by the latter, but with a wall of circumvallation (erected by Titus, during the siege of Jerusalem) by Kenyon. The Third Wall was begun by Agrippa I (AD 41-44), and scarcely finished by the outbreak of the Jewish War AD 66, so that stratigraphical methods would scarcely serve to distinguish Agrippa's Wall from Titus' Wall.

One special point of interest concerning the Second Wall, which must have been built in the 2nd or 1st century BC (Josephus does not date its construction) is its relationship to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. If the church has any claim to marking the authentic site of the crucifixion and burial of Christ, its site must have lain outside the city walls; but for many years it was considered doubtful whether the site lay inside or outside the line of the Second Wall (the Third Wall was not then in existence). It has now been established that this area lay to the N of the wall; the site may therefore be authentic.

The city lay in ruins between AD 70 and the Bar-Kokhba revolt 60 years later. The emperor Hadrian then rebuilt the city, naming it Aelia Capitolina; his city was much smaller than its predecessor, with the permanent retraction of the S wall. During the Christian era, the size of Jerusalem has been by no means constant. The present day walled area ('the Old City') was given its definitive shape by Suleiman the Magnificent in the 16th century.

V. Theological significance

By natural metonymy, the names 'Zion' and 'Jerusalem' frequently stand for the body of citizens (even when far away in exile), the whole of Judah, the whole of Israel, or the entire people of God.

Jerusalem plays an important theological role in both Testaments; in this respect too it is not readily distinguishable from the wider perspective of the whole land. Two motifs predominate: Jerusalem is at the same time

the place of Jewish infidelity and disobedience, and also the place of God's election and presence, protection, and glory. The process of history demonstrated the former, which inevitably provoked divine anger and punishment; the glories of the city can only lie in the future. (See especially Is. 1:21; 29:1-4; Mt. 23:37f.; and Ps. 78:68f.; Is. 37:35; 54:11-17.) The contrast between the actual and the ideal naturally gave rise to the concept of a heavenly Jerusalem (*cf.* Gal. 4:25f.; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 21).
 BIBLIOGRAPHY. On history and archaeology, see especially K. M. Kenyon, *Digging up Jerusalem*, 1974, and bibliography there listed; Y. Yadin (ed.), *Jerusalem Revealed*, 1975; B. Mazar, *The Mountain of the Lord*, 1975; *EAEHL*, 2, pp. 579-647. On economic and social conditions, see J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, 1969. On theology see *TDNT* 7, pp. 292-338; W. D. Davies, *The Gospel and the Land*, 1974. 2

LINEN — (1.) Heb., pishet, pishtah, denotes "flax," of which linen is made (Isa. 19:9); wrought flax, i.e., "linen cloth", Lev. 13:47, 48, 52, 59; Deut. 22:11.

Flax was early cultivated in Egypt (Ex. 9:31), and also in Palestine (Josh. 2:6; Hos. 2:9). Various articles were made of it: garments (2 Sam. 6:14), girdles (Jer. 13:1), ropes and thread (Ezek. 40:3), napkins (Luke 24:12; John 20:7), turbans (Ezek. 44:18), and lamp-wicks (Isa. 42:3).

(2.) Heb. buts, "whiteness;" rendered "fine linen" in 1 Chr. 4:21; 15:27; 2 Chr. 2:14; 3:14; Esther 1:6; 8:15, and "white linen" 2 Chr. 5:12. It is not certain whether this word means cotton or linen.

(3.) Heb. bad; rendered "linen" Ex. 28:42; 39:28; Lev. 6:10; 16:4, 23, 32; 1 Sam. 2:18; 2 Sam. 6:14, etc. It is uniformly used of the sacred vestments worn by the priests. The word is from a root signifying "separation."

(4.) Heb. shesh; rendered "fine linen" Ex. 25:4; 26:1, 31, 36, etc. In Prov. 31:22 it is rendered in Authorized Version "silk," and in Revised Version "fine linen." The word denotes Egyptian linen of peculiar whiteness and fineness (byssus). The finest Indian linen, the finest now made, has in an inch one hundred threads of warp and eighty-four of woof; while the Egyptian had sometimes one hundred and forty in the warp and sixty-four in the woof. This was the usual dress of the Egyptian priest. Pharaoh arrayed Joseph in a dress of linen (Gen. 41:42).

(5.) Heb. 'etun. Prov. 7:16, "fine linen of Egypt;" in Revised Version, "the yarn of Egypt."

(6.) Heb. sadin. Prov. 31:24, "fine linen;" in Revised Version, "linen garments" (Judg. 14:12, 13; Isa. 3:23). From this Hebrew word is probably derived the Greek word sindon, rendered "linen" in Mark 14:51, 52; 15:46 ; Matt. 27:59.

The word "linen" is used as an emblem of moral purity (Rev. 15:6). In Luke 16:19 it is mentioned as a mark of luxury. 1

LINEN. The Heb. word šēš (Egyp. sś) is rendered 'fine linen'. The following Heb. words are rendered by 'linen': baḏ, pištâ, bûš and 'ēṭûn (*cf.* Egyp. 'idmy, 'yarn' in RV). The word pištâ means actually the flax of which linen was made. As early as the 14th century BC the word pšt, or plural pštm, was used in Ugarit for linen (*cf.* Virolleaud, *PRU*, Mission Ras Shamra 7, II). bûš is present only in later books (*cf.* Gk. byssos). RSV, AV translate the following Gk. words by linen: sindōn, othonion and linon.

Linen is made of flax (*Linum usitatissimum*). After treatment the thread of the rind gives linen and the seed linseed-oil. After the flax was treated it was spun by women and made into material (Pr. 31:13, 24). Flax was never extensively grown in Palestine in biblical times. According to Ex. 9:31; Ho. 2:5 and probably Jos. 2:6, it was, however, cultivated from early times. An extra-biblical witness is the Gezer calendar (*c.* 1000 BC), where we read in the fourth line: 'His month is hoeing up of flax' (Albright's translation in Pritchard, *ANET*²). The great cultivator and exporter of flax was Egypt. In Pr. 7:16 we read of Egyptian linen (*cf.* Heb. ḥ^aṭubôt, 'many coloured'). Red linen was especially precious in ancient Egypt and was called 'royal linen'. It is quite probable that linen (*cf.* Egyp. words sś and 'idmy as possible loan-words in Hebrew and Canaanite) was imported from Egypt by the inhabitants of Palestine from the earliest times. We know from Egyp. documents that linen was exported from Egypt to Phoenicia (*cf.* also Ezk. 27:7) and especially Byblos through many centuries.

The use of linen in OT times was prescribed for priests (Ex. 28:39). The coat, turban and girdle must be of fine linen. This is, according to Ezk. 44:17, prescribed for the coolness of the material. The high priest used a woollen overcoat, but was draped in linen on the great Day of Atonement (Lv. 16:4, 23). Linen the Israelites brought along from Egypt was used for

the ten curtains of the tabernacle (Ex. 26:1), the veil (26:31) and the screen of the door of the tent (26:36). Samuel wore an ephod (ʿēpōd of linen (1 Sa. 2: 18); David danced in front of the ark draped in a linen ephod (2 Sa. 6:14). It seems as if the use of linen was associated with special, holy persons, *e.g.* the man with the writing-case in Ezk. 9:2 and the man Daniel saw in Dn. 10:5 and 12:6-7. Linen and fine linen were regarded as precious gifts to the woman a man loved. In Ezk. 16:10, 13 the Lord speaks to Jerusalem as a husband to his wife and reminds her how he has decked her with linen and fine linen. It is obvious from Pr. 31:22 that the use of linen by women was highly esteemed (as in *embroidery). It was a luxury (Is. 3:23). The word būš, ‘linen’, is used in the later books as the material for the rich and important people, *e.g.* Mordecai went to the Persian king draped with a mantle of fine linen (Est. 8:15). Linen was commonly used for fine furnishings, sails and for protection of precious carpets.

The word linen is sparingly used in the NT. In the parable of the rich man and the beggar Lazarus the former is described as decked out in fine linen (Gk. byssos) and purple (Lk. 16:19). The young man who followed Jesus to Gethsemane lost his linen cloth (or sheet?) in his flight from the scene (Mk. 14:51). The body of Jesus was wrapped in linen according to Mt. 27:59 and parallel texts. According to Rev. 19:8, the Bride of the Lamb is clothed in fine linen, which is the righteous deeds of the saints. In Rev. 19:14 the eschatological armies are described as arrayed in fine white linen.

BIBLIOGRAPHY. L. M. Wilson, *Ancient Textiles from Egypt*, 1933; A. Bellinger, *BASOR* 118, 1950, pp. 9-11; G. M. Crowfoot, *PEQ* 83, 1951, pp. 5-31; *Dead Sea Scrolls. 2

EPHOD — something girt, a sacred vestment worn originally by the high priest (Ex. 28:4), afterwards by the ordinary priest (1 Sam. 22:18), and characteristic of his office (1 Sam. 2:18, 28; 14:3). It was worn by Samuel, and also by David (2 Sam. 6:14). It was made of fine linen, and consisted of two pieces, which hung from the neck, and covered both the back and front, above the tunic and outer garment (Ex. 28:31). That of the high priest was embroidered with divers colours. The two pieces were joined together over the shoulders (hence in Latin called *superhumerales*) by clasps or buckles of gold or precious stones, and fastened round the

waist by a “curious girdle of gold, blue, purple, and fine twined linen” (28:6–12).

The breastplate, with the Urim and Thummim, was attached to the ephod. 1

ARK — Noah’s ark, a building of gopher-wood, and covered with pitch, 300 cubits long, 50 cubits broad, and 30 cubits high (Gen. 6:14–16); an oblong floating house of three stories, with a door in the side and a window in the roof. It was 100 years in building (Gen. 5:32; 7:6). It was intended to preserve certain persons and animals from the deluge which God was about to bring over the earth. It contained eight persons (Gen. 7:13; 2 Pet. 2:5), and of all “clean” animals seven pairs, and of “unclean” one pair, and of birds seven pairs of each sort (Gen. 7:2, 3). It was in the form of an oblong square, with flat bottom and sloping roof. Traditions of the Deluge, by which the race of man was swept from the earth, and of the ark of Noah have been found existing among all nations.

The ark of bulrushes in which the infant Moses was laid (Ex. 2:3) is called in the Hebrew *teebah*, a word derived from the Egyptian *teb*, meaning “a chest.” It was daubed with slime and with pitch. The bulrushes of which it was made were the papyrus reed.

The sacred ark is designated by a different Hebrew word, *’aron’*, which is the common name for a chest or coffer used for any purpose (Gen. 50:26; 2 Kings 12:9, 10). It is distinguished from all others by such titles as the “ark of God” (1 Sam. 3:3), “ark of the covenant” (Josh. 3:6 ; Heb. 9:4), “ark of the testimony” (Ex. 25:22). It was made of acacia or shittim wood, a cubit and a half broad and high and two cubits long, and covered all over with the purest gold. Its upper surface or lid, the mercy-seat, was surrounded with a rim of gold; and on each of the two sides were two gold rings, in which were placed two gold-covered poles by which the ark could be carried (Num. 7:9; 10:21; 4:5, 19, 20; 1 Kings 8:3, 6). Over the ark, at the two extremities, were two cherubim, with their faces turned toward each other (Lev. 16:2; Num. 7:89). Their outspread wings over the top of the ark formed the throne of God, while the ark itself was his footstool (Ex. 25:10–22; 37:1–9). The ark was deposited in the “holy of holies,” and was so placed that one end of the poles by which it was carried touched the veil

which separated the two apartments of the tabernacle (1 Kings 8:8). The two tables of stone which constituted the “testimony” or evidence of God’s covenant with the people (Deut. 31:26), the “pot of manna” (Ex. 16:33), and “Aaron’s rod that budded” (Num. 17:10), were laid up in the ark (Heb. 9:4). (See TABERNACLE) The ark and the sanctuary were “the beauty of Israel” (Lam. 2:1). During the journeys of the Israelites the ark was carried by the priests in advance of the host (Num. 4:5, 6; 10:33–36; Ps. 68:1; 132:8). It was borne by the priests into the bed of the Jordan, which separated, opening a pathway for the whole of the host to pass over (Josh. 3:15, 16; 4:7, 10, 11, 17, 18). It was borne in the procession round Jericho (Josh. 6:4, 6, 8, 11, 12). When carried it was always wrapped in the veil, the badgers’ skins, and blue cloth, and carefully concealed even from the eyes of the Levites who carried it. After the settlement of Israel in Palestine the ark remained in the tabernacle at Gilgal for a season, and was then removed to Shiloh till the time of Eli, between 300 and 400 years (Jer. 7:12), when it was carried into the field of battle so as to secure, as they supposed, victory to the Hebrews, and was taken by the Philistines (1 Sam. 4:3–11), who sent it back after retaining it seven months (1 Sam. 5:7, 8). It remained then at Kirjath-jearim (7:1,2) till the time of David (twenty years), who wished to remove it to Jerusalem; but the proper mode of removing it having been neglected, Uzzah was smitten with death for putting “forth his hand to the ark of God,” and in consequence of this it was left in the house of Obed-edom in Gath-rimmon for three months (2 Sam. 6:1–11), at the end of which time David removed it in a grand procession to Jerusalem, where it was kept till a place was prepared for it (12–19). It was afterwards deposited by Solomon in the temple (1 Kings 8:6–9). When the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem and plundered the temple, the ark was probably taken away by Nebuchadnezzar and destroyed, as no trace of it is afterwards to be found. The absence of the ark from the second temple was one of the points in which it was inferior to the first temple. 1

ARK. 1. The ark of Noah (Heb. tēbâ, probably from Egyp. db’t, ‘chest, coffin’, Gn. 6-9; kibōtos, ‘box, chest’ in the NT) was evidently intended to be no more than a floating repository, measuring, if the cubit is taken at c. 46 cm (*Weights and Measures), about 150 x 25 x 15 m (Gn. 6:15). It is

possible to read qānîm, reeds', for qinnîm, nests', in Gn. 6:14, without interfering with the consonantal text, giving the sense that the gopher wood components were bound together and caulked with reeds, and the whole then finished off with *bitumen. While the statement in 6:16 (literally, 'thou shalt make it lower, second, and third') can be taken in the traditional sense as describing three storeys, it is also possible to understand it to indicate three layers of logs laid cross-wise, a view which would accord well with a construction of wood, reeds and bitumen. The ark also had an opening (peṭaḥ) in the side, and a šōhar, a word not properly understood, but most commonly taken to mean an opening for light, running right round the vessel just below the roof.

The ark came to rest on 'one of the mountains of *Ararat' (Gn. 8:4) or, according to the Babylonians, Mt Nišir ('Salvation') in NW Persia. Attempts to find the remains of the Noahic ark and prove its existence from wood fragments found in E Turkey are as yet unconfirmed (*cf.* J. A. Montgomery, *The Quest for Noah's Ark*, 1972).

2. The ark of Moses (Heb. tēbâ, Ex. 2:3-6) may perhaps be pictured as a miniature version of that of Noah, but only of sufficient size to take a small infant. It was made of reeds (gōme', / POPYRI), and sealed with bitumen (hēmār) and pitch (zepeṭ, *Bitumen) and from the fact that it was necessary to open it (Ex. 2:6) it was apparently, as was probably Noah's ark, completely closed in.

BIBLIOGRAPHY. A. Heidel, *The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels*², 1949, pp. 232-237; E. Ullendorff, *VT* 4, 1954, pp. 95-96. 2

FEAR OF THE LORD THE — is in the Old Testament used as a designation of true piety (Prov. 1:7; Job 28:28; Ps. 19:9). It is a fear conjoined with love and hope, and is therefore not a slavish dread, but rather filial reverence. (Comp. Deut. 32:6; Hos. 11:1; Isa. 1:2; 63:16; 64:8.) God is called "the Fear of Isaac" (Gen. 31:42, 53), i.e., the God whom Isaac feared.

A holy fear is enjoined also in the New Testament as a preventive of carelessness in religion, and as an incentive to penitence (Matt. 10:28; 2 Cor. 5:11; 7:1; Phil. 2:12; Eph. 5:21; Heb. 12:28, 29). 1

FEAR. The Bible uses numerous words to denote fear. The most common of these (giving the noun forms) are Heb. *yir'â*, 'reverence'; Heb. *paḥad*, 'dread', 'fear'; Gk. *phobos*, 'fear', 'terror'. Theologically, four main categories can be suggested.

a. Holy fear

This comes from the believer's apprehension of the living God. According to Luther, the natural man cannot fear God perfectly; according to Rudolf Otto, he is 'quite unable even to shudder *grauen*) or feel horror in the real sense of the word'. Holy fear, on the other hand, is God-given, enabling men to reverence God's authority, obey his commandments and hate and shun all form of evil (Je. 32:40; *cf.* Gn. 22:12; Heb. 5:7). It is, moreover, the beginning (or principle) of wisdom (Ps. 111:10); the secret of uprightness (Pr. 8:13); a feature of the people in whom God delights (Ps. 147:11); and the whole duty of man (Ec. 12:13). It is also one of the divine qualifications of the Messiah (Is. 11:2-3).

In the OT, largely because of the law's legal sanctions, true religion is often regarded as synonymous with the fear of God (*cf.* Je. 2:19; Ps. 34:11, Moffatt), and even in NT times the term 'walking in the fear of the Lord' was used in connection with the early Christians. Gentile adherents of the synagogue were called 'God-fearers' (Acts 10:2, *etc.*; *cf.* Phil. 2:12).

In the NT generally, however, emphasis is laid on God as loving and forgiving, the One who through Christ gives to men the spirit of sonship (Rom. 8:15), and enables them boldly to face up to life (2 Tim. 1:6-7) and death (Heb. 2:15) without fear. Nevertheless, a reverent fear remains; for the awesomeness of God has not changed, and there is a day of judgment to be met (2 Cor. 5:10f.). Godly fear stimulates the believer to seek holiness (2 Cor. 7:1), and is reflected in his attitude towards his fellow-Christians (Eph. 5:21).

b. Slavish fear

This is strictly a natural consequence of sin (Gn. 3:10; Pr. 28:1), and can come as a punishment (Dt. 28:28). It was felt by Felix when he heard Paul preach (Acts 24:25); it is felt by Christ-rejecters, for whom remains only 'a fearful expectation of judgment' (Heb. 10:27, RV, 31; *cf.* Rev.

21:8). Though not of itself good, this fear is often used by the Holy Spirit for the conversion of men (Acts 16:29ff., *etc.*).

c. Fear of men

This can be expressed as: (i) a reverential awe and regard of men, as of masters and magistrates (1 Pet. 2:18; Rom. 13:7); (ii) a blind dread of them and what they can do (Nu. 14:9; Is. 8:12; Pr. 29:25); and (iii) in a peculiar sense a Christian concern for them lest they be ruined by sin (1 Cor. 2:3; 2 Cor. 11:3; Col. 2:1). This kind of fear, and also the slavish fear mentioned in (b) above, can be cast out by true love to God (1 Jn. 4:18).

d. 'Fear' as the object of fear

Fear is used in another sense, as in Gn. 31:42, 53, where God is called the 'Fear' of *Isaac—*i.e.* the God whom Isaac feared and worshipped. Their 'fear', the thing that terrifies them, comes upon the wicked (Pr. 1:26-27; 10:24; *cf.* Is. 66:4). When the Hebrews entered the promised land God sent his fear before them, destroying and scattering the Canaanites, or so impressing them with his fear as to render them spiritless and unable to withstand the invaders (Ex. 23:27-28). Fear in this sense is found also in Jb. 4:6 (*cf.* 9:34; 13:21): 'Is not your fear of God your confidence, and the integrity of your ways your hope?'

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BLESS — (1.) God blesses his people when he bestows on them some gift temporal or spiritual (Gen. 1:22; 24:35; Job 42:12; Ps. 45:2; 104:24, 35).

(2.) We bless God when we thank him for his mercies (Ps. 103:1, 2; 145:1, 2).

(3.) A man blesses himself when he invokes God's blessing (Isa. 65:16), or rejoices in God's goodness to him (Deut. 29:19; Ps. 49:18).

(4.) One blesses another when he expresses good wishes or offers prayer to God for his welfare (Gen. 24:60; 31:55; 1 Sam. 2:20). Sometimes blessings were uttered under divine inspiration, as in the case of Noah, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses (Gen. 9:26, 27; 27:28, 29, 40; 48:15–20; 49:1–28; Deut. 33). The priests were divinely authorized to bless the people (Deut. 10:8; Num. 6:22–27). We have many examples of apostolic benediction (2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 6:23, 24; 2 Thess. 3:16, 18; Heb. 13:20, 21; 1 Pet. 5:10, 11).

(5.) Among the Jews in their thank-offerings the master of the feast took a cup of wine in his hand, and after having blessed God for it and for other mercies then enjoyed, handed it to his guests, who all partook of it. Ps. 116:13 refers to this custom. It is also alluded to in 1 Cor. 10:16, where the apostle speaks of the "cup of blessing." 1

BLESSED. The most frequent OT word is *bārûk*. When applied to God it has the sense of praise (Gn. 9:26; 1 Ki. 1:48; Ps. 28:6, *etc.*), and when used of man denotes a state of happiness (1 Sa. 26:25; 1 Ki. 2:45). 'aš^crê ('how happy!', Ps. 1:1) is always used of man and has for its NT equivalent *makarios*. The latter is used in pagan Greek literature to describe the state of happiness and well-being such as the gods enjoy. In the NT it is given a strong spiritual content, as revealed in the Beatitudes (Mt. 5:3-11) and elsewhere (Lk. 1:45; Jn. 20:29; Acts 20:35; Jas. 1:12). The word seems also to contain a congratulatory element, as a note in *Weymouth's New Testament* suggests: 'People who are blessed may outwardly be much to be pitied, but from the higher and therefore truer standpoint they are to be envied, congratulated, and imitated.' *eulogētos* is used only of Christ and God (Rom. 9:5; Eph. 1:3).

BIBLIOGRAPHY. J. Pedersen, *Israel: Its Life and Culture*, 1926; *TDOT* 1, pp. 445-448; *TDNT* 4, pp. 362-370; *NIDNTT* 1, pp. 215-217. 2

BLESSING. The OT word is *b'rākâ* and generally denotes a bestowal of good, usually conceived of as material (Dt. 11:26; Pr. 10:22; 28:20; Is. 19:24, *etc.*). Often it is contrasted with the curse (Gn. 27:12; Dt. 11:26-29; 23:5; 28:2; 33:23), and sometimes is used of the formula of words which

constitute a 'blessing' (Gn. 27:36, 38, 41; Dt. 33:1). The NT word eulogia is used also in the latter sense (Jas. 3:10), but in addition denotes both the spiritual good brought by the gospel (Rom. 15:29 mg.; Eph. 1:3) and material blessings generally (Heb. 6:7; 12:17; 2 Cor. 9:5, 'gift'). 2

PART 2: A REVELATION OF.....

THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID

THE STORY

By comparison to Moses Tabernacle, there is relatively little mention of the Tabernacle of David in Scripture. David' s Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant' s journey to it, is set out in 2 Samuel and confirmed in 1 Chronicles. Other direct references are found in Amos and Acts.

Prior to this time, the Ark of the Covenant, the dwelling place of God in Moses Tabernacle was, at the suggestion of the elders of Israel, taken into battle against the Philistines, the Jews old enemy. A battle in which the Israelites were coming off second best! As the motivation was ' human hope' rather than ' God obedience' , the battle was lost, 30,000 Israelites killed, and the Ark captured.

However, after 7 months the Philistines had had enough of their battle trophy, after their God Dagon was humiliated in his own temple and the people of Akdod and Ekron plagued with tumours.

The Israelites at Beth Shemesh were delighted to see the Ark return. That was, until 70 of their men, full of curiosity, looked inside the Ark to see what was there. In one word - death! For them! For sinful man cannot exist in God' s presence. Naturally the people were now very afraid and removed the Ark out of the way, up the local hill to Abinadab' s house aKirjath-jearim, where they appointed his son Eleazar to keep further curious onlookers away! The Ark remained there for about 70 years, from the sunset of the priest Eli' s years, through much of Samuel' s life and all through the reign of King Saul. Until his successor, King David, decided it was now time to bring the Ark up to his capital of Jerusalem. This enabled David to establish priestly as well as kingly authority over the nation. The journey was only 7 miles (12km) but over a rough road.

Let' s follow the story as it is recorded in 2 Samuel.

The Ark Brought to Jerusalem

6 David again brought together out of Israel chosen men, thirty thousand in all. ² He and all his men set out from Baalah of Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the Name, the name of the LORD Almighty, who is enthroned between the cherubim that are on the ark. ³ They set the ark of God on a new cart and brought it from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, sons of Abinadab, were guiding the new cart ⁴ with the ark of God on it, and Ahio was walking in front of it. ⁵ David and the whole house of Israel were celebrating with all their might before the LORD, with songs and with harps, lyres, tambourines, sistrums and cymbals. ⁶ When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out and took hold of the ark of God, because the oxen stumbled. ⁷ The LORD's anger burned against Uzzah because of his irreverent act; therefore God struck him down and he died there beside the ark of God. ⁸ Then David was angry because the LORD's wrath had broken out against Uzzah, and to this day that place is called Perez Uzzah. ⁹ David was afraid of the LORD that day and said, "How can the ark of the LORD ever come to me?" ¹⁰ He was not willing to take the ark of the LORD to be with him in the City of David. Instead, he took it aside to the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite. ¹¹ The ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite for three months, and the LORD blessed him and his entire household. ¹² Now King David was told, "The LORD has blessed the household of Obed-Edom and everything he has, because of the ark of God." So David went down and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with rejoicing. ¹³ When those who were carrying the ark of the LORD had taken six steps, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf. ¹⁴ David, wearing a linen ephod, danced before the LORD with all his might, ¹⁵ while he and the entire house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouts and the sound of trumpets. ¹⁶ As the ark of the LORD was entering the City of David, Michal daughter of Saul watched from a window. And when she saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD, she despised him in her heart. ¹⁷ They brought the ark of the LORD and set it in its place inside the tent that David had pitched for it, and David sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before the LORD.

¹⁸ After he had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD Almighty. ¹⁹ Then he gave a loaf of bread, a cake of dates and a cake of raisins to each person in the whole crowd of Israelites, both men and women. And all the people went to their homes. ²⁰ When David returned home to bless his household, Michal daughter of Saul came out to meet him and said, 'How the king of Israel has distinguished himself today, disrobing in the sight of the slave girls of his servants as any vulgar fellow would!' ²¹ David said to Michal, 'It was before the LORD, who chose me rather than your father or anyone from his house when he appointed me ruler over the LORD's people Israel—I will celebrate before the LORD. ²² I will become even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes. But by these slave girls you spoke of, I will be held in honor.' ²³ And Michal daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death.

(2 Samuel 6:1-23) 3

We are now going to follow the journey and see how it reflects the walk that God is calling His disciples to in these final days. Indeed, how David' s Tabernacle is a picture, a representation, of God' s beautiful, overcoming, end time church.

3 All scripture is from *The New International Version*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House) 1984 unless otherwise specified.

A GOOD HEART IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH!

David again brought together out of Israel chosen men, thirty thousand in all. ² He and all his men set out from Baalah of Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the Name, the name of the LORD Almighty, who is enthroned between the cherubim that are on the ark. ³ They set the ark of God on a new cart and brought it from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, sons of Abinadab, were guiding the new cart ⁴ with the ark of God on it, and Ahio was walking in front of it. ⁵ David and the whole house of Israel were celebrating with all their might before the LORD, with songs and with harps, lyres, tambourines, sistrums and cymbals. ⁶ When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out and took hold of the ark of God, because the oxen stumbled. ⁷ The LORD's anger burned against Uzzah because of his irreverent act; therefore God struck him down and he died there beside the ark of God. (2 Samuel 6:1-7)

David had a real heart for the Lord. He was also an astute ruler who understood the need to bring the priestly and kingly functions together in order to cement his role as leader of the nation. For Israel had always been an accumulation of tribes with diverse 'family' loyalties rather than a single nation state. In particular, there was a divide between the northern 10 tribes and the southern two, Judah and Benjamin. Moses Tabernacle was well established at Gibeah in the north under the High Priest Zadok and provided the potential to become a power base from which rebellion against David's rule could be initiated. Ironically though, finally it was Zadok who remained loyal and Abiathar, the High Priest in Jerusalem, who was disloyal. Zadok eventually replaced Abiathar, so unifying the High Priesthood again.

The city of Jerusalem, itself, was located in the territory of Benjamin, a politically acceptable location close to the border of the northern and southern tribal areas. So for David, this was an opportunity to combine matters of the heart, in wanting to have the Ark of the presence of His Lord near to him, and his desire to unify the kingdom under his rulership.

So David, in his enthusiasm, gathered together 30,000 representatives from amongst the people, gathering at Baalah and proceeding, no doubt with great excitement and celebration, the short distance to Kirjath-jearim to bring back the Ark to Jerusalem.

In their enthusiasm to get on with the job, they forgot God' s instruction about the Levites carrying the Ark, then only when covered in cloth. Celebrating before the Lord with songs and instruments, they loaded the Ark onto a cart to be pulled by oxen back to its new home, a simple tent in Jerusalem.

They proceeded along the rough road with great rejoicing, However, when they came to Nacon' s threshing floor, the oxen stumbled and Uzzah reached out to steady the Ark. Uzzah dropped dead! The celebration stopped!

THE PROBLEM

This is a clear picture of the many enthusiastic Christians around the world who truly want to do great things for God. But instead of seeking His guidance as to what to do and how to do it, they implement their own ideas and proceed in their own strength. In fact, this is what most Christians do! We implement and participate in multitudinous programmes that keep us busy, make us feel good, but end up bearing little or no fruit. We have all been there and done that!

THE LESSON

While infectious enthusiasm is an admirable human trait, God is seeking today those prepared to follow His instructions. To do what he asks, when he asks, in the way he asks! Those prepared to put aside their own ideas and aspirations to do things God' s way. Often this means waiting until God is ready! For God' s time, invariably, is longer than ours!

The reality, as God Himself tells us, is;

⁸ *‘For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,’ declares the LORD.* ⁹ *‘As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.*
(Isaiah 55:8-9)

So there is a call for us to put aside our own thoughts, dreams and aspirations, however well intentioned they might be, and follow the instructions of our heavenly leader! For the self motivated amongst us, this is particularly difficult, as I well know.

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 1: A church seeking to do God' s will.

THE LORD IS TO BE FEARED!

⁸ Then David was angry because the LORD's wrath had broken out against Uzzah, and to this day that place is called Perez Uzzah. ⁹ David was afraid of the LORD that day and said, 'How can the ark of the LORD ever come to me?' (2 Samuel 6:8-9)

DEFINITION OF ' HOLY FEAR' (New Bible Dictionary)

"This comes from the believer's apprehension of the living God. According to Luther, the natural man cannot fear God perfectly; according to Rudolf Otto, he is 'quite unable even to shudder *grauen*) or feel horror in the real sense of the word'. Holy fear, on the other hand, is God-given, enabling men to reverence God's authority, obey his commandments and hate and shun all form of evil (Je. 32:40; cf. Gn. 22:12; Heb. 5:7). It is, moreover, the beginning (or principle) of wisdom (Ps. 111:10); the secret of uprightness (Pr. 8:13); a feature of the people in whom God delights (Ps. 147:11); and the whole duty of man (Ec. 12:13). It is also one of the divine qualifications of the Messiah (Is. 11:2-3).

In the OT, largely because of the law's legal sanctions, true religion is often regarded as synonymous with the fear of God (cf. Je. 2:19; Ps. 34:11, Moffatt), and even in NT times the term 'walking in the fear of the Lord' was used in connection with the early Christians. Gentile adherents of the synagogue were called 'God-fearers' (Acts 10:2, etc.; cf. Phil. 2:12).

In the NT generally, however, emphasis is laid on God as loving and forgiving, the One who through Christ gives to men the spirit of sonship (Rom. 8:15), and enables them boldly to face up to life (2 Tim. 1:6-7) and death (Heb. 2:15) without fear. Nevertheless, a reverent fear remains; for the awesomeness of God has not changed, and there is a day of judgment to be met (2 Cor. 5:10f.). Godly fear stimulates the believer to seek

holiness (2 Cor. 7:1), and is reflected in his attitude towards his fellow-Christians (Eph. 5:21)." 4

King David reacted to the death of Uzzah in the predictable human way! "God, I am doing this good thing for you and this is how you treat me!" He could not immediately understand what he had done wrong and reacted in the fashion most of us would! Anger is a very human emotion, and not as far below the surface as we would like to think, when we are provoked.

David' s anger turned into fear as he started to realise the full extent of what the Lord had done. Would he be next - or his people? Then, realising his disobedience and seeing the difficult situation he was now in, he decided he needed time to think things over.

THE PROBLEM

In these days of the ' Age of Grace' , which emphasise God' s love for us, we all too often forget that God has a balanced character, one of both love and judgement. We are now experiencing the love, but on the aptly named ' Judgement Day' , we will face His judgement for the things we have - or have not - done.

¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. (2 Corinthians 5:10)

David experienced God' s reaction in a most dramatic way. Quite justifiably, a brave warrior who slayed Goliath and many others, knew he had met his match - and was afraid! A sobering lesson for each and every one of us!

²⁶ If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, ²⁷ but only a fearful

4 *The New Bible Dictionary*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1962.

expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.³⁰ For we know him who said, ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ and again, ‘The Lord will judge his people.’³¹ It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Hebrews 10:26-7,30)

Even Jesus had a reverent fear of the Father.

During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. (Hebrews 5:7)

As was prophesied by Isaiah.

² The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him— the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD—³ and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. (Isaiah 11:2-3)

THE LESSON

As did David and Jesus, we too, are to fear the Lord. This is not the negative fear of doing nothing in case we provoke judgement, but rather, a positive motivator to put our lives right with God, now!

Through the love of Jesus in dying on the cross, our sin has been forgiven. This however is only one side of the balance. The side of the balance we hear about all the time, in this, the Age of Grace.

⁶ Through love and faithfulness sin is atoned for; through the fear of the LORD a man avoids evil. (Proverbs 16:6)

The Bible tells us that if we are prepared to judge ourselves now, and make changes, we will not be subject to judgement later.

²⁷ Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of

the Lord. ²⁸ A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. ²⁹ For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. ³⁰ That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. ³¹ But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. ³² When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world.
(1 Corinthians 11:27-32)

So, there is a call for us to change our lives to conform and perform to the will of the Father, to be holy, as reflected in Jesus through the Word as taught to us by the Holy Spirit.

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 2: A people fearing the Lord now, conforming to Christ in holiness, in order to avoid judgement later.

GIVING UP OUR OWN WAYS

¹⁰ *He was not willing to take the ark of the LORD to be with him in the City of David. Instead, he took it aside to the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite. (2 Samuel 6:10)*

At that moment, David realized that, in spite of his good intentions and enthusiasm, he was acting outside of God' s will. So immediately, he stopped and went into a ' holding pattern' .

Interestingly, David left the Ark in the care of Obed-Edom, quite likely a member of his trusted person guard, comprising mainly of Philistine mercenaries from Gath, those who had attached themselves to him during his earlier sojourn in their country. Obed-Edom however, was a Levite who apparently had also earlier lived in Gath, and likely joined David with the mercenaries. So he was the perfect person with whom to leave the Ark - a loyal Levite.

THE PROBLEM

Very often, we are so busy doing our own thing for God that we don' t hear Him when He speaks to us, when he tells us we are not in accordance with His desires. And we wonder why we miss out on the blessing!

“And now this admonition is for you, O priests. ² If you do not listen, and if you do not set your heart to honor my name,” says the LORD Almighty, ‘I will send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings. Yes, I have already cursed them, because you have not set your heart to honor me. (Malachi 2:1)

But the real situation is far more serious than simply missing out on a blessing! For Jesus said that if we do not hear what God is saying to us, we do not truly belong to Him!

⁴⁷ He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God.”(John 8:47)

THE LESSON

We are charged to walk in the Lord' s ways, as was Joshua upon assuming leadership of Israel.

³ Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. ⁴ The angel said to those who were standing before him, ‘Take off his filthy clothes.’ Then he said to Joshua, ‘See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you.’ ⁵ Then I said, ‘Put a clean turban on his head.’ So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him, while the angel of the LORD stood by. ⁶ The angel of the LORD gave this charge to Joshua: ⁷ ‘This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘If you will walk in my ways and keep my requirements, then you will govern my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you a place among these standing here. (Malachi2:3-7)

We are promised that our enemies will be subdued when we listen to the Lord and do not follow our own ways, no matter how good they may seem to our human logic. David finally understood this, but only after the death of Uzzah. If David had listened first, his friend Uzzah need not have died. Having learned this lesson here, David applied it in his future conquests, seeking the Lord before making decisions. But when he again didn' t do so, he got into further trouble e.g. with Bathsheba. But none of us are yet perfect, are we?

*¹³ If my people would but listen to me, if Israel would follow my ways,
¹⁴ how quickly would I subdue their enemies and turn my hand against their foes! (Psalm 81:13-14)*

The words of Jesus to the Jews during the time of His ministry still apply to the church today. We don' t listen! But if we will, we will be healed.

¹⁰ *The disciples came to him and asked, ‘Why do you speak to the people in parables?’* ¹¹ *He replied, ‘The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them.* ¹² *Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.* ¹³ *This is why I speak to them in parables: ‘Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand.* ¹⁴ *In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: ‘‘You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.* ¹⁵ *For this people’s heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.’ (Matthew 13:10-15)*

Yes, King David responded to His desire to bring the Ark back to Jerusalem in an enthusiastic, but human way. So much of our ' church' activity develops out of a similar heart. Born out of good intentions, not God instruction. One too many "O' s"! After his initial anger with God, David realized what he had done, that he had moved in his own, considerable strength. He learned the lesson. He took a break to seek the Lord' s will.

In Jesus time, sheep would respond to the call of the shepherd they knew. They would only respond to their own shepherd, obeying his instructions and follow his leading. When called, the sheep would stop what they were doing, normally foraging for food or resting, and follow their master. For they trusted the shepherd to guide them, knowing that his way would lead them to better pastures. So it is for us. The Great Commission will not be fulfilled unless and until we do it His way.

²⁷ *My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.* ²⁸ *I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.* ²⁹ *My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand.* ³⁰ *I and the Father are one.” (John 10:27-30)*

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 3: A people prepared to put aside their own methods in order to do things God' s way.

OBEDIENCE IS BLESSED!

¹¹ *The ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite for three months, and the LORD blessed him and his entire household. (2 Samuel 6:11)*

Because David acknowledged what he had done was outside God' s will and stopped doing it, we are told that Obed-Edom' s house was blessed. By stopping and waiting to hear from God, through the Word and the Spirit, we are not ' giving up' as it may appear in peoples eyes and to our pride, but are truly honoring God.

If we are willing to walk in His ways and not our own, we will be blessed.

³² *'Now then, my sons, listen to me; blessed are those who keep my ways. (Proverbs 8:32)*

THE PROBLEM

The problem is that we don' t understand what true blessing is. We immediately look towards the material, the financial, things that we, in our humanity, believe will make us ' happy' .

THE LESSON

The real, practical question is "What is blessing?" In our humanity, the first thing we think of is financial or material gain. As it was in the Old Testament. In those times blessing was measured in terms of territory and possessions. The high point of the Old Testament was seen in the kingdom of Israel under King Solomon. At that time Israel was the leading regional power. However, through disobedience to God, from Solomon onwards the kingdom, the territory and wealth of Israel, was gradually lost and the people taken into captivity, before a partial, subservient restoration was allowed by the Babylonians.

In the New Testament however, blessing takes on a spiritual connotation, as expressed in the most famous of Jesus sermons, the Sermon on the Mount, which is all about blessings.

The Beatitudes

5 *Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ² and he began to teach them, saying:*

³ *'Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

⁴ *Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.*

⁵ *Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.*

⁶ *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.*

⁷ *Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.*

⁸ *Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.*

⁹ *Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called sons of God.*

¹⁰ *Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

¹¹ *'Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. (Matthew 5:1-12)*

Blessings today are the rewards of sacrifice, not acquisition! Yes, it is only through sacrifices and servanthood that we truly enter the kingdom. Certainly not travelling there in our personal Lear Jet!

Jesus came to turn worldly values upside down. He had no possessions.

²⁰ *Jesus replied, 'Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.'* (Matthew 8:20)

He was on the run from Herod (the fox) and the Romans (the eagle birds). Jesus owned no home. He had no wardrobe of spare clothes.

²⁴ *And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get.* (Mark 15:24)

He even had to borrow a donkey ride to make His ' grand entrance' into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, ² saying to them, 'Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. ³ If anyone asks you, 'Why are you doing this?' tell him, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.'" (Mark 11:1-3)

Imagine a king today turning up to his coronation in a borrowed coach and horses! Not the done thing - then or now!

Yet Jesus was so blessed that He is seated in the ultimate place of honour, at God' s right hand.

¹⁹ *After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God.* (Mark 16:19)

When I mentioned this to my wife Kathy, she told me a story of a friend whom the Lord said he would bless while her husband was away on a ministry trip. She looked forward to this! The form of the ' blessing' however, was that the Lord took the opportunity to ' heal her' of something in her life that was not of Him. It was a painful, not a happy time! But the end result was the blessing of becoming more like Jesus, as an area of dross was removed from her life.

True blessing then, in New Testament terms, is to become more like Jesus, as is expressed in the Beatitudes.

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 4: A people seeking the ultimate blessing of becoming like Jesus.

REJOICING IN GOD' S GOODNESS

¹² *Now King David was told, "The LORD has blessed the household of Obed-Edom and everything he has, because of the ark of God." So David went down and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with rejoicing. (2 Samuel 6:12)*

David was pleased that his faithful servant Obed-Edom and his house, was blessed. But he was even happier, that through this blessing, the Lord showed him he had done the right thing in leaving the Ark with his friend, while repenting of organizing the Ark' s return His own way. Of being obedient to, and following the ways of the Lord. He was then able to return to Obed-Edom' s house in the outlying area of Jerusalem, and following the Lord' s pattern and instruction, confidently return with the Ark, rejoicing all the way.

THE PROBLEM

Godly rejoicing grows out of obedience. Generally though, we rejoice in doing things our own way.

THE LESSON

As I write I am reminded of the old hymn that goes, "Rejoice in the Lord always, again I say rejoice", which is taken from:

⁴ *Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! (Philippians 4:4)*

Godly rejoicing however, doesn' t come from ' celebrating' , as David found out during his first attempt to bring the Ark to Jerusalem. True rejoicing comes out of righteousness, out of being obedient to God. Three confirmations, all from Psalms, that great repository of life experience, follow.

¹⁰ *Let those who love the LORD hate evil,*

*for he guards the lives of his faithful ones
and delivers them from the hand of the wicked.*

*¹¹ Light is shed upon the righteous
and joy on the upright in heart.*

*¹² Rejoice in the LORD, you who are righteous,
and praise his holy name. (Psalm 97:10-12)*

*⁹ All mankind will fear;
they will proclaim the works of God
and ponder what he has done.*

*¹⁰ Let the righteous rejoice in the LORD
and take refuge in him;
let all the upright in heart praise him! (Psalm 64:9-10)*

*¹¹ Rejoice in the LORD and be glad, you righteous;
sing, all you who are upright in heart! (Psalm 32:11)*

Rejoicing, and its associated 'fruit of the Spirit', joy, are God given, not human driven. Rejoicing is so much more than celebrating. It is found in knowing that we are doing things God's way, doing them in His will.

Now David could confidently approach the Ark with rejoicing as he knew he was in God's will and way. For this time, the Levites carried the Ark on their shoulders, as per the instructions first given to Moses.

*And the Levites carried the ark of God with the poles on their shoulders, as
Moses had commanded in accordance with the word of the LORD.
(1 Chronicles 15:15)*

It is the same for those of us today who desperately seek everything of the Lord. When we are prepared to do things His way, as He instructs, we can truly rejoice in His goodness.

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 5: A people moving in the will of the Lord who can rejoice in all situations.

A WALK OF SACRIFICE

¹³ *When those who were carrying the ark of the LORD had taken six steps, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf. (2 Samuel 6:13)*

Many preachers say David made sacrifices every 6 paces but this isn't specifically stated in the wording.

There were three reasons why David made this twin sacrifice after 6 paces.

1. As repentance for getting things wrong the first time!
2. As thanksgiving for the blessings on the house of Obed-Edom.
3. As a sign of obedience to God's ways.

THE PROBLEM

Today, we are taught that Jesus made the final sacrifice and that no other sacrifice is required. While this is true regarding the restoration of our relationship with God the father, i.e. salvation, it is not so when it comes to our walk with Jesus. For as Jesus sacrificed everything to the Father, so we are also to sacrifice our lives to Jesus.

THE LESSON

A three part lesson on sacrifice.

1. Understanding the gravity of sin and the need of quick repentance to keep short accounts with the Lord - and doing it! For God's judgement is a fearsome thing.

²⁶ If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, ²⁷ but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. ²⁸ Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled

the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know him who said, 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' and again, 'The Lord will judge his people.' ³¹ It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.
(Hebrews 10:26-31)

For God knows everything we do and are, judging our thoughts as well as our actions. Nothing can be hidden from Him!

¹² For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. ¹³ Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.
(Hebrews 4:12-13)

We learn that by living righteously now we can avoid God's judgement later.

³¹ But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment.
(1 Corinthians 11:31)

2. Today we are to offer sacrificial praise, to thank Jesus for what He has done for us. Not just a few 'religious hallelujahs' but heartfelt praise from the very depths of our being!

¹¹ The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a sin offering, but the bodies are burned outside the camp. ¹² And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood. ¹³ Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore. ¹⁴ For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come. ¹⁵ Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that confess his name. ¹⁶ And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

(Hebrews 13:11-16)

3. The final sacrifice, the one that most distinguishes the disciple from the believer, is the sacrifice of our life to Jesus. Putting aside our own dreams and ambitions in order to do the will of the Father, as Jesus did, no matter what the cost. Three times He confirmed, even though in the human aspect of His nature He didn't want to, He would lay down His life for the Father.

⁴² He went away a second time and prayed, 'My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.' ⁴³ *When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy.* ⁴⁴ *So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.*
(Matthew 26:42-44)

And the same is to apply to us! We are no longer to follow the pattern of the world, but be transformed into the pattern of Christ, submitting to the will of the Father, even at the cost of our life.

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. ² Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Romans 12:1-2)

While some are called to physical martyrdom, for most of us, our death is to be a spiritual one to our own nature and life. It is only through this sacrifice that satan can be overcome.

¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: 'Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.' ¹¹ They overcame him

by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.

(Revelation 12:10-12)

Dying to our own nature is what our walk with Jesus is all about.

⁴ So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God. ⁵ For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death. ⁶ But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code. (Romans 7:4-6)

Our spiritual and natural natures are in conflict.

¹⁶ So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. ¹⁷ For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law. (Galatians 5:16-18)

We are instructed to be like Jesus and not follow our natural nature.

¹⁴ Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature. (Romans 13:14)

In fact, contrary to the 'easy Christianity' theology that abounds today, if we don't live as Jesus did, we are not truly His followers!

⁹ You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of

righteousness. ¹¹ And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you. ¹² Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation—but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. ¹³ For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live. (Romans 8:9-13)

Indeed, the consequences of our continuing to sin are dire!

²⁶ If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, ²⁷ but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. ²⁸ Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know him who said, ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ and again, ‘The Lord will judge his people.’ ³¹ It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.
(Hebrews 10:26-31)

But the desire of those who are ' serious' about God, having sacrificed their lives for Christ, is to become ' sons of God' as Jesus was, is, and evermore shall be!

¹⁴ because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.”(Romans 8:14-15)

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 6: A sacrificial people, desperate to become ' sons of God' .

A PEOPLE OF WORSHIP

¹⁴ David, wearing a linen ephod, danced before the LORD with all his might, ¹⁵ while he and the entire house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouts and the sound of trumpets. (2 Samuel 6:14-15)

Most teaching on the Tabernacle of David centers round worship. For not only are people captivated by the picture of David dancing in simple priestly robes, but also, David' s Tent was open to public view. But we will consider that a little later. Let us now enjoy David' s celebration.

THE PROBLEM

The problem is simple. In worship we are restrained - by our own inhibitions, by our fear of what others may think, by the desire of leadership to conduct services ' decently and in good order' . This applies to me as much as it likely applies to you, particularly if you are grounded in Western or Asian culture. For much of our worship is culturally, rather than godly, based.

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the beginning of the 20th century, resulting in the Pentecostal movement arising in its various guises, saw a breakthrough in this area of worship. However, Pentecostalism too, soon became institutionalized, until today predominantly, it is but a shadow of its former self.

THE LESSON

David wore a linen ephod. Linen represents righteous acts.

⁶ Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: 'Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. ⁷ Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made

herself ready. ⁸ *Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.”(Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.) (Revelation 19:6-8)*

David' s dancing before the Lord with all his might was righteous in God' s sight!

By wearing a simple priestly garment, David was foreshadowing the king/priests, the overcomers, who will reign and rule with Jesus in the millennial kingdom.

⁹ *And they sang a new song: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. ¹⁰ You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.’(Revelation 5:9-10)*

While the remainder of the people were shouting and blowing on trumpets, significantly, they are not recorded as joining him in his ' hundred fold' celebrations. For only relatively few are.

A heart for exuberant, sold out worship of the Lord is a key characteristic of the end time church God is calling to Himself today.

²⁸ *One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, ‘Of all the commandments, which is the most important?’ ²⁹ ‘The most important one,’ answered Jesus, ‘is this: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ ³¹ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12:28-31)*

Our love is expressed in both song and actions.

The final Psalm is a superb example of all-embracing worship.

¹ Praise the LORD.
 Praise God in his sanctuary;
 praise him in his mighty heavens.
² Praise him for his acts of power;
 praise him for his surpassing greatness.
³ Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet,
 praise him with the harp and lyre,
⁴ praise him with tambourine and dancing,
 praise him with the strings and flute,
⁵ praise him with the clash of cymbals,
 praise him with resounding cymbals.
⁶ Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.
 Praise the LORD. (Psalm 150)

We are to worship the Father with our whole selves, not just in spirit but also in truth. Not just in church on a Sunday but all day, every day.

Jesus declared, ‘Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.’ (John 4:21-24)

Trumpets prophetically announce the rule and reign of Jesus, who has been honoured with the highest place in heaven, for dying on the cross in our place.

After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, ‘Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.’ ² At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. ³ And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. A rainbow, resembling an emerald, encircled the throne. (Revelation 4:1-3)

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 7: A people of exuberant worship, putting Jesus in the highest place.

RELIGIOUS REJECTION!

*¹⁶ As the ark of the LORD was entering the City of David, Michal daughter of Saul watched from a window. And when she saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD, she despised him in her heart.
(2 Samuel 6:16)*

The reaction to the end time church from the religious establishment is one of rejection. Michal represents the lineage of King Saul, whose ' religion' was focused on him, not God. In a human sense, all was going for him - height, strength, and good looks. The people' s choice! But not God' s!

THE PROBLEM

Today too, the religious establishment is primarily self-focused. How can we grow the biggest church? Become the biggest denomination! We are the true repositories of God' s truth! Let' s build a larger church! More people! Become more professional! Water down the Word to be more acceptable, to appeal to a wider group! Create a multi-layered clergy/laity hierarchy with titles and uniforms! Happy to stick with the revelation on which the movement was founded, for they have it all, or at least, don' t want any more! With a clergy promoted, often by implication, as an intermediary between man and God!

Summarized simply, the church/movement is worshipped more than God Himself is!

THE LESSON

Therefore, because of this different focus, the establishment sees as being extreme, impractical, misguided, off the edge, disrespectful of authority, those who are 100% sold out to God and His will, rather than blindly following the dictates of the religious system.

While numbers of people are simply rebellious, just wanting to do ' their own thing' , truly sold out Jesus believers seek out and enact the will of the Lord for their lives.

This is misunderstood by the church, (a type of Martha), as not being prepared to pull their weight and do the work! The Mary' s (a type of the end time church) who want to sit at the feet of Jesus are criticized and rejected.

³⁸ *As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. ³⁹ She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, 'Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!'*

⁴¹ 'Martha, Martha,' the Lord answered, 'you are worried and upset about many things, ⁴² but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.' (Luke 10:38-42)

Mary went down the unconventional path, choosing "*what is better*" and, what is more, "*it will not be taken away from her.*"

We have already quoted the ' Greatest Commandment' but it bears repeating here. We are to love the Lord with everything we have! No room for competition!

²⁹ *'The most important one,' answered Jesus, 'is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' ³¹ The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these.'* (Mark 12:29-31)

Jesus himself suffered rejection.

²⁸ *All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this.* ²⁹ *They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him down the cliff.* ³⁰ *But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way. (Luke 4:28-30)*

This was prophesied by Isaiah:

Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ² He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. ³ He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. (Isaiah 53:1-3)

Confirmed by Jesus:

²² *And he said, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.” (Luke 9:22)*

And to be experienced by us.

⁴ *As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him— ⁵ you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 2:4)*

I realize you may well say that these scriptures were referring to rejection by non-believers. But the biggest enemy of Jesus was the established religious hierarchy. Sadly, we too have created a church system with laws of theology, many unbiblical, taught as truth by highly qualified teachers. A system where pastors and ministers, elders and bishops act as priests, inserting themselves, either deliberately, or inadvertently by implication, between God and their people. A system where the needs of the church are put before God' s true will in a given situation.

Personally, over the years, Walking With Jesus Ministries has been rejected, not by the people, but by many in the church hierarchy. For years I blamed myself beating up God and myself, as to where I was going wrong. I sought counsel but received no explanation. Spirits would rise up in others in situations where the Holy Spirit was present. But never once, would a rational argument be presented. I was at a loss.

However, in more recent times the Lord has brought to me brothers with similar experiences, ones who have been able to better explain what is happening. They have shown me that these reactions are not personal but spiritual. What a relief and release!

For religious spirits can rise up in us all - and I don' t exclude myself! But it is apparent that there is spirit of control, particularly over the Holy Spirit, as well as of people, in many of our churches today. Sadly, particularly so within those of the Pentecostal persuasion.

No, I am now neither bemused nor bitter. Indeed, our main ministry is to pastors and leaders, encouraging them and their people to search out the will of God for themselves. To give their whole life and beings to Jesus, to *' leap and dance before the Lord'* spiritually, and physically where possible, as King David did, while accepting that the Michals of the religious world will not be impressed.

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 8: A people who reject religious control in order to seek God for themselves.

A TENT OF SIMPLICITY

¹⁷ They brought the ark of the LORD and set it in its place inside the tent that David had pitched for it, (2 Samuel 6:17a)

David pitched a tent, perhaps near his palace, or on the site of the future Solomon' s temple. No mention is made of the structure. No doubt because it was relatively simple and not worth commenting on. Unlike the Tabernacle of Moses that preceded it, or the future Solomon' s Temple.

Being a simple tent, it was but a temporary structure, one designed only to house the Ark until the Temple was built. In the event, the Ark remained there for 40 years. David had hoped to build the Temple earlier, but God told him that his son, Solomon, was to do it instead.

In Scripture, the glory of Solomon' s Temple symbolizes the even greater glory of the Millennial Reign of Jesus yet to come. In the Temple:

Then the temple of the LORD was filled with a cloud, ¹⁴ and the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the temple of God. (2 Chronicles 5:13b-14)

In the Millennium:

⁴ I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. ⁵ (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years. (Revelation 20:4-6)

In sequence then, the tent symbolizes the short period immediately prior to the return of Jesus, when the end time church will arise and minister to the world.

The Day of the Lord

²⁸ ‘And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. ²⁹ Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days. ³⁰ I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke. ³¹ The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. ³² And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the LORD has said, among the survivors whom the LORD calls. (Joel 2:28-32)

This will be done through the end time church, symbolized by David' s Tabernacle or tent.

¹¹ ‘In that day I will restore David’s fallen tent. I will repair its broken places, restore its ruins, and build it as it used to be, ¹² so that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations that bear my name,” declares the LORD, who will do these things. ¹³ ‘The days are coming,” declares the LORD, ‘when the reaper will be overtaken by the plowman and the planter by the one treading grapes. New wine will drip from the mountains and flow from all the hills. (Amos 11:9-13)

And Israel will be restored.

¹⁴ I will bring back my exiled people Israel; they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them. They will plant vineyards and drink their wine; they will make gardens and eat their fruit. ¹⁵ I will plant Israel in their own land, never again to be uprooted from the land I have given them,” says the LORD your God. (Amos 11:14-15)

THE PROBLEM

Since the early church age ended, man has sought to build ' edifices' to glorify God. These ' cathedrals' , whether they be stone or crystal, are built in the Old Testament image of the Temple, not upon the New Testament church principle of oneness of heart with Jesus.

THE LESSON

Jesus came to bring a ' new way' , moving away from the edifices and formality of religion under the Law, to one based not on wealth, but on love of God, and of our fellow believers, as Jesus did.

¹⁶ This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. ¹⁷ If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? ¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. ¹⁹ This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence ²⁰ whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. (1 John 3:16-20)

Sadly, an ongoing emphasis on tradition and edifices has continued to plague the church, enveloping traditionalists and pentecostals, conformists and non-conformists alike. We all quickly establish traditions and build structures, supposedly to the glory of God, but in reality, as monuments to man.

Yet God' s heart has always been for people' s hearts! In the Old Testament:

⁷ I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the LORD. They will be my people, and I will be their God, for they will return to me with all their heart. (Jeremiah 24:7)

And the New, as Simon the Sorcerer found out!

²⁰ Peter answered: 'May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! ²¹ You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. (Acts 8:20-21)

While we easily criticize Simon, in reality, he is little different to us!

Seeking contributions from a congregation for money to build a building is far easier than gathering funds for working amongst people. Yet we persist in building our ' tabernacles' , even though they are no longer required. Our ' tabernacle' is Jesus himself - in heaven!

The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, ² and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man. ³ Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, and so it was necessary for this one also to have something to offer. ⁴ If he were on earth, he would not be a priest, for there are already men who offer the gifts prescribed by the law. ⁵ They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: 'See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.' ⁶ But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises. (Hebrews 8:1-6)

In the 96 mentions of the ' church' in the New Testament, not one refers to a dedicated church building. The church is people! Of His body, not an earthly temple!

²⁹ After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church— ³⁰ for we are members of his body. (Ephesians 5:29-30)

This ' marriage is indeed a mystery, one most of us do not understand.

³² *This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. (Ephesians 5:32)*

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 9: A people being as Christ to the community.

DAVID - A TYPE OF THE FUTURE

and David sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before the LORD. (2 Samuel 6:17b)

In doing this, David broke all the rules. Even priests had earlier died for unauthorized entry into the presence of God in the Holy of Holies! (Nadab and Abihu: Leviticus 10:1-2) Yet here we have David, one not of the priestly line, making sacrifices before the Lord and not being 'zapped'!

Amazing! Something was different with Him. Let's investigate.

THE PROBLEM

We are taught in our churches that Jesus did it all and we are now free to move into the presence of God. While this is true 'positionally', we are not so well informed of the need to enter His presence 'experientially', through holy living. Therefore righteousness, effectively discipleship, is not accorded a high priority in the church today.

THE LESSON

King David had a spirit different to other men.

The principle of the blessing for a 'different spirit' was earlier established with Caleb, who, along with Joshua, was able to enter the Promised Land, while the remainder of his generation died in the desert.

²⁴ But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it. (Numbers 14:24)

David was of a similar spirit, or heart. One of wholehearted commitment to the Lord!

² *After removing Saul, he made David their king. He testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.'* (Acts 13:22)

Of course, David too was in the line of Jesus.

²³ *'From this man's descendants God has brought to Israel the Savior Jesus, as he promised.'* (Acts 13:23)

David did not go before the Lord with incense (symbolic of worship), as Nadab and Abihu did, but rather, with sacrifices of blood, of repentance, of humility before the Almighty Lord of the universe. We do well not to forget. David was well prepared, both physically, as was required in those days of physical sacrifice, and spiritually, for he had a godly heart.

For 450 years the Ark had been hidden behind the veil in Moses Tabernacle. But for this brief period of 40 years, because of the heart of one man, all the people could view the home of the presence of the Lord.

Today, the presence of the Lord is viewed by the world through those followers of Jesus who reflect the image of Jesus.

²⁷ *To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*
(Colossians 1:27)

The image of Christ isn't something we receive at conversion but is progressively developed throughout our lives, as Paul continued.

²⁸ *We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.* ²⁹ *To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.*
(Colossians 1:28-9)

As a dedicated follower of Jesus we are to be transformed, not merely changed a little!

² *Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*
(Romans 12:2)

Those who know God' s will and do it, are those with a David heart.

⁹ *And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; (Hebrews 5:9)*

King David, acting for the moment as both King and Priest, is a picture of the fully sold out disciples who will form the body of ' kings and priests' of the end time church.

¹⁰ *And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. (Revelation 5:6-10) 5*

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 10: A people with ongoing access to the presence of God.

THE BLESSING OF OBEDIENCE

*¹⁸ After he had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD Almighty. ¹⁹ Then he gave a loaf of bread, a cake of dates and a cake of raisins to each person in the whole crowd of Israelites, both men and women. And all the people went to their homes.
(2 Samuel 6:18-19)*

David had finally succeeded in returning the Ark to Jerusalem. Besides consolidating his political power, now having both the political and religious streams of Jewish life centered in Jerusalem, personally he was residing in close proximity to the Ark of the presence of God. He could literally, as well as spiritually, come into God' s presence whenever he wished. What a reason for celebration for one whose life was sold out to the Lord!

THE PROBLEM

Yet, in spite of His closeness to the Lord, David still did things his own way. He wanted to please the Lord. He truly wanted to do his best for the Lord. Yet he didn' t ask God first. Just like us! For while we too have hearts for God, we still insist on glorifying Him the way we think is best, without asking Him first. Nothing changes!

THE LESSON

David, no doubt relieved, as well as being overjoyed, blessed the people in the natural, with gifts of food. Physical provision was the Old Testament way of blessing, peaking of course, in the splendor of Solomon' s kingdom.

In this Age of Grace, the one of New Testament blessing, our blessing is spiritual, to be obtained through holiness.

³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. ⁴
For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. (Ephesians 1:3-6)

This change in blessing between the two Testaments is confirmed here.

⁵⁰ I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.
(1 Corinthians 15:50)

Unfortunately, in our human nature, we still look to the Old Covenant blessing of physical prosperity. Yet God has chosen those who are materially poor but rich in faith to inherit the kingdom.

⁵ Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? (James 2:5)

Our blessing today is in the spiritual realms.

³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.
(Ephesians 1:3)

The blessing comes through obedience. Jesus too had to learn obedience, and attained perfection by doing so.

⁸ Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered ⁹ and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him (Hebrews 5:8-9)

Obedience leads to righteousness which, in turn, leads to the spiritual blessing of kingdom inheritance.

¹⁶ Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? (Romans 6:16)

⁸ But about the Son he says, 'Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom. (Hebrews 1:8)

Unlike the Old Testament where kingship, status and wealth were the signs of God' s favour and blessing, our blessing comes through personal sacrifice, servanthood and obedience to God' s will, as was the case with Jesus. For He operated under New Covenant provisions.

⁵ Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: ⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross! ⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:5-11)

The spiritual has replaced the physical.

¹⁰ This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people..... ¹³ By calling this covenant 'new,' he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear. (Hebrews 8:10,13)

For our true blessing is in building the kingdom of God within.

²⁰ Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, *“The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, ²¹ nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is within you.”* (Luke 17:20-21)

This is a kingdom that the overcomers will inherit physically upon the return of Jesus.

⁵⁰ I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹

Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— ⁵² in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³ For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. ⁵⁴ When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: ‘Death has been swallowed up in victory.’
(1 Corinthians 15:50-54)

To rule and reign with Him for a thousand years.

²¹ *To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.*
(Revelation 3:21)

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 11: A people seeking the ultimate blessing of ruling and reigning with Christ.

REJECTED - AS JESUS WAS!

²⁰ *When David returned home to bless his household, Michal daughter of Saul came out to meet him and said, ‘How the king of Israel has distinguished himself today, disrobing in the sight of the slave girls of his servants as any vulgar fellow would!’* ²¹ *David said to Michal, ‘It was before the LORD, who chose me rather than your father or anyone from his house when he appointed me ruler over the LORD’s people Israel—I will celebrate before the LORD. ²² I will become even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes. But by these slave girls you spoke of, I will be held in honor.’* ²³ *And Michal daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death. (1 Samuel 6:20-23)*

David came home full of the joy of the Lord, ready to bless his family as he had the families of those who had brought the Ark with him. And he received a totally unexpected reception!

At this time he had at least 3 wives, Michal, Ahinoam and Abigail. We don't know the reactions of the other two, as the Biblical account centers upon the response of Michal, the daughter of King Saul. For Michal is a type of the religious church, an inheritance from her father.

Imagine the letdown for David when his wife confronted him! He had blessed God and God had blessed him in return. Now it was his family's turn. But when he received the unexpected reaction, he still placed God first. He understood the religious spirit now found in his wife, for he had experienced its effects for 10 long years during the time King Saul sought to kill him. He didn't let her attitude deter him and Michal suffered the consequence of the ultimate shame for a Jewish woman of the time, barrenness.

THE PROBLEM

God anointed King Saul through the prophet Samuel, as king. Under the Jewish culture of the time, this encompassed all areas of life, including God's religious inheritance.

Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on Saul's head and kissed him, saying, 'Has not the LORD anointed you leader over his inheritance?' (1 Samuel 10:1)

In a time of stress, under battle conditions, Saul disobeyed God greatly, by making the sacrifices himself instead of waiting for Samuel to come.

¹¹ 'What have you done?' asked Samuel. Saul replied, 'When I saw that the men were scattering, and that you did not come at the set time, and that the Philistines were assembling at Micmash, ¹² I thought, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the LORD's favor.' So I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering.' (1 Samuel 13:11-12)

And he paid the price!

¹³ 'You acted foolishly,' Samuel said. 'You have not kept the command the LORD your God gave you; if you had, he would have established your kingdom over Israel for all time. ¹⁴ But now your kingdom will not endure; the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the LORD's command.' (1 Samuel 13:13-14)

Nothing has changed. As Michal inherited the trait of her father, many in the church today following their own ideas, doing what they think will be best for God. They inevitably fail to see, or accept, when God truly moves.

THE LESSON

King David's parade to Jerusalem can be likened to Jesus making the same journey on Psalm Sunday. It was a time of rejoicing.

⁸ *A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.* ⁹ *The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David!’ ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!’ ‘Hosanna in the highest!’* (Matthew 21:8-9)

However, this was followed a few days later by His complete and utter rejection, at the instigation of the priests.

²⁰ *But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus executed.* ²¹ *‘Which of the two do you want me to release to you?’ asked the governor. “ Barabbas,” they answered.* ²² *‘What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Christ?’ Pilate asked. They all answered, ‘Crucify him!’* ²³ *‘Why? What crime has he committed?’ asked Pilate. But they shouted all the louder, ‘Crucify him!’* (Matthew 27:22-23)

We generally look at this pattern as applying between believers and non-believers. While it does have some parallel, the reality is that in both cases, the rejection was from those of the supposedly godly line.

"But surely this situation doesn't apply today?" you might well ask. Sadly, it has always existed in the church, right from the very early days of the New Testament church.

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: ² *Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.* ³ *For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.* ⁴ *They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.* (2 Timothy 4:1-4)

It takes a long time, even for those who are dedicated to God, particularly ones who are capable in the natural, to learn that God' s ways are better than our own.

²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength. (1 Corinthians 1:25)

We must learn to rest in God, not pushing on in our own strength but waiting on Him.

⁹ There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; ¹⁰ for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. ¹¹ Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience. (Hebrews 4:9-11)

But reality is, many in the church will not understand and will reject those who desire to be ' 100 fold' Christians.

⁸ Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. ⁹ He who has ears, let him hear.” (Matthew 13:8-9)

Those who work for the Lord, because He said it, not just because it is a church programme.

²³ Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, ²⁴ since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. (Colossians 3:23-24)

Those in the church who are tied to its traditions, its theologies, who effectively place ' their church' above God, do not understand those who seek to follow the Lord with all they have. Yet, it is these ones who are sold out to Jesus, who will inherit the kingdom of God.

³² *“Well said, teacher,” the man replied. “You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. ³³ To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.” ³⁴ When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.”* (Mark 12:32-4)

Rejection is a powerful force. We like belonging to ' the group' . Being rejected by those in the world is hurtful enough, but understandable. But being rejected by our brothers and sisters in the church is a 100 times more painful! For they are our family in Christ - and we are going to have to spend eternity with them! How' s that for a scary thought! But God is gracious!

Once again there is another verse we use in a Christian/non-Christian context, but it has an even greater application within the church.

²² *Blessed are you when men hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man.* (Luke 6:22)

For there is a group of people the Lord is calling out to Him today who are to be capable of overcoming satan. Not just those who believe in Jesus, (*the blood of the Lamb*), nor those who have also experienced the release of Holy Spirit power in their lives, (*the word of their testimony*). But those who are prepared to sacrifice all aims, ambitions and desires to the will of the Father, even being prepared to die for Him physically as well as spiritually, be that required of them.

¹⁰ *Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: “Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. ¹¹ They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.* (Revelation 12:10-11)

Yes, those who do not understand will reject us, but like King David when sarcastically abused by his wife Michal, we will place the Lord first.

David said to Michal, ‘It was before the LORD, who chose me rather than your father or anyone from his house when he appointed me ruler over the LORD’s people Israel—I will celebrate before the LORD. ²² I will become even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes. (1 Samuel 6:21-22a)

No, the rich and the religious people will not understand, but those who are poor in the eyes of the world but rich in their dedication to the Lord will, as David explained.

*But by these slave girls you spoke of, I will be held in honor.”
(1 Samuel 6:22b)*

A church of the poor, the misfits, those who cannot possibly succeed in their own strength, but need to rely fully upon their Lord.

As Jesus said to the 'organizer', Martha, (a picture of today's religious church), about Mary, the one who loved the Lord with all she had;

⁴¹ ‘Martha, Martha,’ the Lord answered, ‘you are worried and upset about many things, ⁴² but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.’ (Luke 10:41-2)

A people who simply desire to follow Jesus, to do what He did.

⁵ Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: ‘Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; ⁶ with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased. ⁷ Then I said, ‘Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll—I have come to do your will, O God.’” ⁸ First he said, ‘Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them’ (although the law required them to be made). ⁹ Then he said, ‘Here I am, I have come to do your will.’” He sets aside the first to establish the second. ¹⁰

And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. ¹¹ Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹² But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. ¹³ Since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool, ¹⁴ because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy. (Hebrews 10:5-14)

Amen.

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 12: A people prepared to be rejected by the ' religious church' in order to fully serve their God.

GOD' S OVERCOMING CHURCH

A SUMMARY

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 1: A people seeking to do God' s will.

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 2: A people fearing the Lord now, conforming to Christ in holiness, in order to avoid judgement later.

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 3: A people prepared to put aside their own methods in order to do things God' s way.

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 4: A people seeking the ultimate blessing of becoming like Jesus.

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 5: A people moving in the will of the Lord who can rejoice in all situations.

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 6: A sacrificial people, desperate to become ' sons of God' .

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 7: A people of exuberant worship, putting Jesus in the highest place.

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 8: A people who reject religious control in order to seek God for themselves.

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 9: A people being as Christ to the community.

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 10: A people with ongoing access to the presence of God.

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 11: A people seeking the ultimate blessing of ruling and reigning with Christ.

END TIME CHURCH TRAIT 12: A people prepared to be rejected by the ' religious church' in order to fully serve their God.

FROM THE HOLY PLACE TO THE ARK

The Holy Place contained three natural items of Furniture. The Ark itself, also contained three items, but these were supernatural. Remarkably, by matching like items from each place, we can build a picture of the differences between the church today and the church to come.

In the Holy Place of Moses Tabernacle, the 3 man made items of furniture were:

1. *Table of Showbread:* On this Table the priests placed 12 loaves of bread which were replaced weekly to keep them fresh. The bread represents the revelatory Word of God, revealed by the Holy Spirit to us. We need to keep reading the Word to receive the revelation and to prevent our lives becoming 'spiritually stale.
2. *The Lampstand:* The lamps of the candlestick needed to be trimmed and filled with oil twice daily. Spiritually, this represents the oil of anointing; the spiritual gifts that God gives us. Again, these need to 'trimmed' through repentance and 'topped up' with the Holy Spirit daily.
3. *Altar of Incense:* Incense was regularly burned on coals to make a heavenly smelling cloud of smoke. This represents the ways we reach out to God, primarily through praise, worship and prayer. Once again, it must be done on a regular basis.

The 3 items in the Ark however, were of supernatural origin, befitting the presence of God.

1. *Gold Jar of Manna:* God provided manna from heaven to feed His people during the 40 years they wandered the desert. Six days a week a new supply was given, one which would go moldy after 24 hours, except for the 'double portion' before the sabbath, which lasted 2 days.
2. *Aaron' s Budded Staff* When placed in God' s presence, the Almond rod miraculously produced buds, blossoms and almonds, symbolizing the authority of the priesthood, of which Aaron was the first representative.
3. *2 Stone Tablets of the Covenant:* The original stones were carved by God and written on by Him also. Being entirely perfect God, they

couldn't exist in the presence of sin. So Moses had no option but to throw the tablets down, breaking them in the presence of the golden calf Aaron had made during his absence. The second set of stones however, were prepared by Moses and inscribed by the finger of God.

FROM PENTECOST TO TABERNACLES

- A SUMMARY

The Holy Place and its furniture represented the pentecostal anointing of the Holy Spirit. In the Holy of Holies initially, and finally in David's Tabernacle, above the Ark, dwelled the very presence of the Father.

Moving through from the Holy Place to the presence of the Ark can therefore be likened to moving from the Pentecostal/Charismatic church age of the 20th century, in which the Holy Spirit was preeminent, to the Tabernacle church age, characterized by obedience to the will of the Father.

Let's now see how the items in the Holy Place and the items in the Ark interrelate and illustrate the change in the church God is bringing about in these end times for those prepared to follow Him exclusively.

1. ***The Living Word: From the Table of Showbread to the Jar of Manna.***
As we move towards greater maturity, so our revelation of God, via His Word, grows. At the Table of Showbread we need to seek out revelation constantly. But as we move on into Tabernacles, God reveals Himself to us in a greater and greater way, through His Word. The full revelation of Him however, can only come with perfection. For then we can meet with Him face to face.

2. ***The Power of God: From the Lampstand to the Budded Staff***
The call of most Christians is, "Give me more gifts!" But God says, "If you want more gifts, build a character that is capable of exercising them without going astray." Most prefer to ignore God's call! The harsh reality is, if we were given the ability to use Aaron's staff of authority to bring up

plagues of frogs, the whole world would soon be overrun with frogs, for we would abuse the authority and power given us.

However, those prepared to conform to the image of Christ through absolute obedience to the Father' s will, will receive the Power of God to do greater things than Jesus did. But the gift of God' s power comes not from pleading, but instead, through submission.

3. *The Image of Christ: From the Incense Altar to the 2 Stone Tablets of the Covenant*

Today, many of us enter into the presence of God through the Incense Altar of praise, worship and prayer. We do not remain in His presence over long periods of time as we are insufficiently holy so to do.

The first set of Tablets was absolutely perfect, being made and written on by God. Their destruction should be a sober reminder to us that God and sin are mutually exclusive!

The second set though, were made by Moses and written on by God. This speaks of God perfecting man as we allow Him to write on the ' tablets' of our life, until we become like Jesus, the perfect fulfillment of the Law. Ultimately, the most powerful witness we can make and be to the world is the Jesus living inside. As we submit ourselves to the working of God in our lives, however painful that might be, we will grow more and more into the image of our Savior and Lord. To be like Jesus is the ultimate sign of maturity in our individual lives and the over riding characteristic of the end time, Tabernacle of David church.

THE HOLY OF HOLIES IS EMPTY!

It is with both a heavy and glad heart that I write.

Many people are unaware of the Tabernacle of David. Neither as a temporary tent for the Ark of the Covenant, nor for its end time truths.

Even fewer people are aware that for these short 40 years there were actually two tabernacles in existence. David' s political reason for bringing the Ark back to Jerusalem was to eliminate a potential threat to his monarchy. Had the Ark been returned to the original Tabernacle of Moses, now permanently stationed in Gibeon, about 9km (5 1/2 miles) from Jerusalem, it could have been used as a power base by a potential usurper of David' s throne, through claiming the Lord' s blessing. So David stationed his staunch supporter Zadok as High Priest in Gibeon rather than in Jerusalem, as a further protection.

³⁷ David left Asaph and his associates before the ark of the covenant of the LORD to minister there regularly, according to each day' s requirements. ³⁸ He also left Obed-Edom and his sixty-eight associates to minister with them. Obed-Edom son of Jeduthun, and also Hosah, were gatekeepers.

³⁹ David left Zadok the priest and his fellow priests before the tabernacle of the LORD at the high place in Gibeon ⁴⁰ to present burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of burnt offering regularly, morning and evening, in accordance with everything written in the Law of the LORD, which he had given Israel. (1 Chronicles 16:37-40)

Moses Tabernacle had now been in continual use for nearly 500 years, amazing in itself. The cloth used must have been both strong and weather resistant! But by now, it would have been weather beaten, to say the least.

The furniture, built by Bezalel, Oholiab and their team to the designs given to Moses by God on Mount Sinai, remained at Gibeon with the exception of the Ark of the Covenant itself.

A HEAVY HEART

I have a heavy heart as the Lord showed me that the Tabernacle of Moses at Gibeon is a picture of much of the church today. The church has

- The *Altar of Sacrifice* for the forgiveness of sins
- The *Washing Basin* of baptism and the washing of the Word.
- The *Table of Showbread* of the revelatory Word
- The *Candlesticks* of spiritual gifts
- The *Altar of Incense* of worship which has been taken through the torn veil into the Holy of Holies (Hebrews 9:3)

But the *Ark of the Covenant* above which the presence of God dwelled, is no longer there. The power has gone. The fear of God has gone. The glory of God has departed. It is a church of form but without substance, going through the motions but not seeing the presence of God.

A church rooted in the past. A church focused on buildings, (i.e. the Tabernacle), a church focused on programmes (i.e. the daily religious rites), and a church focused on status and titles, one effectively reintroducing an intermediary between the people and God (i.e. the Priesthood). A church without substance or power, for the presence of God has departed with the Ark to a new home.

A GLAD HEART

But my heart is glad, for God has not deserted His people! Rather, He has called out a new people, a people with the heart of King David, a heart for the Lord (Acts 13:22), to join Him face to face in the simple tent which is the Tabernacle of David. A humble but powerful people not seeking status or position, buildings or religious programmes, but preferring simply to be Jesus to others.

It is not another church in the conventional sense of the word, but individuals and informal groups of disciples 100% sold out to their God, ones willing to sacrifice everything they have and are, for their Lord.

They are called by many names in the Bible. The ' sons of God' , the ' overcomers' , the ' Bride of Christ' , the ' martyrs' , both literal and spiritual. All receive the ' double portion' of God s blessing that Elisha requested of Elijah.

⁹ When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?" "Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit," Elisha replied. ¹⁰ "You have asked a difficult thing," Elijah said, "yet if you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours—otherwise not." (2 Kings 2:9-10)

As Elijah indicated, this is not an easy thing, nor an easy life to live, but reserved by God for those fully committed to making the necessary sacrifice. It was not something that Elisha knew at the time. He had to walk in faith. His receipt of the double portion was reflected in his life where finally, he did twice the number of miracles that Elisha did. It is all about the walk, not the talk!

This ' tabernacle church' will last but for a short time, until the return of Jesus. David' s Tabernacle was sandwiched for only 40 years between the Tabernacle of Moses (the church as we know it) and the Temple of Solomon (a type of the kingdom reign of Jesus).

For those who attain the high calling there is the reward of taking part in the first resurrection, of ruling and reigning with Christ for 1000 years.

⁴ I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. ⁵ (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years. (Revelation 20:4-6)

To which resurrection, to which ' Tabernacle' , do you choose to belong?