

INTRODUCTION

As a student of The Word of God, I was very fortunate and blessed to be taught and mentored by outstanding men and women of God. They all had a common flair in their respective ministries. They all used the teaching principle of The Law of Apperception. From the very onset of their teaching sessions, they had the uniqueness of involving their students in their teaching and as the teaching progressed, the students felt a definite part of the entire teaching session. My teachers were seasoned craftsmen; they grabbed your attention from the very beginning of their discourses by taking the student from the known to the unknown. Jesus, our Lord and Saviour also used this teaching principle. A classic example of this is when Jesus taught of the importance of Spiritual Bread: "And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God (Lu 4:4)." Jesus captured the attention of his large audience by taking them from the known to the unknown. He wisely quoted from The Old Testament and then brought to their attention that natural bread was necessary for the sustenance of their physical bodies; however, that man in order to live spiritually had to feast on The Bread of Life -- The Word of God.

I adopted this unique teaching method. Not only have my students comprehended the teachings, they have also implemented the teachings into their respective ministries and that with great spiritual rewards.

I have always been fascinated in the spiritual applications of the human hand in The Word of God and to fully comprehend the imperative role and various spiritual expressions it has in Holy Scripture, it is essential that we remind ourselves of the unique functions of the human hand in its natural setting and thereafter see the correlation between the natural role of the human hand to that of the spiritual role of the human hand.

It is the aims of this brief exposition on The Power of the Hand to bring God's people to:

- A fresh awakening of the prominent role of the human hand in authentic scriptural worship of The Triune Godhead.
- Know that God considers what is in our hands when He calls us to the ministry?

- Comprehend the dynamic and the important role the human hand plays in the ordination of God's ministers.
- Know and understand The Old Testament typologies of the human hand and The New Testament interpretations thereof.
- Know and understand the significance of the human hand in intercession.
- Understand and appreciate the role of the human hand in The Baptism into The Holy Spirit.
- Know just who May lay hands on those seeking The Baptism Into The Holy Spirit?
- Believe that by the laying on of hands The Gifts of The Holy Spirit are imparted.
- Know just who may lay hands for the impartation of The Gifts of The Holy Spirit?
- Know that by the laying on of hands the sick are healed.
- Know and understand what is in the hand of Almighty God?

Chapter 1

From the Known to the Unknown

The Five Senses

God has wonderfully endowed humankind with five senses. It is through these five senses that man makes contact with his fellowman and his surroundings. The five senses are:

- Hearing
- Sight
- Touch
- Smelling
- Taste

Man hears with his ears, strategically placed on either side of his face. His eyes through which he sees is placed close to his forehead. The ability to touch and feel is within the two hands and that being the right and left hand. The nose has two nostrils that enable man to smell. The mouth with its jaw, teeth and tongue gives man the ability to chew food and make the necessary distinctions of taste between the various foods he eats.

These senses are vital to the well-being of man and when these senses fail or cease to operate man is considered as handicapped and impaired.

The Precise Position of the Five Senses

Four of the Five Senses are situated on the face, close to the brain, and that being; hearing, sight, smell and taste. The touch sense is approximately 80 -100 centimetres from the eyes. It is all by itself and yet they all work perfectly in harmony. They are uniquely correlated by the brain, which transmits directives as the other four senses feed information to the brain. It is the touch sense that acts as the servant of the other four senses. Perhaps considering the following acronym will help us to see the correlation between the hands and the brain.

H - Hands

A - Activate

N - Neurological

D - Directives

The Hand - the Touch and Feeling Sense

There is a marked distinction between touching and feeling. When touching we encounter an object and oft times we are unable to distinguish immediately what has been touched, however when we feel we are able to detect what has been touched. It is usually with the fingers of the hand that we are able to recognise what has been touched.

The hand has five fingers and each with a special ability. It is because of these special abilities that the fingers are named accordingly:

- The Thumb
- The Index Finger
- The Middle Finger
- The Ring Finger
- The Baby Finger

The Thumb

The Thumbs are situated on the extreme left of the right hand and the extreme right of the left hand. When our hands are folded together, the two thumbs meet. It is the smallest of all the fingers and yet surprisingly enough it often speaks of the seal of a person. Those unfortunate people who cannot write are encouraged to use their thumbprint as a mark of authentication. Strange and yet so true every person has a different thumbprint, (in fact all the fingers) and therefore it has the uniqueness of authorising legal documents. Because of this uniqueness, the thumb is often referred to as The Authority of a Person or the Seal of a Person.

The Index Finger

The Index Finger is the closest to the thumb of authority. The Index Finger is used for pointing and therefore is often referred to as the pointing finger - the finger of direction. The proximity of the pointing finger to the thumb of authority is for a special reason. When authority and direction join, they take on an ability that is similar to that of the tongue. The tongue through speech communicates. The thumb of authority and the finger of direction also communicate. When a pen or a pencil is placed between the two communication also takes place. The tongue speaks to the ears of men with audible sound, whereas the thumb of authority and the finger of direction speak to the eyes and that not with sound. Like the thumb, the index fingers join when the right and left hands are folded together.

One of the common uses of the index finger is the calling of people; however, in certain cultures this is very offensive.

The Middle Finger

The Middle Finger is the longest of all the fingers and when the hand is touching, it reaches out the furthest on the object being touched. Like the thumb and the index finger when the hands are joined together, the middle fingers touch and unite.

Sadly, in many cultures the middle finger is used as a sign of obscenity and insult. All the other fingers are closed down onto the palm of the hand whilst the middle finger is stretched out thus signifying obscenity and insult.

The Ring Finger

The Ring Finger is the second longest finger. It is called the Ring Finger for on it in most cultures the wedding ring is worn. The wedding ring is usually worn on the left hand. I once heard it is the finger that has a vein linked directly to the heart.

After research, I have discovered that this was not the case. There was a belief in ancient times that a vein ran from the fourth finger (that is counting from the thumb) directly to the heart. No wonder this vein was nicknamed "vena amoral" which means "the vein of love." It was this view in mind that married couples wore their wedding rings on the ring finger depicting their love for each other as a hand and heart connection.

When the two hands are clasped together, the second two longest fingers come together as a unit.

The Little Finger

The Little Finger is also known as the pinkie finger, which means small. Counting from the thumb it is the last finger of the hand. This little finger is usually used to scratch in the ear. Like all the other fingers when the hands join, they denote union.

The Symbolism of the Hand

There is so much that we can glean from the symbolism of the hand, that we can adopt in order to improve our personal life and how we treat others with honour and respect. Before we mention and briefly explain these wonderful symbols of the hand, it is essential that we remind ourselves that there is a constant correlation between the brain and the hand. The hand receives directives from the brain and acts accordingly.

There are two kinds of actions that the hands express and that being voluntary and involuntary actions. Voluntary actions are undertaken by one's free will. Classic examples of this are what we decide to eat, whether or not we do daily exercises to strengthen our bodies. Involuntary actions are those certain actions over which we have no control. Several good examples are sleeping, breathing and yawning (I find it quite strange that when I see someone yawning, I start yawning almost immediately). The best example of involuntary actions comes from my Primary school days. Our teacher gave us a classic example of how when touching a hot plate or hot pot we do not decide whether to remove our hand. Without premeditation and thought, we remove our hands instantly.

Symbol 1 POWER

As small, as the hand is in comparison to the rest of the body (the chest, the legs, the head etc) it is rather remarkable how that POWER is associated with the hand. Considering a clenched hand, we note it enables a person to knock down another person. On the other hand, when the hand is open and outstretched to another hand it has the ability to pick a person up.

From this simple thought The Lord has spoken to me and I have shared this with many of God's wonderful children: "POWER IN THE WRONG HANDS CAN BE VERY DESTRUCTIVE; HOWEVER POWER IN THE RIGHT HANDS CAN BE VERY CONSTRUCTIVE.

Usually an open hand is a hand that blesses others. Usually a clenched hand (a fist) is a hand that destroys others.

There are those certain few (people like Hitler, Mussolini and Bonaparte) who believe that hands are meant for war. It is not surprising to note that almost all weapons of destruction are placed in the hand - the sword, the bow and arrow, the pistol, the machine gun, the knife etc.

Remarkably, as much as there are violent people in this world, there are those gentle people as well, whose life's are motivated to do good. These people's hands are forever open and outstretched to the less fortunate and downtrodden, willing to pick them up from the muck and mire of an unpleasant life and clasping their weak and feeble hand of the discarded in their strong hand and leading them to a better life.

There are so many good types of hands in the world:

- Hands of Mercy
- Hands of Grace
- Hands of Trust
- Hands of Peace
- Hands of Power

Sadly, in this world there are also those hands that love to fight - the hands of war.

Symbol 2 Covenant/Agreement

My parents although they could not provide the best and sundry for us, yet gave my siblings and myself that which money could never ever buy. They gave us honour and dignity. My father was a man of a few words and yet a man of great action. He lived by his word and his word was his bond. He was as good as his word and whenever he gave his word to another person as his bond, he joyously yet solemnly said: "Let's shake on that." My humble father extended his hand in a handshake, thus signifying the confirmation of his promised word.

How sad are the present days, the words of men cannot be trusted. Every agreement must be in writing, signed by the parties entering into covenant agreement, further witnessed by at least two witnesses and signed on the document of agreement. Times have sure changed humankind. It was not so long ago that the only requirement was a simple handshake.

Symbol 3 Greeting

My dear Pastor, Apostle Edwin Gray, surely knew how to break down the divide between people. He convinced me and many others of the power of the wave of the hand accompanied by a pleasing smile. I have seen the most miserable and unloved people succumb to a hand wave of greeting and a pleasing smile.

Gestures carry definite messages and no doubt, a hand wave greeting gesture sure invites people to want to know you. They probably ask themselves why this man is so friendly.

One of the first things that mothers love teaching their little babies is the farewell wave. With great joy and pride, we hear them encourage the little baby: "Say bye bye." To our wonderful surprise the sweet and adorable little baby eagerly begins waving their hands and smile gleefully. No doubt, the little child did not say goodbye, but they convincingly spoke with their hands.

In several cultures hugging and kissing is discouraged and at best, left to the women. To refrain from definite embarrassment men prefer to firmly shake hands. It is most assuredly a sign of friendship as well. Handshakes in most cultures are signs of welcoming and fare welling.

Symbol 4 Anger

An angry person is a dangerous person. They can do great harm to people. They are best avoided. Often angry people unknowingly give a gesture that forewarns us of evil intent. They raise a clenched hand (a fist) toward people.

It has been said that many angry people lose their rationality. It is as another person takes over.

Symbol 5 Respect

The enlisted troops salute their superiors (officers) of an army. No matter where they meet, the enlisted soldier will salute his senior. This is not just a sign of greeting; it is more a sign of respect acknowledging seniority. The hand raised to the side of the head as the soldier brings his feet together with a ceremonious stomp.

Symbol 6 Prayer

The hand portrays two symbols of prayer and that being trust and contrition. When our hands are placed together and all our fingers face upward it is a sign that we are more than just communicating with God in prayer, we are trusting and believing God will answer our prayer.

When our two hands are clasped together, all our fingers face downward except our two thumbs, which face upward, this is very significant. The eight fingers downward is a sign of contrition. We acknowledge our sins, holding our clenched hands on our chest close to our heart as a sign of contrition and repentance. The two thumbs point upward (heavenward) and note carefully though they point heavenward they are crisscrossed. This speaks of the Cross, where our sins were dealt a deathblow, or, should it should remind one of The Cross.

When our hands are open and raised above our stature it is in most cases a different type of prayer altogether. This symbolism of prayer does not deal with trust and contrition; it deals matters that concern others. It is prayer of

fervent intercession. It is a time that we take on the burdens of others and plead with Almighty God on their behalf.

Symbol 7 Approval and Disapproval

Though most people are blessed with the ability to speak, we often use gestures to communicate and often used metaphorically. One of the most common metaphorical gestures is the thumbs up or thumbs down. The index, middle, ring and small finger are closed in a tight fist action with the thumb extended either upwards or downward. The upward extended thumb conveys the unspoken metaphor of approval, whereas the down-extended thumb denotes disapproval. Often when asked probing questions like "how was the game?" Thumbs up sign will indicate the game was good. The thumbs down sign would indicate the game was bad.

The Versatility of the Hand

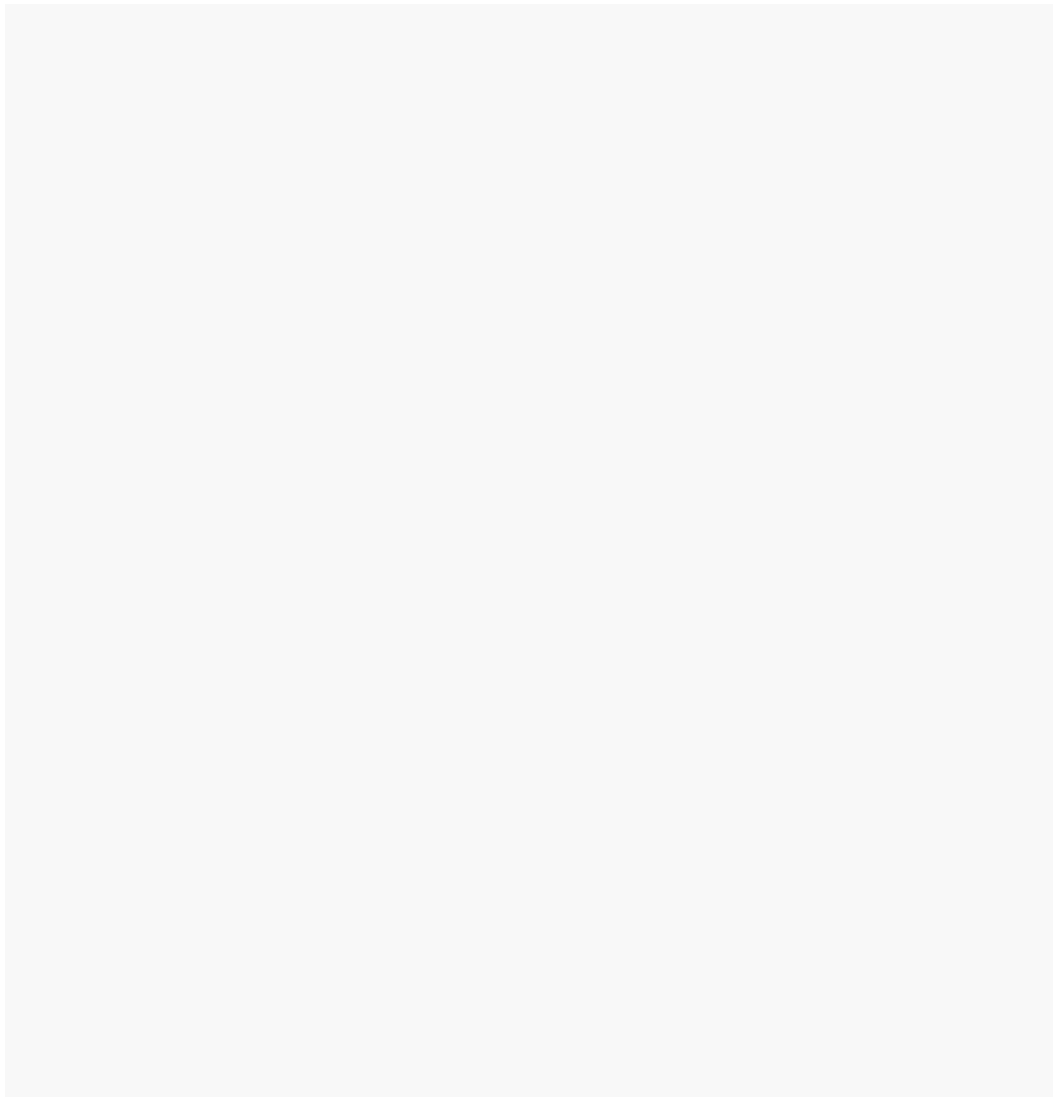
The hand is the most versatile member with the unique ability to act on behalf of the impaired senses. It has the unique ability to act on behalf of the impaired senses. The unique hand aids those people who are unable to hear. The creative hand aids those who are unable to speak. The illustrious hand aids those unable to read.

The hand manipulates sign language and those who are deaf are able to hear and communicate as they focus on the manipulations of the hand. Those who are unable to speak are able to communicate and that effectively as they too use the art of sign language.

The hand is extremely sensitive. The sense of touch and feeling in all of the fingers give the hand the ability to read. The blind and the visually impaired are able to read through the touch and feel gate of their hands. Braille (named after the Frenchman that invented Braille) is written on embossed paper, which enables the letters of the alphabet to stand out from the paper. Each letter has its distinct code and touch thus enabling the blind to read.

Blindness not only robs people of sight and the ability to read, it also robs the blind of mobility. Once again, it is the hand of power that comes to the rescue of the blind who are often prisoners in their own homes. By simply placing a marked cane, usually white, in their hand, they are able to go to most places where all normal people go. There is also the remarkable aid of the trained dog who leads the blind. Once again, the hand plays a prominent part. The lead is placed over the neck of the dog and extends to the hand of the blind person. The dog avoids all the dangerous hazards in the path of the intended journey. It

might sound laughable that the lead is not placed around the ankle, the leg, or the neck of the blind. The lead is strategically placed in the hand of the blind. It is the hand of the blind that has the strength and the ability to heed (pay attention to, listen to, take note of, observe, notice and regard) the guidance of the dog. Can we imagine the lead around the ankle, the leg or the neck? The blind person will must definitely be hobbling along or being slowly choked to death. It is the all-powerful hand or should I further say the remarkable hand that becomes the hearing aid, the mouthpiece and the spectacles of the physically impaired.



Chapter 2

The Prominent Role of the Human Hand in Authentic Scriptural Worship of God

It is quite alarming that many Christians do not fully comprehend what true Worship entails. To most of us, it is singing praises to God in a liturgical setting and reciting prescribed prayers from a prayer journal. On the other hand, there are those that follow the order of Worship through a Worship Leader, who leads the congregation with choruses accompanied by a large band of musicians and backup singers. Yet there are those certain few that adamantly believe that Worship is a private matter between the individual and God.

Though all of the above do have a ring of truth in it, are these forms of Corporate Worship and Private Worship really what God expects from the redeemed. Before we answer the pertinent question perhaps, it would be wise to consider just what our common English Dictionaries say of Worship.

THE FREE ON LINE DICTIONARY

- The reverent love and devotion accorded a deity, an idol, or a sacred object.
- The ceremonies, prayers, or other religious forms by which this love is expressed.
- Ardent devotion; adoration.
- Often Worship Chiefly British Used as a form of address for magistrates, mayors, and certain other dignitaries: "Your Worship"

- To honor and love as a deity.
- To regard with ardent or adoring esteem or devotion.
- To participate in religious rites of worship.
- To perform an act of worship.

THE OXFORD DICTIONARY

- The religious rites or ceremonies, constituting a formal expression of reverence for a deity: *the church was opened for public worship.*
- Great admiration or devotion shown towards a person or principle: the worship of celebrity and wealth.
- Archaic honour given to someone in recognition of their merit. (His/Your Worship) chiefly British used in addressing or referring to an important or high-ranking person, especially a magistrate or mayor: we were soon joined by His Worship the Mayor.

The above definitions though sound do not really concur with The Scriptures. There are vast differences between the secular interpretation and scriptural interpretation of Worship. To fully comprehend a scriptural interpretation of Worship an intense study must be undertaken from both The Old and New Testaments.

There are 62 verses and 40 verses in The Old Testament and The New Testament that deal with Worship. A grand total of 102 verses and therefore we can most definitely conclude that Worship is an integral part of The Holy Bible.

Time and space does not permit us to deal with all of those 102 verses, however The First Mention Principle of Hermeneutics (The Science of Biblical Interpretation) will help us to cite a Biblical perspective of Worship.

The First Mention Principle

This principle teaches that the first time a specific topic (subject, theme) is mentioned, it sets the tone of how the topic should be interpreted thereafter. As a servant of The Lord I adamantly adhere to this principle, however as I declare my personal interpretation of Worship, as a student of The Word it is your prerogative to agree or disagree (perhaps the thumbs up or thumbs down symbol can come into effect).

Let us now therefore consider (and at length) the first mention of Worship. This is recorded in Genesis 22:1-18:

After these things, God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here am I." He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt

offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.” So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. On the third day, Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar. Then Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and WORSHIP and come again to you.” And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. And Isaac said to his father Abraham, “My father!” And he said, “Here am I, my son.” He said, “Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” Abraham said, “God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.” So they went both of them together. When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here am I.” He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.” And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. So Abraham called the name of that place, “The Lord will provide”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided.” And the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven and said, “By myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice (ESVUK).

We, The Born Again of The Spirit are well aware that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are the Patriarchs of the Jewish nation. However, on close examination of Genesis perhaps we need to reconsider just who is the true Patriarch of The Jewish Nation. On close examination of the so-called three Patriarchs and their respective wives, it is evident that all of their wives were barren.

Now Sarai was barren, she had no child (Gen 11:30 ESVUK).

And Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she was barren. And the Lord granted his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived (Gen 25:21 ESVUK).

When the Lord saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb, but Rachel was barren (Gen 29:31 ESVUK).

In reality if God had not performed a miracle in each family there would not have been a Jewish nation. God, who performed the miracle of conception in each family, is THE TRUE PATRIARCH OF THE JEWISH NATION.

Abraham had a special relationship with Almighty God. They were in a covenant relationship. God had made significant promises to Abraham (Gen 12:1-3; 15:1-20; 17:1-8). Covenant promises of posterity, greatness, a blessing to the nations and the father of many nations and an everlasting land covenant. Abraham knew that God would never violate His promises and when commanded by Almighty God to offer up Isaac as a burnt offering, Abraham was confused and perplexed. Though Abraham could not comprehend what God asked him to perform there were in the command of God that gave Abraham a glimmer of hope that somehow or the other God will keep His covenant promises.

God's special mention of Isaac spurred Abraham on to carry out the strange command. Six times in Chapter 22 God mentions "son", four times before the intended sacrifice of the knife and twice after the intended sacrifice (I have underlined these six times in the above passage of Scripture).

Take your son,

your only son, whom you love,

your son, your only son,

your son, your only son.

God is very precise in His word to Abraham. God was well aware of Abraham's other son- Ishmael and yet on three definite and distinct times He categorically emphasizes "your only son." Was God ignoring the fact and truth that Abraham

had fathered Ishmael with Sarai's maidservant- Hagar? Candidly, the answer is a most definite no. Ishmael was already blessed of Almighty God: *"And I will make a nation of the son of the slave woman also, because he is your offspring (Gen 21:13 ESVUK)."* However, the unique covenant relationship of fathering The Jewish nation and the Everlasting land Promise was to continue with the son of THE COVENANT PROMISE and that being- Isaac:

And God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her." Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, "Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" And Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before you!" God said, "No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him. As for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I have blessed him and will make him fruitful and multiply him greatly. He shall father twelve princes, and I will make him into a great nation. But I will establish my covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this time next year (Ge 17:15-21ESVUK).

Whom You Love

Isaac was dearest to the heart of Abraham. God Himself speaks this to Abraham. He was to sacrifice the son he loved. No doubt, Abraham wrestled with this command from God; nevertheless, he was obedient and prepared for his journey of heartbreak. The wood for the fire was gathered, the knife to slay the sacrifice was packed away and the donkey was saddled up for the tedious journey of three long days.

The Threefold Cord of True Worship

Within the context of the extraordinary ordeal, that Abraham had to endure was a threefold cord of spiritual truth that possibly calmed his anxious spirit (Ecc 4:8-12). His profound *love* for his God was the first cord:

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments (1Jn 5:2 KJV).

Love will always lead to the journey of *obedience*, which is the second cord of spiritual truth. The third cord that helped Abraham keep his sanity (his good judgement) was his profound (insightful) words of *faith*: On two occasions, the distraught Abraham pushed his feelings aside and spoke words of intense faith:

Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you (Ge 22:5 ESVUK)."

And Isaac said to his father Abraham, "My father!" And he said, "Here am I, my son." He said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Abraham said, "God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." So they went both of them together (Ge 22:7-8 ESVUK).

The words *come again to you* and *God will provide the lamb for a burnt offering* were not just ordinary words, they were words that were energized, produced and birthed by *obedience*. Abraham spoke those unique words of *faith* because of his sincere *love* he had for his God, a *love* that was evident through his act of *obedience*. Whenever *love* and *obedience* unite the inevitable will always follow and that being *faith*. It is no wonder that Abraham is declared The Father of Faith (Ro 3:27-4:11; Heb 11:17-19; James 2:18-23).

Love, obedience and faith are the spiritual ingredients that ultimately produce genuine Worship. Abraham's words: "*Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and WORSHIP and come again to you;*" are uniquely profound for it is the first time that Worship is mentioned in The Holy Scripture.

Just how did Abraham *Worship*? Did Abraham raise his hands in *Worship*? Did Abraham prostrate himself and Isaac before The Lord in *Worship*? Did Abraham and Isaac sing songs of *Worship* and praises unto God? The answers are most definitely no. Abraham did what is seen by Almighty God as true *Worship*. He was willing to sacrifice his only son, whom he loved to Almighty God.

Abraham after building the altar bound Isaac to the altar. Isaac, his only son, whom he loved, was firmly laid on the wood to be *SACRIFICED AS AN ACT OF WORSHIP TO ALMIGHTY GOD*. This is the *Worship* that Abraham spoke of to his two servants. That which was the dearest to his heart was to be offered up to God as an act of *Worship*. Abraham raised the knife high above his head and as he began the death plunge The God of mercy and grace intervened. God's

voice echoed above the heartbroken cry of Abraham as the plunging knife came down to the heart of Isaac:

“Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here am I.” He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.”

Considering Abraham's act of *Worship*, does God require less from you and I? I do believe that our God loves our singing, our praises, our hands lifted up high in adoration and yet He wants so much more from us. He wants us and no wonder The Holy Spirit moved the Apostle Paul to pen these remarkable words:

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect (Ro 12:1-3 ESVUK).

The above Scripture is blatantly (deliberately) clear that which will please The Lord is the sacrifice of ourselves. This is true *Worship*. No wonder the Apostle said this of himself:

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me (Gal 2:20 ESVA).

Abraham raised the knife in his hands to sacrifice his only son whom he loved as *Worship* as unto The Lord. Is God asking too much of you and I? Is it beyond us? God who is omniscient knows it is way beyond us and therefore He comes to our aid. God endeavours to convince us:

"that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us (Phil 4:13 NKJV)."

Let us build our *altar of Sacrifice*, raising the knife to plunge down upon our hearts with all the force we can muster and *Worship our God in spirit and in truth*. Let me assure you as God stopped Abraham's powerful downward thrust of the knife, so will God, who loves you, cry out:

"Do not lay your hand upon yourself, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld yourself from Me."

In the days, months and years that lie ahead let us rejoice in *Worship* as we raise our hands unto God knowing full well that Jesus, our Sacrificed Lamb took our place at The Cross of Calvary, the very altar that God, The Father of Jesus Christ had prepared for *His only begotten Son*.

Spiritual Application

- God told Abraham to offer up his only son, that which was dearest to his heart. We are not called to offer up our children to God. It is our Christian duty to dedicate our children to God. God wants us to offer up ourselves. We have to come to the understanding that we are in this wicked, perverse world, but in no way are we to be a part of it. God has called us out of this world. It is to this evil world that we have to die unto. We are to reckon ourselves alive unto God and dead to this perverse world. Jesus, our Lord and Master has encouraged each one of us to pick up our cross daily and follow after Him (Mt 16:24). Controlling this world are evil spiritual powers that once controlled us. Now that we are Born Again, we have to come to the realization that we need not be controlled anymore by these evil forces. Our old nature of sin and self are dead through the Efficacious Death and Resurrection of Jesus. We have been made alive unto God and the life we now live is not meant to be controlled by the flesh anymore and the evil insinuations of the powers of darkness that rules this world. We live a life empowered by The Spirit of God. This is the *Sacrifice of Worship* that God expects of all of us and no wonder the Apostle Paul had said: *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me (Ga 2:20 KJV)."* Our *Sacrifice of Worship* is in The Finished Work of The Cross. It is an acknowledgement of what Jesus had accomplished on The Cross. It is this in mind that when, tempted by the powers of darkness, we reject their evil insinuations and in so doing we keep our sins and self nailed to The Cross. This is clearly evident when we consider Romans 6:1-4: *What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by*

baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life (ESVUK).

Rejecting sin and refusing to align ourselves with the standards of this world is our daily *Sacrifice of Worship*.

- The Word of God is very specific in its commands: "*Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams (1Sa 15:22 KJV).*" The sincere Love we have for God will ignite Obedience, which in turn will promote Faith that leads to a *Sacrifice of Worship*. The above Scripture has to be placed in its context for a clear understanding. King Saul was commanded by God to annihilate The Amalekites and all their possessions. King Saul spared the king and the prized livestock was offered to The Lord as a sacrifice. The sacrifice was not accepted as a *Sacrifice of Worship* for the simple fact it was a violation of God's command. It was nothing less than an act of disobedience. As God's people there are those certain occasions that the promptings of The Holy Spirit will encourage us to make certain sacrifices. It has been my personal experience that I have been prompted to forego some of my pleasures. Like most men I love sport, more so, boxing and rugby. Even whilst watching these sports or even before watching at times I have been prompted By The Holy Spirit to pray and seek The Face of the Lord. By the grace of God I have heeded the promptings most times and to my sheer delight I have had wonderful times of Worship. When we sacrifice our pleasure to be alone with God, we will always be rewarded with a deluge of His Presence. Rest assured *LOVE FOR GOD AND OBEDIENCE WILL ALWAYS LEAD TO FAITH AND WORSHIP.*

Chapter 3

What Is In Your Hand?



Preamble

Many of God's people disregard themselves. They see themselves as nobodies and because of this innate (inborn, intrinsic, natural) perception of themselves, they sadly fail to achieve in life. Sadly, many fail both intellectually and secularly.

Born Again, Spirit filled children of God must deal with this horrible inferior complex. So many of us are in desperate need of a God infused biblical understanding of just who we are in Christ. Reflecting over our past, many of us are strewn with failure, rejection, poverty and illiteracy. We wring our hands in despair, placing ourselves on the shelves of God's intended blessings, resigned never to be a blessing to God and His Church.

It is true that our environment moulds and shapes us for our future, and often because God was not in the centre of our past, we feel we are ear marked for failure. Our mindsets have to change because there is absolutely nothing that God cannot undo and change for the better. Maybe our upbringing has stripped us of our dignity and self worth, but let us assure ourselves this is exactly the type of persons that our Lord Jesus Christ uses for His glory.

God in His mercy delights to use the discarded, the marginalized and the downtrodden, How true is the scripture:

But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty (1Co 1:27 KJV).

Early in my ministry The Good Lord spoke into my spirit these uplifting words: *GOD WILL TAKE A NOBODY FROM NOWHERE, AND GOD WILL MAKE HIM A SOMEBODY, AND AFTER GOD HAS MADE THIS NOBODY A SOMEBODY, GOD WILL PLACE HIM SOMEWHERE, AND AFTER GOD HAS TAKEN THIS NOBODY AND MADE HIM A SOMEBODY AND PLACED HIM SOMEWHERE, GOD WILL THEN SEND HIM EVERYWHERE.*

Many of us have been marginalized in our own family circles and sadly, we have brought this rejected spirit into our walk with God and The Church. Many of us feel there is no room for us in The Church. We feel that we are overlooked by The Leadership of our Local Churches and because of this unfounded misconception of ourselves, we become recluses and we suffer the horrible consequences of self-imposed alienation, which robs us of God's good intentions for our life and ministries.

No doubt our Church Leadership have disregarded us, however, let me assure all who suffer an acute inferior complex, that The Holy Spirit is not like man. He does not *LOOK FOR PERFECTION IN MAN; RATHER HE LOOKS TO THE POTENTIAL IN MAN THAT LEADS TO PERFECTION.* The gentle Holy Spirit considers our faithfulness and humility; He is not moved with our talents and abilities. No matter our rejection, poverty, illiteracy and incompetence, He is more than able to perform wonders in our life and ministries.

Let us by the help of The Holy Spirit and the forever-effective Word of God resolve to follow after faithfulness and humility. Let us cry out to God to remove this inferior complex, that He may fill us with His Person and Power and that we may become mighty *SOLDIERS OF THE CROSS OF CALVARY.*

Throughout The Bible, there are mighty men of God who once saw themselves as *INSIGNIFICANT.* Men whose dignity was at low ebb. They saw nothing good in themselves, but this was not how God saw them. He saw in them *HIS POWER* and *GLORY.* Out from their nothingness He moulded *GREATNESS AND INFLUENCE THAT EFFECTED THEIR GENERATIONS AND FUTURE GENERATIONS. GOD CAN DO THE VERY SAME FOR YOU AND I. WHAT IS IN YOUR HAND TODAY? GIVE IT TO GOD AND YOU WILL BE AMAZED HOW YOU WILL BE USED OF ALMIGHTY GOD.*

Moses

One of the remarkable revelations of the unadulterated Word of God is just how God presents His servants to us. All of the servants of God are disclosed. Their good and bad are as an open book to us all. Nothing is hidden

from us. No doubt, it is for a definite purpose. God knows how we love to imitate and mimic others and therefore He purposely displays all of His servant's character, strengths and weaknesses of ministry that we may be more Godly in character and more effective in ministry. We are well aware that we learn so much from other people's mistakes.

Moses was one of the greatest Prophets of Jehovah God and yet on scrutiny of his life and ministry we discover so many flaws. Like you and I Moses was not perfect, however he served a Perfect God. As we study the life and ministry of Moses, chew the spiritual meat, and discard the physical bones, we too can become mighty men and women of God, doing exploits for God that will bring honour to His name and deliverance and blessing to the people of God.

The Meaning of the Name Moses

I have often asked family, my close friends and myself: *"What is in a name?"* The answer I believe came from The Lord (you judge). Names may often carry certain traits of personalities and even certain characteristics of ministries. One common name is Andrew, which actually means a warrior. Oft time's parents wonder why their son Andrew is at times very violent; well he is just living up to his name. Elijah was a famous Prophet of the Old Testament, whose name depicts Jehovah, is God. When we consider all the miracles he performed, the one that stands out is when he proved to Israel who was the true God of Israel. He said the God who answers with fire is God. The name of Moses is very significant as it means *drawing out (of the water), i.e. rescued (see Strong's Hebrew Concordance no. 04872)*. Moses lived up to his name. He rescued God's people from the Egyptians. For over 400 years, they were slaves and this man rescued from the River Nile became their emancipator. With great signs and wonders, he crushed the power of the Egyptians, rendering their gods powerless against the might and power of The God of Hebrews.

His Early Life (Ex 2:1-19)

His parents were Amram and Jochebed (Ex 6:20). Their names are very meaningful and when interpreted we may see the definite role they played in the early years of Moses' life. Amram means *high people (Strong's Hebrew Concordance numbers 06019, 5971, and 7311)*. To fully comprehend the meaning of Jochebed we have to consider all three Hebrew words that make up the name. Looking at The Strong's Hebrew Concordance numbers 03115, 03068 and 03513 we note the following:

03115. dbkwy Yowkebed, yo-keh'-bed
Search for 03115 in KJV

from 3068 contracted and 3513; Jehovah-gloried; Jokebed, the mother of Moses:--Jochebed.

03068. hwhy Y@hovah, yeh-ho-vaw'

Search for 03068 in KJV

from 1961; (the) self-Existent or Eternal; Jehovah, Jewish national name of God:--Jehovah, the Lord. Compare 3050, 3069.

See Hebrew 01961 (hayah)

See Hebrew 03050 (Yahh)

See Hebrew 03069 (Y@hovih)

03513. dbk kabad, kaw-bad'

Search for 03513 in KJV

or kabad {kaw-bade'}; a primitive root; to be heavy, i.e. in a bad sense (burdensome, severe, dull) or in a good sense (numerous, rich, honourable; causatively, to make weighty (in the same two senses):--abounding with, more grievously afflict, boast, be chargeable, X be dim, glorify, be (make) glorious (things), glory, (very) great, be grievous, harden, be (make) heavy, be heavier, lay heavily, (bring to, come to, do, get, be had in) honour (self), (be) honourable (man), lade, X more be laid, make self many, nobles, prevail, promote (to honour), be rich, be (go) sore, stop.

Assimilating all of the above, we can conclude there are two meanings of the name Jochebed. *Firstly, Jehovah is heavily burdened and afflicted. Secondly, Jehovah is gloriously rich in honour.* Moses mother's unique name was a vivid glowing picture of just how Jehovah felt about His Covenant people's enduring suffering at the hands of the Egyptians. Their pain became God's pain. Some may say this is a gross exaggeration, however when we allow Scripture to interpret Scripture we see that God, though Almighty is more than able to feel our pain:

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin (Heb 4:15 KJV).

This High Priest is none other than Jesus Christ, The Son of God, whom God The Father addresses as God (Heb 1:8). The Strong's Greek Concordance sheds much light on infirmities:

769. *asyeneia astheneia, as-then'-i-ah*

Search for 769 in KJV

from 772; feebleness (of mind or body); by implication, malady; morally, frailty:--disease, infirmity, sickness, weakness.

See Greek 772 (asthenes)

Jochebed had a grave responsibility: she had to transfer the burdensome affliction that God felt for His elected people to her son Moses. Once again, some may say this is going too far, however when we consider the very words of God many of God's people will understand that God can and will transfer His heart to His people, and that those who will lay down their life that others may be set free from sin's bondage:

And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites (Ex 3:7-8 KJV)."

Just how was God to come down? Was The Word of God to become flesh that the Israelites be set free from their horrendous years of enduring bondage? No, not at that point in time. God came down and empowered Moses as the chosen emancipator of God's chosen people. Jochebed in her unique way was to lay a strong spiritual call on her little son-Moses.

Amram's significant name most certainly depicts just who Moses was to deliver and that none other than Jehovah's *high people*. These *high people* were extraordinary in that they were the only nation with whom Jehovah God was in a covenant relationship with. Moses, *the rescued became the rescuer of God's high covenant people*.

Moses was born during a catastrophic time in the history of the Jewish nation. Fearful of the rapid multiplication of the Jews and the possibility of them joining the enemies of Egypt, waging war against Egypt, and fleeing from Egypt, the king laid heavy burdens upon God's elect. Taskmasters were put over them afflicting them with extreme burdens. They were physically forced to build store cities at Pithom and Raamses. God's chosen covenant people became Egypt's slaves. They became the work force of the Egyptians. However the

greater the burden, the greater the multiplication of the chosen covenant people of God. The king could not understand that even with all the harshness of forced labour, he could not stem the escalation of the Hebrews and therefore he devised one more evil that would surely stem the phenomenal growth of the immigrants. All newborn males were to be killed at birth by the midwives.

It was at this crisis time that Moses was born and after hiding him away for three months, Jochebed prepared a special basket and sent it down the Nile River with baby Moses in it. This was an act of great faith, in her heart she knew that her son was destined for great things for God. Jochebed exercised faith but she knew that her faith had to be accompanied by wisdom and therefore she sent Miriam, the sister of Moses to see what would happen to Moses. The Word of God gives a vivid and an emotional description how that baby Moses was rescued from The Nile River:

When she could hide him no longer, she took for him a basket made of bulrushes and daubed it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and placed it among the reeds by the river bank. And his sister stood at a distance to know what would be done to him. Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her young women walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her servant woman, and she took it. When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby was crying. She took pity on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the girl went and called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him. When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, "Because," she said, "I drew him out of the water (Ex 2:3-10 ESVUK)."

Rest assured Jochebed was the nurse Miriam called. The Word of God does not declare for how long Jochebed nursed Moses. I am personally of the opinion between 2-3 years, however what is of paramount importance is in that short time she not only deposited the call of God to Moses, she also imparted the very pain that God had for His suffering, enslaved covenant people. The modern day Church lays stringent teachings on the transfer of evil spirits, however very little is said of the transfer of God's Holy Spirit to God's elect. We are so quick to promote the negative and so slow to promote the positive, or

even worse, we do not believe that the positive is more than possible. On close examination, there is a positive example of the transfer of spirits in the Old Testament narrative of Elijah and Elisha. The young aspiring prodigy Elijah knew that in order to fill the spiritual void that Elijah was leaving after his departure, he had to have the very anointing that rested on his spiritual mentor to continue the unfinished work of his mentor and no wonder he asked very specifically for a double portion of the Elijah's spirit:

Then Elijah took his cloak and rolled it up and struck the water, and the water was parted to one side and to the other, till the two of them could go over on dry ground. When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask what I shall do for you, before I am taken from you." And Elisha said, "Please let there be a double portion of your spirit on me." And he said, "You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it shall be so for you, but if you do not see me, it shall not be so (2Ki 2:8-10 ESVUK).

There are those certain scholars and may I add renowned men of God who stipulate that in order for a biblical truth to be accepted it has to be mentioned at least twice. Thank God concerning the spiritual transfer of Elijah's power there is a confirmation that there was a definite transfer from Elijah to Elisha:

Now when the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho saw him opposite them, they said, "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha." And they came to meet him and bowed to the ground before him (2Ki 2:15 ESVUK).

Using the experience of the two above mentioned prophets I am of the persuasion that there was a definite transfer of Jehovah's empathy that rested heavily upon Jochebed. After weaning Moses, she had no more dealings with Moses. He was raised as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Though Jochebed was separated from her son, that which was deposited in the spirit of Moses lived on. No wonder there came that time when no longer Moses saw himself as an Egyptian:

By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter (Heb 11:24 ESVUK).

The above verse emphatically states that Moses by faith began to see himself as an Israelite. He was more than willing to identify with his own people, rather than enjoying the fleeting pleasures of living as an Egyptian prince. Within the inner man of Moses, there was a spiritual awakening and a stirring that he

could not fully comprehend. The Spirit of God activated that which Jochebed had instilled in him in that very short space of time. How was this possible, he lived within an environment that was void of Jehovah God? There was no way that faith could come alive, there was no Word of God resounding in Pharaoh's palace. As Born Again, Spirit filled Christians we are well aware that it is The Word of God that produces faith (Ro 10:17). The Spirit of God quickened the very Word that Jochebed spoke over Moses, as he was being breast-fed. As Spirit filled Christians we know that God's unadulterated Word will never ever return null and void, it will forever accomplish its Divine purpose (Is 55:11).

Unable to fully comprehend the inner dealings of The Spirit of God Moses took matters into his own hands and murdered an Egyptian who was mercilessly beating an Israelite. Moses fled in fear of his life for Pharaoh had heard of Moses evil action. Rest assured, often when God's people have to flee from impending danger, they rush into the safe arms of their loving God and there in the sanctity of God's holy presence, a new and a better chapter of their lives begins.

The Three Specific Periods of Moses' life

Several scholars wisely sub divide Moses life into three specific periods and that being:

- 40 years in Egypt,
- 40 years in the wilderness and
- 40 years in the service of God.

As a young minister of the glorious Gospel, I always pondered on this and very graciously, I believe The Holy Spirit in His unique way revealed to me the various reasons (no doubt this is subject to judgement). The first 40 years was a definite period of grandeur in Egypt, raised as an Egyptian. The second period was 40 years in the wilderness for three exact purposes. First and foremost to take Egypt out of Moses. Secondly to take Moses out of Egypt, and finally to place God in Moses. Remember God had said: *"I have come down to deliver my people."*

We, the modern day servants of God are no different to Moses and no wonder Romans 12:1-2 speaks volumes to us:

I appeal to you therefore, brothers by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your

spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect (ESVUK).

God is well aware for us to be effective with lasting results in the ministry that we have to empty ourselves of self. What is done in the flesh will only be for a time and a moment. AS WE LAY OURSELVES ON THE ALTAR OF SACRIFICE, GOD WHO IS A CONSUMING FIRE WILL RECEIVE THE SACRIFICE. AS WE YIELD OURSELVES TO GOD, WE WILL EMPTY OURSELVES OF SELF AND GOD WILL FILL US WITH HIMSELF. God's servants have to realize that God's work can only be done with God's power and to have God's power expressed through our life and ministry we must be filled with God to the sense of overflowing. No wonder John the Apostle speaks of living waters flowing from us:

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

The Call of Moses (Ex 3:1 -4:17)

It is my personal understanding that God will always reveal Himself in some peculiar way to those whom He calls to the ministry and furthermore every call is uniquely different. We cannot confine God's call to one servant of God's peculiar experience. Not all of us will have a Moses experience or a Saul experience. What is of paramount importance is that we will hear within our inner man the call of God, whether in a still small voice or the thunderous sound of the resounding voice of God.

Moses call was unique to him. He saw a burning bush that was not consumed. On approaching the burning bush, he hears the voice of The Almighty calling his name twice. He answers and is told to take off his sandals as he is standing on holy ground.

God introduces Himself as The God of the Jewish Patriarchs, Abraham , Isaac and Jacob and that being the COVENANT KEEPING GOD (Gen 12:1-3, 7; 13:14-18; 15:1-18; 17:4; 22:15-18; 26:1-5; 28:1-4, 10-15).

God conveys the sufferings of His covenant people and commissions Moses to deliver God's chosen people. Moses is reluctant for the simple fact he considers himself and not who God is. He makes another excuse that the chosen people

of God will not believe him as God had not yet revealed His name unto His covenant people and furthermore the people will not believe that God had appeared unto him.

God knowing the frailty of Moses gives Moses definite and convincing signs that He is most definitely with Moses and that it will be God's power and not Moses' ability nor lack of ability that will wrestle the chosen people out of the evil grip of Pharaoh.

The first sign is preceded by a question: "What is in your hand?" Moses held in his hand a ROD, however this was no ordinary rod. Fenis Jennings Dake, the composer of the Dakes Bible states that it was a shepherd's crook. For forty long years, Moses served his father in law as a shepherd, minding and caring for the sheep. Moses was instructed to cast the rod to the ground and even as he obeyed, the rod became a serpent. On picking it up by the tail, it becomes a shepherd's rod once again.

The second sign was Moses hand onto his bosom and on taking it away from his bosom the hand became leprous and on re-enacting the process again the hand was restored back to normal.

The third sign was the taking water out from the Nile River and pouring it out on the ground and thus turning the water into blood.

What Moses held in his hand was but a shepherd's crook however, on close examination of The Infallible Word of God there are two occasions that this simple rod is referred to as THE ROD OF GOD:

And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the rod of God in his hand (Ex 4:20 KJV).

And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand (Ex 17:19 KJV).

God in the above Scriptures is most definitely conveying spiritual truth. Whenever man takes that which is in his hand, no matter how minute or insignificant and gives it to God, there are great transformations. The natural will become the supernatural. The mundane (ordinary) will become the extraordinary. The insignificant will become the significant.

After all the above convincing signs, Moses was still reluctant to heed the call of God. His final excuse was his inability to speak fluently and eloquently. God once more endeavours to convince him that with God all things are possible with God, for it was God who created man.

The Symbolism of the Rod of Moses (The Rod of God)

The Rod of Moses is also referred unto as The Rod of Aaron, the elder brother of Moses (Nu 17:6, 8) and The Rod of God (Ex 4:20; Ex 17:9). It was a simple shepherd's rod to guide the herd of sheep and to be a means of support for the tired shepherd. It had no special powers; however, whenever raised heavenward, waved and struck the power of God would come upon it to perform mighty signs and wonders. It was symbolic of The Mighty Hand of God.

Fenis Jennings Dakes in his Dakes Annotated Reference Bible cites 42 miracles (see page 109) that Moses performed.

1. Moses' Rod turned into a serpent (Ex 4:2-3),
2. The serpent turned back into The Rod of Moses (Ex 4:4),
3. Moses' hand turned leprous (Ex 4:6),
4. Moses hand healed of leprosy (Ex 4:7),
5. The Rod turned into a serpent before the elders of the people of Israel (Ex 4:30),
6. The serpent turned back into The Rod before the elders of Israel (Ex 4:30),
7. Moses hand becoming leprous before the elders of the people of Israel (Ex 4:30),
8. The leprous hand of Moses healed before the elders of the people of Israel (EX 4:30)
9. The Rod of Aaron becoming a serpent before Pharaoh (Ex 7:9-10),
10. The Rod swallowed the rods of the Egyptian magicians (Ex 7:12),
11. Moses changes the waters of Nile River into blood (the first plague) by striking it with his Rod (Ex 7:14-25),
12. Aaron stretched his hand with The Rod in his hand which caused the plague of frogs (the second plague Ex 8:1-7),
13. The cessation of the plague of frogs (Ex 8:8-15),
14. Aaron stretching out his Rod over the dust of the earth (the third plague), and thus turning the dust into gnats (Ex 8:16-19),
15. The fourth plague, the plague of flies (Ex 8:20-24),
16. Goshen, where the Israelites lived was not affected by the plague of flies (Ex 8:22),
17. The cessation of the plague of flies (Ex 8:29-32),

18. The fifth plague of murrain (cattle disease) upon the livestock of Egypt (Ex 9:1-7),
19. The livestock of Israel immune to the plague of murrain (Ex 9:4-7),
20. The sixth plague of boils upon the Egyptians and their animals (Ex 9:8-12), Moses stretching out his Rod toward heaven causing thunder, hail and fire to come upon the land where the Egyptians dwelt (the seventh plague Ex 9:13-35),
21. Moses stretching out his Rod toward heaven causing thunder, hail and fire to come down upon the land where the Egyptians dwelt (the seventh plague).
22. Goshen, where The Israelites lived was exempt from the seventh plague (Ex 9:26),
23. The cessation of the seventh plague (Ex 9:28-35),
24. The stretching of the Rod over the land of Egypt bringing forth locusts to destroy the plant life of Egypt (the eighth plague Ex 10:1-15),
25. The cessation of the plague of locusts (Ex 10:16-20),
26. The stretching forth of the hand of Moses toward heaven thus incurring darkness to come over Egypt (the ninth plague Ex 10:21-29),
27. Goshen, where the Israelites lived was exempt from the plague of darkness (Ex 10:23),
28. The death of all the first born of Egypt, both mankind and animals (the tenth plague Ex 11:1-51),
29. All the first born of The Israelites were exempt from the final plague of death (Ex 11:7-10),
30. Moses stretching his Rod over the Red Sea and dividing it to the left and to the right, thus causing a pathway through the sea on dry ground (Ex 14:21-22),
31. Moses stretching his hand over the sea (no doubt with the Rod in his hand), causing it to come together again and thus drowning the Egyptians that were pursuing God's covenant people.
32. Moses cast a tree into the bitter waters of Marah, which sweetened the water (Ex 15:23-26).
33. The raining of bread from heaven (Ex 16:4-35; Numbers 11),
34. The eating of flesh (Ex 16:8-13),
35. Moses smiting the rock with his Rod thus causing drinking water to gush forth from the rock (Ex 17:1-7),
36. The raising of the hands of Moses with The Rod of God firmly gripped in his hands, thus conquering the Amalekites (Ex 17:8-16),
37. The quenching of the fire of death (Num 11:1-2),
38. The healing of Moses sister- Miriam (Num 12:1-16),
39. The earth swallowing up the 250 rebels (Num 16:1-35),

- 40. The cessation of the plague of death (Num 41-50).
- 41. Moses striking the rock, causing drinking water to gush forth (Num 20:2-13) and
- 42. The healing of the Israelites (Num 20:4-9).

Moses after making his final excuse of not being eloquent and asking God to send someone else to deliver God's chosen people, angers God, however God graciously informs Moses that Aaron, his brother will be his assistant. Aaron was a good speaker and Moses was told that Aaron would speak on his behalf. Aaron was to speak for Moses as the mouth of Moses and Moses being as God to Aaron. Moses' anxiety lifted knowing that he was not alone in the great task of emancipating God's elect.

Of the 42 miracles, it is very interesting to note the various miracles that were enacted by either Moses or Aaron using The Rod of God; however, what is important is that only Aaron used The Rod of God when instructed by Moses to do so.

When Moses finally yielded to the commission, he was told categorically to take the Rod of God with him:

"And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs (Ex 4:17 KJV)."

Moses obeyed God and on taking the Rod, the great miracle of transformation took place. From being the Rod of man, it became The Rod of God. We cannot deny the fact that throughout the narrative of the deliverance of The Israelites the Rod is mentioned several times as The Rod of Moses and The Rod of Aaron and only twice as The Rod of God:

And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the rod of God in his hand (Ex 4:20 KJV).

And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to-morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand (EX 17:9 KJV).

The Hand of God

In the Introduction of this book, I emphasised that the hand speaks of power and authority. We work and create with our hands. The hand plays a dominant

role. In like manner, the hand of God also plays a dominant role in the life and deliverance of His people. The hand portrays God's power and authority. The Rod of Moses and The Rod of Aaron became The Rod of God for it expressed the power and authority of God. In essence, The Rod depicted The All Powerful Hand of God. The deliverance of God's chosen people was a spiritual contest of power and authority between God and the powers of darkness. It was God coming up against Satan. God's plan was to express His power and authority through a man who had in his hand a simple Rod; however, when that simple shepherd's Rod was handed over to Almighty God, the power and authority of God was invested in it. Therein was the power to crush the false gods of Egypt. Though Pharaoh was the prominent person that Moses and Aaron continually came up against, it was God coming up against Satan.

The Ten Plagues on Egypt

I have always wondered why there were ten plagues poured out upon Egypt. It was always my opinion that just one act of God's supernatural power would suffice for the immediate deliverance of His chosen people. God with His infinite wisdom used The Ten Plagues for definite reasons:

1. *Pharaoh would know that The God of the Hebrews was truly God. When Moses and Aaron spoke to Pharaoh the first time of letting God's people go, he was blatantly disrespectful and even denied the existence of The God of The Hebrews: "And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go (Ex 5:2)."*
2. *Convince the Egyptians that their gods were but idols and had no power to resist the might of The God of The Hebrews. David Padfield in his article Against All the Gods of Egypt states that they worshipped over 80 gods.*
3. *God honoured His promise of deliverance He made to Abraham concerning the seed of Abraham: "As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram. And behold, dreadful and great darkness fell upon him. Then the Lord said to Abram, "Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years. But I will bring judgement on the nation that they serve, and afterwards they shall come out with great possessions. As for yourself, you*

shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. And they shall come back here in the fourth generation, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete (Gen 15:12-16 ESV)."

4. *To show forth God as The Father and Saviour of all God's people who put their trust and confidence in him. Not only were the Hebrews saved from The Tenth Plague and that being The Plague of Death, all those Egyptians that sought sanctuary in the homes of God's chosen people where The Blood of The Lamb was painted on the lintels and two posts of the door were saved. This is a classic picture of Jew and Gentile becoming one through the grace and mercy of Almighty God: "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us (Eph 2:14 KJV)."*

Vengeance belongs to God (Ex 12:1-32)

Moses and Aaron played no part in the final Plague - The Plague of Death. All Moses and Aaron had to do was but instruct God's elect to prepare a lamb for each of their households. The lamb was to be killed and the blood thereof was to be painted on the lintel of the door and on the two side posts of the door. The blood was a sign to The Lord to pass over those households that had applied the blood of the lamb.

Moses was born during the time that Pharaoh declared an edict that all the male children of the Hebrews had to be killed at birth. God's people were shattered and rest assured they cried out for vengeance for the death of their innocent children. Eighty years later God himself poured out His vengeance on The Egyptians for shedding innocent blood. Herein was a lesson for Moses and for all of God's servants to this present day:

"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord (Ro 12:19 KJV)."

Spiritual Application

- Moses raised as an Egyptian and yet graciously influenced by the caring and loving Spirit of God that rested upon his mother Jochebed, and that for at least three years, became the deliverer of God's chosen people. Initially he took matters into his own hands and

murdered an Egyptian. Even as fled in fear of his life, he unknowingly ran into his God ordained future with God. There in the wilderness God prepared him for divine service. *All that what God wanted of Moses was that which was in his hand and in his heart.*

Are there perhaps any similarities between Moses and us? We too were raised in an environment void of God, a world that has often turned its back against God. Like Moses we too had sinned (perhaps not murderers) coming short of the glory of God. There is always that special day in all of our life's that God will make Himself known to us through the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ and all we have to do is present to Him, (in our desire for active service in His Kingdom), is what is in our hands. As defiled as they are, God will cleanse our defiled hands the very way he cleansed the vile lips of Isaiah with the tongs from off the altar (Isaiah 6:1-9). Whatever is in your hands, no matter how minute, how large, how insignificant and even significant, simply lay it down before His throne of Grace and you will be amazed of how God through you will deliver all those who are enslaved by sin and demonic powers. The Rod of Moses has been replaced with The Word of God, hold it in your hand as a two edged sword, whirl it in the power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit and the gods of this world will flee.

- Let us not lose heart as we consider our status. Many of us come from backgrounds of poverty and ignorance. It is true that men, and even some in ministerial leadership, first consider the level of education and influential status of those desiring to enter the ministry. Many are lost to the ministry because they fall short of the expectations of others. I have always maintained that God considers *THE POTENTIAL OF A MAN AND NOT THE PERFECTION OF MAN*. I have further said, *IT IS NOT WHAT YOU KNOW, IT IS WHO YOU KNOW, AND I MIGHT NOT KNOW IT ALL BUT I KNOW HIM WHO KNOWS IT ALL*. Let me assure you that God has His eye upon you. Who knows, you might be like David. Obscure, for the simple fact, you are not in the eye of the public. You are surrounded by remoteness. However, in your obscurity, hidden from man, you like David have attached yourself to God, and it is not man that will propel you to the fore, it is God that will open the door to His perfect will for your life. I am of the persuasion that many a good man is kept down, but no man can keep God's man down. It is so exciting to know that God delights to use the discarded, the marginalized, and

the so called ignorant for the simple reason to shut those up, who are egotistical and who constantly look down upon others. Like Moses, David also had a shepherd's rod. No doubt, you do not have a shepherd's rod; probably you may have a saw and a hammer. A simple man without a shepherds' rod, but praise be to God, you do have a SHEPHERD'S HEART and that meets God's standard for the ministry.

- Never ever consider your abilities, nor the lack thereof. It is not what you do for God that counts; rather it is what God does through you.
- The naming of our children and even our ministries are very important. Often names and even titles carry characteristics that are not synonymous with godliness. Moses was named by an Egyptian princess (some Hebrew scholars advocate Jochebed). The name has great significance, in some circles it seen as *saviour*. The common meaning of the name is *drawn from the water*.
- Our ministries should never be moulded on God's Bible characters. Whenever we mimic, we not only incorporate their strengths but their weaknesses as well. Our model for our life and ministry should only and always be Jesus, for He alone is perfect.
- Moses had a simple shepherd's rod that God used in great signs and wonders. We have The Word of God. Many servants of God wonder why the signs and wonders of God are so far and between in our day. The answer is so simple. God confirms His Word with signs following (Mark 16:20). Be it that The Church is not actively engaged in Evangelism and Missions then sadly there is no need for God to confirm His Word.
- Moses was born during a major crisis. Pharaoh had passed a decree that all the new born Hebrew male children be killed at birth. Like Moses, we too are born in a crisis time. The book of Esther presents a great challenge to God's people today: *"For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this (Es 4:13-14 ESVUK)?"*

- Just as Moses' life was divided into three spans, so is our life. Moses had a Past (that was not good) in Egypt. Moses had The Wilderness experience that prepared him for his ministry. Thereafter Moses served God and The Israelites forty years. We too have a Past that was dictated by sin and self. Thereafter, although Born Again, we were spiritually pruned through the process of sanctification. As we matured God placed us into the ministry He had purposely designed for each one of us. All of God's people have a Past, a Present and a Future. What is of vital importance is that we always bear in mind that no matter how bad the past was God is more than able to change his people around and that for the better. My father always told me that people are never too bad to become good. God's grace is able to mould people for the better. Our Past when forsaken can never mould our future. It is our Present State that moulds our Future. Therefore it is extremely essential that we live lives dedicated (in the now) unto God that our Future be blessed of The Lord.
- It is inevitable that the very people we minister unto, will come up against us. It is so easy for us to cut them off. At times we might even want to recompense them. As ministers of The Gospel we must never recompense evil with evil (Ro 12:17). We at all times must pray for our persecutors and for those who spitefully use us (Mt 5:44). As ministers of The Gospel we must always bear in mind that we are serving people who are in the process of being perfected. At all times, though it breaks our spirit, we must be gracious, always ready to forgive and reconcile. As ministers we are preaching The Gospel of Forgiveness, and be it that we ourselves cannot not forgive, then sad to say we are making a mockery of this gracious Gospel of unending forgiveness. Furthermore we must never ascend to higher positions at the demise of others. We should never use people's setbacks. Our spiritual responsibility is to restore those who have fallen and not to take advantage of their demise (Ga 6:1-5).
- **The Lone Ranger mentality**
Moses saw himself as inadequate, and therefore God gave Aaron to be his assistant. In our modern day, there are too many of us who are over confident. We consider our status, our theological diplomas and degrees and deem ourselves more than capable to do the work of The Lord. Jesus, the master mentor gives us an excellent example of how we ought to operate in the ministry: *“And he called unto him*

the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits (Mk. 6:7).” Later we see Barnabas and Saul sent forth by the Antioch Church (Acts 13:1-3). In Acts 15:40 we note that Paul chose Silas as his ministry companion. Too many of God's modern ministers are all on their own and no wonder they burn out. They carry the heavy load all by themselves and the work of God becomes insipid. We all need other men of God to come alongside of us to help us to be effective in the ministry.

THE TEN PLAGUES-JEHOVAH GOD AGAINST THE GODS OF EGYPT

	Plagues	The Egyptian Gods	Moses Rod	God's Rod	Aaron's Rod	Interesting Facts
1	Water into blood Exodus 7:14-25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Khnum - Guardian of river's source. • Hapi - Spirit of the Nile. • Osiris - Nile was his bloodstream. 			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mimicked by Egyptian magicians • Occurred in Egypt and in Goshen
2	Frogs Exodus 8:1-15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hapi} Frog goddess to Egypt. • Heqt} Both related to fertility. 			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mimicked by Egyptian magicians • Occurred in Egypt and in Goshen
3	Lice Exodus 8:16-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seb - The earth god of Egypt. 			✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egyptian magicians unable to mimic • Occurred in Egypt and Goshen
4	Flies Exodus 8:20-32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uatchit - The fly God of Egypt. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only occurs in Egypt • No more plagues to affect Israelites
5	Disease on cattle Exodus 9:1-7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ptah • Mnevis } Egyptian Gods • Hathor • Amon } associated Bulls and cows. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affects property and livestock
6	Boils Exodus 9:8-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sekhmet - Egyptian God of Epidemics. • Serapis } • Imhotep} Egyptian God of healing. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affects physical bodies and Pharaoh's magicians unable to appear in court.
7	Hail Exodus 9:13-35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nut - Egyptian Sky goddess. • Isis & Seth - Egyptian agriculture deities. • Shu - Egyptian god of the atmosphere. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique storm

8	Locusts Exodus 10:1-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serapia - Egyptian deity protector from Locusts 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pharaoh's compromise is rejected 	
9	Darkness Exodus 10:21-29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re • Amon • Atum • Thoth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amon -re • Horus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aten } Egyptian sun gods. • Horus } Egyptian moon god 	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unusual darkness in Egypt at midday whilst sun shines brightly in Goshen
10	Death of Firstborn Exodus 12: 29-36	Judgement on all Egyptian gods including Pharaoh.					

CHAPTER 4

The Hand That Parted The Red Sea



Preamble

I have often asked myself do we as Spirit filled Christians play a role in the supernatural workings of Almighty God. Reflecting over the life and ministry of Moses, I have come to a definite and precise conclusion that we do play a definite and a vital role in the supernatural workings of God. Yet there are those certain times when God acts entirely on His own. He does not need us to display His awesome power and yet He purposely blesses us to the extent that we often share in His amazing wonderworking miracles.

Throughout The Old and New Testaments there are those certain times when God does act on His own and those certain occasions that man acts out the miraculous. When we consider Moses in The Old Testament and the role the Apostles played in The New Testament our faith is ignited toward the supernatural workings of God. This chapter deals with Moses acting out the wondrous miracle of parting the Red Sea. However it is essential that we also see the Apostles acting out the wonderworks of God that we may know that it is God's will that, we too play an active role in the supernatural workings of Almighty God.

All four Gospels record the feeding of the five thousand with the five loaves and two fish (Mt 14:13-21; Mk 6:30-44; Lk 9:10-17). Not all record the bread was given by the lad except John's Gospel. However, what stands out is that after Jesus prayed, He broke the bread and gave it to the disciples who in turn

distributed the bread and the fish. It took an act of faith on the part of the disciples to act out the miracle. They most definitely shared in the wondrous miracle of the feeding of the five thousand.

Another outstanding wonderwork is recorded in John chapter 11:1-44 - the raising of Lazarus from the dead. In this wondrous miracle, Jesus also prayed and gave three implicit instructions: *"roll away the stone, unbind him and let him go (ESVUK)."* Who rolled away the stone? Who unbound Lazarus and set him free? Surely, it was the Apostles. Once again, it is evident that the Apostles played a vital and meaningful role in the raising of Lazarus from the dead. What God done through the Apostles, Moses and so many other mighty men of God surely stirs our faith to share in the wondrous wonderworks of God?

God's Prophetic Word

God's chosen people were in Egypt for 430 years (Ex 13:40). A new king ascended the throne of Egypt after the death of Joseph who in fear of the rapid growth of the Hebrew populace placed harsh taskmasters over them afflicting them with burdens of hard labour. For just on 400 years, God's chosen people were enslaved, building cities for the Pharaohs.

From sunrise to sunset they laboured and that without remuneration. Cheated out of almost 400 years of their wages, but praise be to God what a man sows that is what he reaps:

Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap (Ga 6:7 ESVUK).

God's people left Egypt extremely wealthy. They received their wages and may I add even with an amazing bonus for work well done. This back pay that they received was prophesied by God when God commissioned Moses at the burning bush:

"And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians; and when you go, you shall not go empty, but each woman shall ask of her neighbour, and any woman who lives in her house, for silver and gold jewellery, and for clothing. You shall put them on your sons and on your daughters. So you shall plunder the Egyptians (Ex 3:21-22 ESVUK)."

Almighty God made sure that His hard working chosen people would receive their just reward:

The people of Israel had also done as Moses told them, for they had asked the Egyptians for silver and gold jewellery and for clothing. And the Lord had given the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked. Thus they plundered the Egyptians (Ex 12:35-36 ESVA).

It is interesting to note that the Hebrew word for plundered is recover (Strong's Hebrew Concordance no.05337).

What is still more interesting is that God when ratifying the Abrahamic Land Covenant had also prophesied to Abraham of the suffering of his posterity for four hundred long years and thereafter they would leave the land of bondage with great possessions:

As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram. And behold, dreadful and great darkness fell upon him. Then the Lord said to Abram, "Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years. But I will bring judgement on the nation that they serve, and afterwards they shall come out with great possessions (Ge 15:12-14 ESVUK)."

God is a good God, He watches over His word. He keeps His promises, heaven and earth will pass away but never The Word of The Lord (Is 55:11; Mt 24:35).

The Hardness of Pharaoh's Heart (Ex 14:5-31)

On hearing, that The Hebrews had fled Pharaoh's heart was hardened and he vehemently resolved to bring them back to their slave pits. He mustered up his army and pursued the people of The Most High God. On seeing the Egyptian army, drawing near God's chosen people panicked and murmured against Moses. The servant of The Lord endeavoured to allay their fear; he spoke encouraging words of faith: Moses said to the people:

"Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace (Ex 14:13-14 KJV)."

Moses, by faith spoke those words prior to God commanding him to divide the Red Sea.

God honoured the words of faith that Moses spoke. His words of faith pleased God (Heb 11:6) and therefore God told Moses to lift up his Rod and stretch out his hand over the sea and divide it. The command from God was outstanding in that Moses was to divide the sea. Moses was to act in the very way he had spoken- by faith. The servant of God was to play a strategic part in the miracle that followed. Moses part in the miracle was to raise The Rod to divide the sea, God's part in the miracle was deal with The Egyptian army that were rapidly approaching the fearful nation of Israel. Distraught and gripped with fear they anxiously awaited the impossible - the parting of The Red Sea.

The nation of Israel was led by God out of Egypt. The Angel of God and The Pillar of The Cloud went before them leading them into the unknown. God was their Leader. God went before them preparing the way. God, himself had set before them an open path. God had one more major task to perform with Pharaoh and The Egyptians and that to annihilate them. It was payback time for the terrible years that Israel had endured as slaves of the tyrannical Egyptians. They were to receive their just rewards in The Red Sea.

The Angel of God and The Pillar of The Cloud strategically placed themselves behind The Israelites and thus between The Israelites and The Egyptian army. God protected His chosen people. A horror of darkness came over the area where The Egyptians were, whilst in the camp of God's chosen people the light shone brightly. The Egyptians were unable to move forward they were severely handicapped by the horrendous darkness. No doubt, this surely brought a sense of calm upon God's people, for though they were in the light they could not see The Egyptian army for they were blacked out by the ghastly darkness.

Concerning The Angel of God and The Pillar of The Cloud that led God's chosen people there are several interpretations from various renowned theologians that are very interesting:

ADAM CLARK'S COMMENTS ON EXODUS 14:19

The angel of God] It has been thought by some that the angel, i.e., messenger, of the Lord, and the pillar of cloud, mean here the same thing. An angel might assume the appearance of a cloud; and even a material cloud thus particularly appointed might be called an angel or messenger of the Lord, for such is the literal import of the word Kalm malach, an angel. It is however most probable that the Angel of the covenant, the Lord Jesus, appeared on this occasion in behalf of the people; for as this

deliverance was to be an illustrious type of the deliverance of man from the power and guilt of sin by his incarnation and death, it might have been deemed necessary, in the judgment of Divine wisdom, that he should appear chief agent in this most important and momentous crisis.

JOHN WESLEY'S COMMENTS ON EXODUS 14:19

The angel of God-Whose ministry was made use of in the pillar of cloud and fire, went from before the camp of Israel, where they did not now need a guide; there was no danger of missing their way through the sea, and came behind them, where now they needed a guard, the Egyptians being just ready to seize the hindmost of them. There it was of use to the Israelites, not only to protect them, but to light them through the sea; and at the same time it confounded the Egyptians, so that they lost sight of their prey, just when they were ready to lay hands on it. The word and providence of God have a black and dark side towards sin and sinners, but a bright and pleasant side towards those that are Israelites indeed.

MATHEW HENRY'S COMMENTS OF EXODUS 14:19-20

A guard set upon Israel's camp where it now lay most exposed, which was in the rear, Ex 14:19-20. The angel of God, whose ministry was made use of in the pillar of cloud and fire, went from before the camp of Israel, where they did not now need a guide (there was no danger of missing their way through the sea, nor needed they any other word of command than to go forward), and it came behind them, where now they needed a guard (the Egyptians being just ready to seize the hindmost of them), and so was a wall of partition between them. There it was of use to the Israelites, not only to protect them, but to light them through the sea, and, at the same time, it confounded the Egyptians, so that they lost sight of their prey just when they were ready to lay hands on it. The word and providence of God have a black and dark side towards sin and sinners, but a bright and pleasant side towards those that are Israelites indeed. That which is a savour of life unto life to some is a savour of death unto death to others. This was not the first time that he who in the beginning divided between light and darkness (Ge 1:4), and still forms both (Isa 45:7), had, at the same time, allotted darkness to the Egyptians and light to the Israelites, a specimen of the endless distinction which will be made between the inheritance of the saints in light and that utter darkness which forever will be the portion of hypocrites. God will separate between the precious and the vile.

Considering these wise words of these mighty men of God, they all agree that The Angel of God was within The Pillar of The Cloud. My dear friend Rev Keith Walsh says that The Pillar of cloud speaks of the *Shekinah glory of God*, in which The Angel of God manifested Himself. Adam Clark suggests that The Angel of God was possibly The Lord Jesus.

My personal interpretation of The Angel of God and The Pillar of The Cloud differs, (however, my interpretation is subject to judgement). I am of the persuasion that The Angel of God is The Lord Jesus Christ, whereas The Pillar of The Cloud is The Spirit of God. I have come to this conclusion based on the fact that The Lord Jesus and His redemptive work is clearly typified in the application of the blood of the slain lamb on the two posts and the lintel of the homes of Israelites. The Pillar of The Cloud clearly typifies the leading and guiding of the Holy Spirit (Jn 16:13-15). However a personal word of caution doctrine is not formulated, neither based on Typology, this is a personal interpretation and is subject to your scrutiny.

After God had settled the people, Moses began his part of the miracle. He stretched out his Rod over the Red Sea. Moses was a man of great faith; he had seen the power of his God repeatedly through the plagues on Egypt. However, this time his faith was surely to be tested to the hilt (maximum). The miracle he was about to initiate through the raising of his Rod was not just an act of faith; it was also an act of obedience. He obeyed the command of God to raise his Rod over the sea, thus exercising faith in God to perform the impossible. As he initially raised The Rod, he immediately heard the howling of a great ferocious wind blowing over and through The Red Sea causing it part to the left and the right forming a dry thoroughfare. The Word of God is very specific how it describes this ferocious wind. The wind is expressed as *a strong east wind*.

Some may say that God parting The Red Sea used a natural phenomenon. He used the wind to divide the sea. What you about to read you need not concur (agree) with as it is my personal interpretation. I did not hear from God, my inner man did not leap within as I penned my personal thoughts. I am of the personal persuasion that the east wind was a type of The Spirit of God that moved over and through the sea. Better still, it was The Spirit of God. How did I come to this conclusion?

The Word of God is quick and powerful (Heb 4:12). God reveals Himself, His actions and purposes through the unadulterated Word of God. Genesis chapter 1 clearly shows forth The Triune Godhead in the creation narrative of the

heaven and the earth. The Spirit of God's part in the creation was His very moving over the waters. On doing a word study The Strong's Hebrew Concordance number 07307 sheds explicit (open, clear) illumination (light) on just how The Spirit of God moved over the waters:

07307. xwr ruwach, roo'-akh

Search for 07307 in KJV

from 7306; wind; by resemblance breath, i.e. a sensible (or even violent) exhalation; figuratively, life, anger, unsubstantiality; by extension, a region of the sky; by resemblance spirit, but only of a rational being (including its expression and functions):--air, anger, blast, breath, X cool, courage, mind, X quarter, X side, spirit((-ual)), tempest, X vain, ((whirl-))wind(-y).

See Hebrew 07306 (ruwach)

With the above outstanding information, we can conclude that it was *the ruwach that breathed life over the creation of The Triune Godhead*. It was the same Spirit of God that moved through and over the Red Sea that moved and breathed over the creation.

It is extremely imperative (crucial, important) that we briefly reiterate (say again) what has been written concerning The Spirit of God: I have said that The Pillar of The Cloud is none other than The Spirit of God. I have also said that The Spirit of God that went before God's people removed Himself from going before and went behind God's chosen people to stop the advancing Egyptian army. This personal assessment might pose a problem to some and no doubt I can understand why as we consider the following: Recently I heard a mighty man of God give an account of his personal experience in heaven, the very immediate presence of God. He saw God The Father and God The Son. He did not see The Spirit of God and therefore he asked the stupid question (he personally said the question was stupid): "Where is The Spirit of God?" The reply he got was that The Spirit of God was on earth. Immediately I realized that there was something drastically wrong with his unique experience.

All three persons in The Godhead are Omnipotent, Omniscient and Omnipresent. This renowned man of God made the gross mistake of saying (though not in specific words) that The Spirit of God could not be in two places simultaneously (at the same time). The Spirit of God could not be in Heaven for He was on earth reaping the harvest of souls. I have purposely used this so-

called out of body experience to deal with certain sceptics for they may just say that The Holy Spirit in the miracle of the parting of The Red Sea was between The Israelites and The Egyptian army and therefore could not be performing the wondrous miracle of dividing The Red Sea at the same time. I have to concur with the sceptics that He was there and yet at the same time because He is Omnipresent He also was moving over and through The Red Sea, dividing it to the left and the right causing a safe passage for the people of God to cross over safely. There is another great lesson that we can learn from this renowned man's theological error. Paul, the Apostle gives The Church a wonderful teaching of how we all ought to deal with our personal experience in relation to disclosing our personal experiences and revelations to The Body of Christ:

"I must go on boasting. Though there is nothing to be gained by it, I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body, I do not know, God knows. And I know that this man was caught up into paradise—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows— and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter. On behalf of this man, I will boast, but on my own behalf, I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. Though if I should wish to boast, I would not be a fool, for I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me. So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited (2Co 12:1-7 ESVUK)."

Whilst the *ruwach* (there are no capitals in The Hebrew language) was moving over and through the waters, Moses was holding up his Rod. There was collaboration (teamwork, cooperation, alliance) between The Spirit of God and Moses. They were working together. Moses by extending his Rod was invoking the power of the *ruwach* over and through The Red Sea. How marvellous God working with man to do the impossible?

God's people crossed over safely whilst God held back the Egyptian army. Once over the other side God spoke to Moses to stretch his hand over the sea that it may come back on the Egyptians. All the Egyptians were drowned as the *ruwach* heeded the signal of Moses to bring the waters as one again.

Spiritual Application

There is so much that can be read into the narrative (story) of the deliverance of The Israelites:

- *They had a human deliverer who used a simple shepherd's Rod that was empowered by Almighty God to part the Red Sea thus enabling God's chosen people to cross through on dry land to the other side.*

As Born Again, Spirit Filled children and servants of God we are the modern day deliverers. We are called by God to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations (Mt 28:19-20). Many of us disregard ourselves. We feel so inadequate. We consider our status, our abilities and because they are not of high standing, we make the same excuse as Moses: **"Who am I should go to the nations"**? So many of us fail to realize that the only hope for the unsaved is with us. God has given us the answers to all the perplexities of life. We have the way out of the dilemmas (predicaments) of life. We have The Word of God that is more than able to set men free from sin and its horrible addictions and consequences. The very Word that we are holding back from those imprisoned in sin was The Very Word that saved us. If God could do it for us, He that is no respecter of persons will surely do it for them.

Let us not reiterate (repeat) the same mistake of Moses. Let us stop looking to ourselves. God's Word is infallible. God says we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us (Php 4:13).

Even as the pertinent (relevant, related, important) question resounds: *"What is in your hand"*? Whatever is in your hand give it to God and He will make something of it. Perhaps you may say there is absolutely nothing in your hand, it is empty and void. Fret not God can still use you, for the simple fact He created everything out of nothing. One of my proverbial (well-known) sayings is God spoke to nowhere and from nowhere came everywhere. Many of us do not realize that the mere fact that we are Born Again and Spirit filled that God has chosen us.

Let me share this profound truth with you: *It is one thing to have faith in God but it is another thing for God to have faith in you.* As much as you believe in God, so does God believe in you with one great distinction-- *He believes more in you than what you believe in Him and yourself.* God had said to Satan of His servant Job: *"Have you considered my servant Job?"* Let me assure you the devil knows what potential is within you and no

wonder he brings fear and despair upon you. God has called you; you have come to the kingdom of God for a time such as this. Lift your head heavenward, grab the two edged Sword of God and march forward into the enemy's camp and declare to all those bound and shackled that you have brought deliverance to them via The Gospel of Jesus Christ. Other than the unsaved, God's Born Again Children face many spiritual and physical obstacles that they themselves have no power and control over. Their dilemmas and perplexities rob them of their Faith; they wring their hands in despair wondering where God is. Many feel forsaken and it is at times as these that men of God wrestle with God for their deliverance. Like Moses, Men and Women of God stand before the insurmountable problems of their congregational members praying words of deliverance. Men and Women who have the heart of God for God's people soon discover *The Power of the Spoken Word over the afflictions, dilemmas and perplexities of those whom God has entrusted into their care.*

- *God, through Moses delivered a people with whom He had a Covenant Relationship. God had promised their Patriarch Abraham (Gen 15:13-16) that he would bring them back to the land he had given Abraham.*

Ministers of the glorious Gospel must always bear in mind that God is true to His Word. God at all times watches over His Word to perform it (Is 55:11). God's chosen people were enslaved, in captivity for 400 long years before God answered their heart cries for deliverance. God never ever forgets His Words of Covenant and nor does He forget the people with whom He has entered into Covenant with. We, The Born Again are also God's Covenant people and we can rest assured *weeping may endure for a season but joy will come in the morning (Psalm 30:5).* The Men and Women of God must at all times quote the many promises of God recorded in The Holy Scriptures concerning deliverance to their congregations and more so when those in the congregation have insurmountable problems perplexing them

- *God brought judgement on the Egyptians who had enslaved God's people for 400 years (Gen 15:14). Vengeance belongs to God.*

My dear wife, Dolores, has always been a great encouragement in my ministry. Though she always spoke encouragingly, she also spoke firmly. With great love, she often told me of my ministerial weaknesses: *I hurt too easily and take too much personally.* Over the years I have taken her wise counsel and I am excited to say that these days the many attacks

that I face from within The Church and from without The Church are like water on a ducks back. I have learnt, like so many other men and women of God; *that no weapon formed against his servants and handmaidens can prosper (Is 54:17).*

My eldest daughter, Yolanda, when still very young (probably about eight years old) spoke a precise (accurate) Word of Wisdom that has been a tremendous blessing to me throughout the 35 years of my ministry. I remember very vividly we were at our supper table and I very unwisely revealed to my wife and three beautiful daughters that I had enough of the verbal abuse, unwarranted rebukes, insults and gossip and was seriously considering giving up on the ministry. Yolanda looked at me with a smile on her face that stretched across the entire table. Her smile was that radiant. Her words echoed throughout the supper room, vibrating in my spirit as she spoke with love and inspiration: *"Daddy, you must understand that people only really talk about you when you are important."* I literally choked up and fought back my tears for I realized that I was witnessing Scripture being fulfilled before the family and I: *"Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger (Ps 8:2KJV)."*

That night I cried myself to sleep, not only just because of conviction, but also because of Parental Pride. To this day, my daughter's words often ring loudly in my spirit when facing ridicule. Over the years, I have seen God's vindication of my ministry. Some of those people who slandered my ministry, were themselves removed from the ministry. Others over the years have come and apologised. I must admit at first I relished that God had dealt with them; however I soon realized that I was stooping to their level and the best thing that I could do for my persecutors was but pray for them.

God after 400 long years poured out His judgement on the Egyptians for touching the anointed of The Lord. Vengeance belongs to God and God alone. Let us not take up arms against those who come up against our ministries. Let us hand them over to God and let Him deal with them. He is a merciful God and He will always deal with them in a spirit of Love, and forgiveness if they repent, though He will chastise them. There are four more important spiritual truths that I learnt from my inflicted sufferings: Firstly never take delight in the demise of others who have come up against you and the ministry that God has entrusted to you. Secondly, the wheels of God grind and they grind slowly, but they do grind and though

God might take what seems at times an eternity to deal with your persecutors, God in His good time will recompense. Thirdly, at all times we must have a positive attitude toward suffering or should I rather say a scriptural attitude toward suffering. The Book of Hebrews records a remarkable Scripture of the importance of Suffering: *"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered (He 5:8 KJV)."* Jesus, The Son of God, our Redeemer, was taught obedience through suffering. The question that follows: Are we exempt from suffering? Our answer is we are not exempt. Finally yet importantly, Suffering always moulds *The Character of God*. Whenever our responses toward our persecutors are noble and we do not recompense evil with evil God will make us a blessing to others. Many servants and handmaidens of God minister from a level of knowledge acquired, however the most effective ministry flows from experience: *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God (2Co 1:3-4 ESVUK)."* God comforts us in the ministry as we face trials and persecution that we in turn out of a comforted spirit may comfort our fellow ministers who are passing through similar horrendous attacks from within The Church and from without The Church.

- *Though mighty miracles were wrought by The Rod of Moses, The Rod of God and The Rod of Aaron ultimate deliverance came via The Passover Lamb.*

Nine stupendous plagues were invoked upon The Egyptians as The Rod of Moses, The Rod of God and The Rod of Aaron was raised heavenward. The gods of Egypt were belittled (demeaned). They were exposed as fakes and yet the Israelites were still held captive. *Only when the lamb was slain and the blood applied to the doorposts and the lintel were God's people set free.* Herein lies a great lesson for us modern day servants of God. Our ministries must be enriched with supernatural acts of Almighty God; however, our main emphasis must always be The Sacrificial Death of Christ, the shedding of his forever efficacious Blood and His Triumphant Resurrection over sin and death. Miracles are there to destroy the powers of darkness; The Blood is there to set the captive free. Let us never forget that without the shedding of The Blood of Jesus there can be no remission of sin (Ro 3:25; Heb 9:22).

- *God will not allow His chosen people to be robbed of what is rightfully theirs (Gen 15:14; Ex 12:35-36). He ensures that what is rightfully theirs through their labour will finally come to them.*

In our modern day Church society The Ascended Gift of The Prophet and The Gift of Prophecy are very prominent. However most prophecies that I have personally heard regarding many others and myself deal exclusively with blessings and we thank God for that. However, on close examination of The Word of God, there are Prophecies within the canon of Scripture that also deal with great suffering. One of the classical examples of this is the suffering of The Jewish nation. God prophesied to Abraham, The Father of the Jewish nation, that his seed would be strangers in a foreign land for four hundred years. There they would suffer great affliction and after their suffering God would punish their taskmasters and deliver them and they would come out with great substance (Ge 15:13-14).

It is true God is no man's debtor. As a family, we have seen financial miracles. One time we almost lost our home, however God spoke to certain people to pay off the backlog on our house. It is one thing when the world with holds what is rightfully due to us, but it is a disgrace when God's people with holds from His servants what is rightfully theirs because of their labour: *“Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward (1Ti 5:17-18).”*

Let us learn from the experience that God's chosen people had in Egypt. They stripped the Egyptians bare of their wealth. Let us not muzzle the ox that treads the corn (De 25:4; 1Co 9:9; 1Ti 5:18). Let us bless and always honour God's servants. On the other hand, there are those certain few men of God who bleed their Local Churches of their financial resources, taking exorbitant salaries. Though God's workman are worthy of their hire and more so those who Pastor and Teach deserve double honour (1Ti 5:17), it is always wise that we Church Leaders receive salaries that though good will not cause the unsaved to slander The Church and thus bring The work of the Lord into disrepute.

- *The depth of our spiritual intimacy determines the depth of our spiritual power.*

God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). What God had done through Moses, God most assuredly can do through you and I. However, we must

realize that there is a price to pay (though many of the modern day ministers believe that Christ has paid for it all), *we must shut ourselves off from the world, our pleasures, at times from our families and even at times from Church activities, TO BE SHUT IN ALONE WITH GOD.* Oft we are so busy for God that we lose out on our spiritual intimacy with God. It is God who sheds abroad in our hearts His love and the power of The Holy Spirit as we spend time alone with Him (Ro 5:5). The power of God to perform the supernatural acts of God in our ministries hinges on our relationship with God. Time spent with God develops a relationship with God that empties us of self and fills us with God. Busyness depletes our spiritual power. We have to bear in mind and spirit it is not what I do for God that counts rather it *is WHAT GOD DOES THROUGH US THAT COUNTS AND THEREFORE WE MUST SPEND TIME ALONE WITH GOD IN WORSHIP, PRAYER AND INTERCESSION.*

- **Obedience produces faith.**

As ministers of the glorious and forever effective Gospel of Jesus Christ, we have to constantly stir up our faith. We are well aware that faith comes from reading, studying and applying God's unadulterated Word (Ro 10:17; Ja 1:23). Other than The Word of God, praying in the Spirit also builds up our faith: *"But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit (Jude 20 ESVUK)."* As ministers of The Gospel there are many men of God who are in step with God through reading, studying and applying The Word of God, but oh how sad it is that so many are out of step with The Holy Spirit for they do not accept speaking in tongues for our day. Some have gone as far as saying that speaking in tongues is of the devil. Well, I really wonder what demon controls me when I pray in The Spirit. *HOWEVER A WORD OF CAUTION LET US NOT DERIDE (RIDICULE, SCOFF, PUT DOWN) THOSE WHO SNEER US, WE WHO PRAY IN THE SPIRIT MUST ALWAYS REMEMBER THEY ARE OUR BRETHREN. WE ARE NEVER TO ATTACK OUR BRETHREN. IT IS TRUE THE GATES OF HELL SHALL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST THE CHURCH, BUT SADLY BECAUSE OF OUR IGNORANCE AND DOCTRINAL INDIFFERENCES WE ATTACK EACH OTHER WITH MALICIOUS WORDS AND IN SO DOING, WE THE CHURCH PREVAIL AGAINST THE CHURCH, OF WHOM EVEN OUR CRITICS ARE AN ESSENTIAL PART OF.*

Whenever God instructed Moses to raise The Rod, it took an act of simple childlike Faith on his part. He simply obeyed God and acted in Faith. Once again, I have to mention the important link between Obedience and Faith. Rest assured that Faith is born out of Obedience. As God's ministers for this hour, we have to delight ourselves in God. Like Jesus, we must delight ourselves in

obeying the directives we receive from God: *"Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God (Heb 10:7 KJV)."*

Just as Obedience produces Faith, in like manner Faith produces Trust and Hope. The following acronym that the Holy Spirit impressed me with illustrates this clearly.

*F FAITH
A ACTIVATES
I INSPIRED
T TRUST (and)
H HOPE*

Though often times we may obey God with blind Faith, it is Faith that inspires (stimulates, provokes, encourages, arouses) Trust and Hope. No matter how grave the problem we may face Faith will always inspire us to Trust and Hope on God's Word: *"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen (He 11:1 ESVUK)."*

*H HOPE
O ON
P PROMISES
E ETERNAL*

As God's servants and handmaidens let us always realize that there is only one way that we can truly please our Lord and Saviour: *"And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him (He 11:6 ESVUK)."*

Let us, the ministers of the glorious Gospel of power and deliverance purpose in our hearts that we will stir up our Faith that we like Moses may become emancipators of God's people.

- **God's abiding presence**

How often have we heard God's people joyfully exclaim that the battle belongs to God and the victory ours? The crossing of The Red Sea is a typical example of this. God went behind the Israelites to keep at bay the advancing Egyptian army. The Spirit of God went before them as a *strong east wind* dividing The Red Sea. God was behind them and God was before them. The Presence of God protected their back. The Presence of God went before them clearing a path for them. Their experience though outstanding does not in any

way surpass the experience that you and I have. Like the experience of the Israelites God will always protect our back. Like the experience of the Israelites God will always go before us. However, there is one experience that we have that the Israelites did not experience. God went behind them and before them but was never *WITHIN THEM*. God has and always will go behind us (The Church) to protect us against the wiles of the enemy. God will always go before as a lamp and a light (Ps 119:105), and more than that God will always *BE IN US*. We, every member of The Body of Christ (The Church) are The Temple of God and The Habitation of The Holy Spirit (1Co 3:16).

- **The just shall live by faith**

Moses exercised great Faith. He took God at His Spoken Word. At all times Moses simply obeyed God's commands. As ministers of The Gospel of Jesus Christ we must be very careful of where we place our Faith. Many modern day ministers have taken Faith to a level that is beyond what The Word of God teaches. Having Faith in God's Word is a necessity for the working of the supernatural. However, having Faith in Faith is not of God. Let me cite an example of this. Jesus was tempted of Satan in the wilderness. In fact after His Water Baptism and His inauguration of Prophet, Priest and King at The Jordan River, Jesus was led by The Holy Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. One of the several temptations was that Jesus hurl Himself down from the pinnacle of The Temple:

And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you", and "On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone." And Jesus answered him, "It is said, You shall not put the Lord your God to the test." And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time (Lu 4:9-13)."

Satan quoted Psalm 91:11-12. Although Satan quoted God's Word Jesus did not hurl Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple. Hypothetically if Jesus had hurled himself it would have been A PRESUMPTIOUS ACT ON, HIS PART. Jesus did not act on The Word of God quoted by Satan for the simple reason it was not God speaking. Anyone may quote The Written Word (The Logos), but not anyone can speak a Rhema Word, which is The Spoken Word of God spoken by The Holy Spirit through God's people. In most cases it is A Word of Direction. Jesus did not heed The Written Word for the simple reason The Holy Spirit was not speaking through Satan. This is a classic example of Presumptuous Faith, exercising Faith in Faith. As God's people we are well aware without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb 11:6). However, we also know that our Faith has to be directed into the threefold cord of expression and that being: Faith in The

Word of God, Faith in The Blood of Jesus and Faith in the work of The Holy Spirit.

Chapter 5

The Hands of Intercession



Prologue

Prayer is one of the most important spiritual disciplines and therefore we have to fully comprehend (understand) it. Prayer has several facets (aspects, parts) and when practiced within the various facets Prayer takes on its true purpose. Each type of Prayer is earmarked for a specific purpose:

- *Prayer of Agreement:* One of the classic examples of this facet of Prayer is found in Acts 1:14: "*All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers (ESVUK)*. Jesus instructed The Apostles and His disciples to wait for the outpouring of The Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5).
- Their prayers were directed toward the promise of Jesus. They knew within themselves they were unable to fulfil The Great Commission. However, through what Jesus had promised them, they were of the persuasion that they would become effective witnesses of Jesus Christ.
- *Prayer of Binding and Loosing:* Jesus had convinced His Apostles that the gates of hell would not prevail against The Church (Mt 16:18). He gave them his authority to do exactly what He had done in His ministry before them. The name of Jesus was their Power of Attorney, whatever they loosed in His name would be loosed, and whatever they bound in His name would be bound. It was the name of Jesus that acted as the key to lock and to open (loose). The modern day Church has the exact same power.

- *The Prayer of Consecration:* The Lord Jesus sets forth a wonderful example of this type of Prayer in The Garden of Gethsemane: *"And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will (Mt 26:39 ESVUK)."*
- *The Prayer of Faith:* *"And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven (Ja 5:15 ESVUK)."*
- *The Prayer of Intercession:* This chapter deals with this type of Prayer
- *The Prayer of Judgement:* In The Old Testament prayers of judgement, we prayed on the enemies of Israel. The New Testament our Lord Jesus teaches us to pray for our enemies and all those who spitefully use us (Mt 5:44-48).
- *The Prayer of Thanksgiving:* *"Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name (Ps 100:4 ESVUK)."*
- *The Prayer of Supplication:* *"First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people (1Ti 2:1 ESVUK)."*
- *Praying in The Spirit:* *"Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God (Ro 8:26-27)."* *"But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit (Ju 20 ESVUK).*
- *Prayer of Worship:* *"While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them (Acts 13:2 ESVUK)."*

The Heart of the Pastor

Many Born Again Christians fail to realize that their destinies are held in the praying hands of their Pastors. The ministry of a Pastor is unique in that it is a caring ministry. Congregation are more readily blessed when their man of

God is an intercessor. In our modern day Church, we have ministers who excel in preaching. Many are uniquely articulate. Words flow and come easy in their profound preaching. Though this is an important aspect of the pastoral ministry, it is in no way the hallmark of the pastoral ministry. I have always maintained that any Tom, Dick and Harry could be an articulate preacher; however, it takes a man of great love for God's people to care for God's flock.

Sadly, many Pastors love the crowds and the accolades of their congregations. No doubt the call of the man of God is to be with the people of God, and yet the strength of his ministry and more so the strength of the people whom he pastors is not just dependent on what he says to them through the preached Word of God. It is also crucially dependent on what he says to God on their behalf in his private chamber of prayer. I will never forget these words of wisdom (sadly I cannot recall who said it and I am paraphrasing) that the test of a man of God's soul is not how much time he spends preaching to God's people, but rather how much time he spends alone with God in prayer for God's people.

Moses is recognised as The Prophet of God of The Old Testament and yet when we make an in depth study of his ministry most of us will agree that he most definitely had the caring heart of a Priest. No wonder it was Moses that ordained Aaron as the first High Priest of The Jewish Nation. The simple fact is that you cannot impart to others that you yourself do not possess. Why do I stress these ministerial facts of Moses? I do so for the simple reason that as a Prophet of God, he declared to the people of God the very *mind of God* and as man of God with the caring heart of a Priest (who offers up sacrifice and that of himself, time, energy, family, pleasure etc) he exhibited *the loving heart of God*. There is a simple spiritual truth and may I add no man has taught me this: (years of heartache, self-denial and the empowerment of The Holy Spirit): *You cannot make known the mind of God to His people unless you have the heart of God*. God has taught me over the years that it is the fundamental duties of men and women of God to echo the voice of God to God's elect and in turn echo to God the innermost hurts, groanings, sorrows and sufferings of God's people to God. The servant of God must always bear in mind that he is not only a servant of God but also the servant of man. He, the man of God is God's representative to man and man's representative to God. The man of God is God's mouthpiece to God's people and in turn the people's mouthpiece to God. If ever there was a man of God that fits the above descriptions of a true man of God, it is Moses. This mighty Prophet of God loved God's people more than he loved himself. One of my personal favourite sayings has become the earnest desire of my

ministry and I know that I can excel in the ministry if I make every effort to live up to it: *Before you preach to people, pray for the people.*

Moses, the People's Intercessor

I really wonder whether Jesus had Moses in mind when he spoke the parable of the lost sheep. Remember Jesus spoke of leaving the 99 and going to look for the one lost sheep (Mt 18:10-14). Moses had an experience that truly showed forth his caring heart for the people of God. They murmured against Moses for there was no drinking water. The murmurings against the servant of God were that ghastly that it almost led to the disastrous action of Moses being stoned (Ex 17:1- 7). Moses cried to The Lord and was instructed to strike The Rock. Fresh water gushed forth from The Rock, thus quenching the dire thirst of the people.

The Scripture teaches that in no way are God's servants to be ridiculed, threatened and attacked: *"And he said unto his men, The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD (1Sa 24:6 KJV)."* God is the defender of His servants. He has and will always recompense (repay) those for coming up against His servants. God punished His people severely for coming up against His servant Moses. The Amalekites killed many of the people:

Then Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim. So Moses said to Joshua, "Choose for us men, and go out and fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand." So Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed, and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands grew weary, so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it, while Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side. So his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. And Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the sword (Ex 17:8-13 ESVUK).

Both Mathew Henry and Jennings Dakes state that the Amalekites killed off the stragglers (those at the rear). This was a cowardly attack. Moses, the good shepherd that he was of God's flock acts out what Jesus says in Mathew 18:10-14. Like Jesus, he cared for the sheep entrusted into his care. He stops the entire nation from moving forward and goes to the rear of the camp and instructs Joshua to choose out an army to come up against the enemy whilst he

goes to the overlooking hill with The Rod of God. (Note carefully how The Rod is described, it is now neither The Rod of Moses nor The Rod of Aaron, it is now, when the people are in dire danger that it becomes The Rod of God).

Moses stood on the hill viewing the battle intently (attentively) and raised The Rod of God heavenward. As long as The Rod of God was raised, the battle went for Joshua's army. However, whenever The Rod of God went down to his side the battle went against the army of Joshua. This is a classic picture of what I had mentioned in the sub heading *The Heart of the Pastor: He holds their destiny in his hands. Be it that he is a praying man, a man of God that intercedes for the flock that God has entrusted him with, they, the flock will always know the delivering power of Lord Most High. Be it that the man of God loves The Pulpit and does not spend time in intercession for those in the Pew (church seats), then sad to say Satan and his demonic horde will run roughshod (brutal) over God's people.*

Helping Hands of Intercession

The Scriptures are not clear whether Aaron and Hur accompanied Moses initially when he ascended the hill. However, they had noticed as long as The Rod of God was raised heavenward the battle went for them and when it drooped to his side, the battle went against them. These were wise men of God. They did not rush to raise the hands of the man of God. They surveyed (reviewed) the situation and then acted accordingly. They did something that so many of God's people fail to do concerning their Pastors. They made the man of God comfortable. Standing there on the hill all alone, hands constantly outstretched, and the people upon his heart was way too much for this loving Prophet of God, who had a heart of a Priest. They saw him sink to his knees, unable to continue, the burden of his people was too heavy for him, for he was but a mere man. They wisely sought for a small boulder (stone, small rock) on which they made him sit, thus making him comfortable. Thereafter they stood alongside him, one on the left and on the right, placing their hands on his weakened arms and raising his hands high with The Rod of God secure in his hands. These men of God who knew that the future of their beloved nation rested with this mighty man of God. They acted without speaking. They knew that words would not solve the critical situation. They acted instantly and yet with great wisdom. They made sure that Moses was no more in physical discomfort, although the spiritual burden weighed heavily upon his spirit. There on the hilltop was a threefold cord of intercession that could not be broken: *"Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their*

toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken (Ecc 4:9-12 ESVUK)." On the hill, the actions displayed by Aaron and Hur were most definitely prophetic toward the modern day Church: *"1Co 12:26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it (KJV).*" We are our brother's keeper and believe it or not, we like Moses, Aaron and Hur hold the destinies of others in our hands.

A great victory was won for Israel against their enemy, not because of Joshua and his army. The battle was won because of Moses who held the destiny of The Israelites in his hands of intercession and two mighty men of God who said so little but did so much.

SPIRITUAL APPLICATION

- For our ministries to be effective as ministers of The Gospel of Jesus Christ we have to know and understand every facet of Prayer for the simple fact we have to Pray the right type of Prayer at given times and in certain situations.
- As Pastors, we must always be aware that we hold the people of our congregations in the palm of our hands. Through Our Prayers of Intercession on their behalf, we determine their future, their deliverance and their blessings.
- Though Preaching is an integral facet of our ministry, it is not the highlight of our ministry. The highlight of our ministry is the time that we spend alone with God. It is through ardent (passionate, fervent, devoted) communication with God that God rubs off on us. When we shut ourselves off from the mundane (common, routine) of life and shut ourselves in with God, He pours His person into us, that when we stand before our congregations they will not only hear the Word of God we preach unto them, but they will see The God of The Word. What we preach God Himself will act out. Be it that we preach on healing, then God will heal. Be it

that we preach on forgiveness then God will forgive. Be it that we speak on the supernatural then God will show up and perform the supernatural. God will confirm His Word with signs following when His servants spend time with Him alone.

- As important as Preaching is we should always bear in mind that *before we Preach to People, we must Pray for people*. My dear colleague and friend Dr Ronnie Naidoo shared in his teaching class how that he before every service would be early at Church that he might pray for all those dear people who will be attending the Church service. He went from empty pew to empty and laying hands asking God to bless the people that would sit in the specific pews and that The Word of God he would be preaching to them would convict and bless them. A true story is told of a very renowned Pastor whilst flying to minster in another country had a large stack of photographs with writing on each photograph and as he held each one in his hand he spoke the name of the person's photograph he was holding in his hand. This went on for some time and finally the passenger seated next to him could no longer wonder what this Pastor was up to and asked him very politely what he was doing. He replied that he was simply memorizing the names of his congregation members that after The Church service, he when shaking their hands would mention their names. He also shared with the passenger that he had photographs of all his congregational members in his prayer room and on alternate days he would pray for certain members. This man was well loved and appreciated by his flock. Let us forever bear in mind that a *Praying Pastor is a loved Pastor*.
- To have a well-balanced effective ministry we must always seek The Mind of God and The Heart of God. We must never forget it is one thing to know everything but it is another thing to Love everyone.
- As Ascended Gifted Ministers, we must never ever forget that our vertical relationship will always determine our horizontal relationship. When right with God, we will always be right with man.

- Hands clasped in fervent prayer on behalf of others are a simple but meaningful revelation of God's Love flowing from a man or woman of God that has the heart of God.

Aaron and Hur are a prophetic picture of the ministry of Jesus our Lord and The Holy Spirit, who come alongside God's people in the hour of dire need. Scripture teaches Aaron was the first High Priest of the Israelites. The Easton's Bible Dictionary sheds much light about Hur. He was the husband of Miriam, the sister of Moses (Ex 17:10-12). He was the son of Caleb and the grandfather of Bezaleel, one of the major artisans who built the Tabernacle of Moses (Ex 31:2; 35:30; 1Ch 2:19). Aaron is a type of our forever-effective High Priest-Jesus Christ (He 3:1; 4:14) and how Aaron assisted Moses is seen in one of the many acronyms God has given me over the years of my ministry:

P ... PRAYING
R ... RIGHTEOUS
I ... INTERCESSORY
E ... EFFECTUAL
S ... SUPPLICATIONS
T ... TOWARD
S ... SALVATION

In our moments of despair when we struggle to pray, let me assure you, my fellow ministers, Jesus comes alongside of us just as Aaron had done. Jesus places *His hand of Grace on our weak and feeble arm and lifts up our hand heavenward*. The hand of Jesus is a hand of Grace and does not the Bible encourage us that the GRACE of our Lord Jesus is more than enough: *"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me (2CO 12:9)."* Pastor James Seekola, a very renowned minister of The Full Gospel Church in Durban gives an acronym that truly expresses the unmerited favour that we receive from a loving and caring God:

G ... GOD'S
R ... RICHES
A ... AT
C ... CHRIST'S
E ... EXPENSE (author unknown)

The Holy Spirit of whom Hur is a type of comes alongside us just as Hur came alongside Moses and raised his weak feeble hand. It is said that when The Holy Spirit comes He will enthuse us with His power: *"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you (Acts 1:8 KJV)."* I pastored a Church in Havenside Chatsworth, which sadly was not growing numerically, and may I add was struggling to support me financially. I encouraged the Church to pray with me Wednesday mornings at 5 am. I lived about a half an hour car drive away from the Church and no doubt it was a sacrifice on my part. When I arrived for our first early Wednesday morning Prayer Meeting, I was devastated and dismayed. Only five people attended, including me. I went through the motions of prayer, but I must admit, I was so disappointed that my heart was not in it. However, even in my spiritual heartache God encouraged me. Within my inner man and in my mind the word POWER was echoing repeatedly. I yielded to The Lord and I will never ever forget what words flooded my spirit and mind: *"THESE ARE THE FIVE PEOPLE THAT WILL BRING MY POWER TO THIS CHURCH."* The Church grew numerically and the congregants began tithing faithfully, thus solving my financial problem. These five people became the pillars of our Church. At that first meeting, God spoke to me in the peculiar way He does speak to me by giving me another acronym and that for Power:

*P POWER
O ... OVER
W ... WICKED
E EVIL
R RIVALRY*

Perhaps there are those of us when facing personal crisis and also interceding for those in desperate need, discover that no one comes alongside of us. We are in this spiritual battle all by ourselves. I have been there. I know what it is to face life's challenges and the problems of The Church all by myself. There are no Aarons and Hurs around. What do we do at these crucial times, knowing full well that we are holding the destiny of the members of congregation in our Hands of Prayer. Let me assure there are two that will come alongside when you are all alone.

Whenever we pray according to The Word of God and in The Spirit, it is Jesus who comes alongside of us (Jn 1:1-4) and The Holy Spirit that comes alongside of us (Ro 8:26-27). I believe that the best threefold cord of prayer is You, The Word and The Holy Spirit. Thank God for our fellow brethren that do stand alongside of us but when alone fret not for that is the time when two persons of The Eternal Godhead comes alongside of you. Who would you rather have

alongside you? Brother Jack and Sister Jill or The Word of God and The Holy Spirit. Yes, like you I would rather prefer The Word and The Holy Spirit.

Prayer is the lifeblood of all Christians, Born of the Spirit and Filled with The Spirit (Jn 3:5; Eph 5:18). Prayer is like water to the human body, stop drinking water and we will dry up. Stop praying and we will dry up spiritually. Let me close this exciting chapter with one more acronym that the Good Lord gave me:

P ... PRAYER

R ... REVEALS

A ... ALMIGHTY'S

Y ... YAHWEH'S or YESHUA'S (HEBREW FOR GOD AND JESUS)

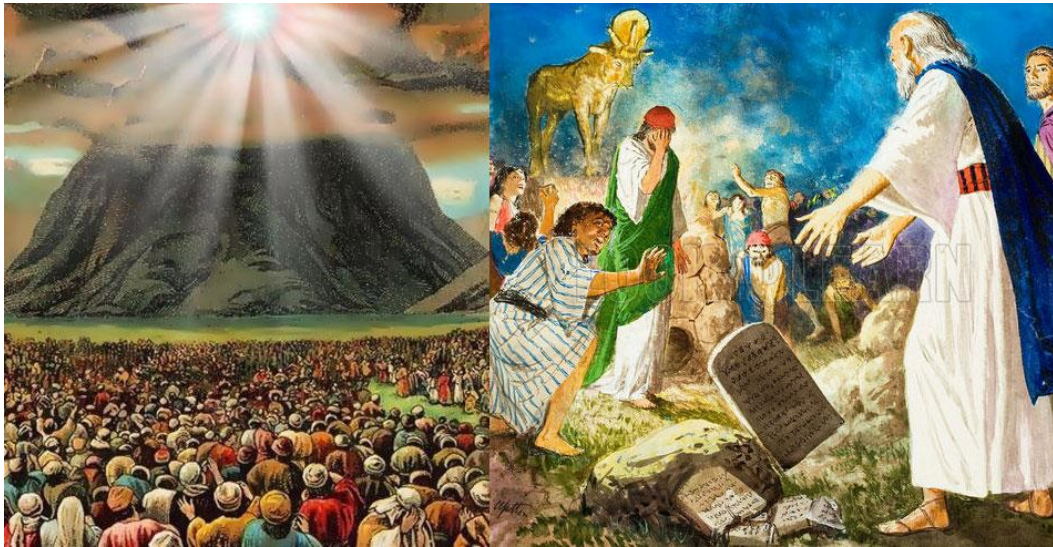
E ... ETERNAL

R ... RIGHTEOUSNESS

One mighty man of God said that Righteousness is simply God's Holiness in action. Whatever God does is RIGHT. What He does is always in line with His Holy Character. Rest assured when God answers our Prayers, Almighty God answers in RIGHTEOUS ACTION.

Chapter 6

Is God in your Heart and Hand?



Foreword

As a young boy, I always daydreamed of my name being in lights. I saw myself as a famous movie star. Thank God, it did not materialise. Most of us when young imagine ourselves becoming important people having some effect on our world. It is good that we do have dreams. Joseph, the dreamer, saw himself as the head of his family and by the grace of God regardless of all his trials and tribulations his dream was realized.

There are great lessons that we can glean from Joseph. First and foremost, he never allowed his afflictions to rob him of his dream. Many people allow themselves to be stripped of their dream. The sad fact is they often are the very persons that rob themselves of their dreams. How is this possible? Joseph gives us a good example of how to keep our dreams alive. Joseph maintained his integrity. He did not succumb to infidelity. He was faithful to God and to his master Potiphar. When interpreting the dreams of others he always gave God the glory. People lose out on their dreams for the simple reasons they forego their integrity, become self centred and disregard others. Pastor Tyron Pretorius had a saying that just thrilled me, in fact, I have used it several times, in my preaching, though making sure I would quote him: *"Many reach for the stars but in the process they trample underfoot the daisies."* Not only have I used this outstanding truth in my preaching, I also made sure that as I endeavoured to fulfil my calling that in the process I would not injure God's people that were in my path.

I am still working (since immigrating to New Zealand in 2003 and I am trusting God for a miracle to go back into Full Time Ministry), and it amazes me how that so many workers reach for the high positions and totally disregard their fellow workers. In fact, many delight in character assassinations of their fellow workers that they more readily climb the ladder of success and achievement. Sadly, this spirit is also in The Church. Often when men of God are going through a dark patch in their life and ministry, there are those who clamour for position and power. Too often, it is done in a subtle way. Instead of reaching down to the man of God, who through pressure and family problems is not performing to the best of his anointing, they purposely highlight his inadequacies. It is so heart breaking when many a good man of God is robbed of his dream and calling by the very ones who should stand alongside him in his hour of need.

What was Moses dream? Being raised in the palace of Pharaoh was it perhaps to become Pharaoh one day. He was raised as an Egyptian prince and yet he rather chose to be identified with the Israelites:

"By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw that the child was beautiful, and they were not afraid of the king's edict. By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. By faith he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing him who is invisible. By faith he kept the Passover and sprinkled the blood, so that the Destroyer of the firstborn might not touch them (He 11:23-28 ESVUK)."

Moses turned his back on Egypt, refusing the throne. Imagine being the Pharaoh of Egypt, then the might of the then known world.

He murdered an Egyptian when he was forty years old. He did not fully comprehend that God's hand was upon him when he took matters into his own hands. He was willing to suffer with the people of God. Moses gave up so much. In the desert, God called Moses and there he received his true life's dream at the age of eighty

There are two occasions that God offers Moses greatness that defies description. He is offered by God to become The Patriarch of a New Nation that God would birth through him. This was even greater than becoming Pharaoh. Moses declined and this is what this chapter deals with, just why Moses refused this glorious offer to become even greater than Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. What is so vitally important is just why Moses refused this outstanding offer? Was he in his right mind? Surely, the pressure of leading the people out of Egypt weighed heavily upon him and therefore he could not think wisely to accept the offer.

Moses rejected the offer. Imagine God's servant saying no to God. He had good reasons to accept and yet he wisely refused. Much has been written about *holding the destiny of the Israelites in his hand*. The fact was emphasized that he held their destiny in the palm of his hand for the simple reason he had them in his heart. *Moses loved the people of God, but more than that, he loved The God of the people*. Moses, the man of God, the servant and Prophet of God and the people, held more than the destiny of God's chosen people in his hand; he also held the testimony of God who delivered the chosen people out of the evil clutches of the Egyptians.

The Disrespect Toward Moses

One of my pet hates is disrespect. In fact, it is a spiritual weakness that I have constantly to work on. I tend to cut off disrespectful people. Thank God, Moses was in no way like me. If ever there was a man of God that people had, much to thank for it was Moses and yet they at certain occasions literally despised him. On two occasions, they wanted to stone him:

All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of Sin by stages, according to the commandment of the Lord, and camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. Therefore the people quarrelled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" But the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" So Moses cried to the Lord, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me (Ex 17:1-4 ESVUK)."

Then the entire congregation raised a loud cry, and the people wept that night. And all the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The whole congregation said to them, "Would that we had died in the land

of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! Why is the Lord bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become a prey. Would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?" And they said to one another, "Let us choose a leader and go back to Egypt." Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the people of Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes and said to all the congregation of the people of Israel, "The land, which we passed through to spy it out, is an exceedingly good land. If the Lord delights in us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land that flows with milk and honey. Only do not rebel against the Lord. And do not fear the people of the land, for they are bread for us. Their protection is removed from them, and the Lord is with us; do not fear them." Then the entire congregation said to stone them with stones. But the glory of the Lord appeared at the tent of meeting to all the people of Israel (Nu 14:1-10 ESVUK).

It was one thing to disrespect Moses but another thing to disrespect God. Throughout the wilderness experience, the chosen people of God constantly murmured against God. They were a complaining people, never ever satisfied, no matter what good God bestowed upon them. There is so much a servant of God can take from murmuring and complaining people, however, Moses did not give up on the people that God had entrusted in his care.

God's First Offer of Greatness to Moses

I wonder when I consider The Israelites whether the proverb "absence makes the heart grow fonder" is true. When we reflect on Moses' absence from the people while he was on Mount Sinai receiving The Ten Commandments, their heart toward God and His servant waxed cold. They influenced Aaron to build a golden calf, which they worshipped exclaiming that the idol Aaron made were the gods that brought them out of Egypt.

"And the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, and the people gathered themselves to Aaron. And they said to him, Up! Make us gods who shall go before us. For this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him. And Aaron said to them, Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them to me. And all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. And he took them from their hand, and fashioned it with an engraving tool. And he made it a

molten calf. And they said, These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. And when Aaron saw, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made proclamation and said, Tomorrow is a feast to Jehovah. And they rose up early on the next day and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings. And the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play (Ex 32:1-6 MKJV)."

God, in His just anger conveyed to Moses what had taken place. God says in no uncertain terms that He had enough of them and He will begin a new nation with Moses:

"And the LORD said to Moses, Go! Get down, for your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt, are corrupted. They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them. They have made them a molten calf, and have worshiped it, and have sacrificed to it, and said, These are your gods, O Israel, who have brought you up out of the land of Egypt. And the LORD said to Moses, I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people. And now leave Me alone, so that My wrath may become hot against them and so that I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation (Ex 32:7-10 MKJV)."

Did Moses consider this great offer? Did he ponder on it? No sooner had God offered Moses this stupendous (awesome) that Moses declined:

"And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it forever. And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people (Ex 32:11-14 KJV)."

Moses, a mere mortal, reasoned with God. His words were well chosen, yet were not articulate. These words of wisdom were heart wrenching. He wisely spoke of the awesome power of God that delivered The Israelites, yet inferring if God does annihilate the delivered people, then God's mighty act of power in

delivering had been futile. He was simply saying to God that it served no purpose. Furthermore, what would the enemy of God's people say? God only delivered them to destroy them. These words were spoken with great humility, yet with great authority. Moses, as I have previously stated loved the people of God and more so The God of the people. He loved God with all his heart, all his soul, all his mind and all his strength (Mt 22:37). This great Prophet of God had power with God, simply because of his outstanding love for God. It was not unusual for certain servants of God to have power with God. Jacob, like Moses also had power with God: *"And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed (Ge 32:38 KJV)."* However, there was a marked distinction between Jacob's power with God and Moses' power with God. Jacob's prevailing power with God allowed God to change his name from Jacob, a deceiver, to that of Israel, a Prince with God. Moses power with God caused God to repent of His impending judgement on His chosen people. I am of the personal persuasion that Moses was very convincing, however it was the final persuasion (point of view, argument, urging) that changed the heart of God toward His people.

Deep down in his inner man Moses was aware that *God honoured His Word above His name (Ps 138:2) and watches over His word to perform it (Is 55:10-11).*

Moses with unique spiritual insight reminds God of His covenant promises to The Jewish Patriarchs. He speaks of their Posterity (future generations) and their land inheritance. It was Moses who penned The Word: *"God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfil it (Nu 23:19 ESVUK)."*

The last appeal melts the heart of Almighty God and He repents of His intended Judgement. God repents; He simply has a change of mind. The intended act of God's judgement was justified because of the sin of idolatry, however, God was bound by His Covenant Promises, He had given to The Patriarchs.

Moses missed a great opportunity of becoming The Father of The New Nation of Israel. Can we imagine for one moment these profound words being removed from our beloved Bible, *The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and replaced with The God of Moses?* Moses was surely a loving and caring man. He stopped the hand of God from obliterating His chosen nation. Moses loved

God to the extent that he protected the good name of God. There was no way that he would stand by and allow The Egyptians to speak ill of His God

Moses not only held the destiny of God's people in his hands, he also held in his hands the good testimony of his God.

God's Second Offer of Greatness to Moses

There has been a common problem between The Israelites and The Church of God. This common problem had caused havoc within The Nation of Israel and to this present day is still causing havoc in The Church. The Israelites unwisely allowed themselves to be influenced by the principles of democracy. The voice of man was more important than the voice of God. In many Local and Denominational Churches, we have the self same attitude. I must concur that there is wisdom and safety in the multitude of counsellors (Pr 11:14), however, it is distinct from democracy. Having the right to vote on a matter and giving counsel on a matter are poles apart. Not all people give sound advice, yet all people have the right to vote.

Moses had sent out twelve spies to check out The Promised Land and to his dismay, they came back with conflicting reports, which caused undue tension and rebellion:

"And they left and came to Moses and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, to the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh. And they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. And they told him and said, We came to the land where you sent us, and surely it flows with milk and honey. And this is the fruit of it. However, the people that dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are walled, very great. And also we saw the children of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south, and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains. And the Canaanites dwell by the sea and by the coast of Jordan. And Caleb stilled the people before Moses and said, Let us go up at once and possess it. For we are well able to overcome it. But the men that went up with him said, We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we. And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched to the sons of Israel, saying, The land through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eats up those who live in it. And all the people whom we saw in it were men of stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, of the giants. And we were in our own sight like grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight (Nu 13:26-33 MKJV)."

Ten of the twelve spies gave a bad report. Caleb (and later in Nu 14:6 Joshua) gave a good report. The ten spies lacked faith and were afraid of the giants that dwelt in the land. Sadly, the chosen people sided with the ten spies. The ten who gave a bad report outvoted the two that gave a good report. God punished them severely. Forty years they wandered in the wilderness, a year for each day the spies were in The Promised Land. If ever there was a time that democracy failed dismally, it was that time.

The nation was badly influenced by the evil report and decided to appoint a new leader to take them back to Egypt:

"And all the congregation lifted up their voice and cried. And the people wept that night. And all the sons of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron. And the whole congregation said to them, Oh that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or, Oh that we had died in the wilderness! And why has the LORD brought us into this land to fall by the sword, so that our wives and our sons should be a prey? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt? And they said to one another, Let us make a leader, and let us return to Egypt. And Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the sons of Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, of those that searched the land, tore their clothes. And they spoke to all the company of the sons of Israel saying, The land which we passed through to search is an exceedingly good land. If the LORD delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land which flows with milk and honey. Only do not rebel against the LORD, neither fear the people of the land. For they are bread for us. Their protection has moved from them, and the LORD is with us. Do not fear them. But all the congregation said to stone them with stones. And the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the sons of Israel. And the LORD said to Moses, How long will this people provoke Me? And how long will it be before they believe Me, for all the signs which I have shown among them? I will strike them with the pestilence and will disinherit them, and will make of you a greater nation and mightier than they. And Moses said to the LORD, Then the Egyptians will hear, for You have brought up this people in Your might from among them. And they will say to the inhabitant of this land. They have heard that You, LORD, are among this people, who is seen eye to eye. You are the LORD, and Your cloud stands over them, and You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night. And will you kill this people as one man? Then the nations who have heard Your fame will speak, saying, Because the LORD was not able to bring this people into the land which He swore to them, therefore He has slain them

in the wilderness. And now, I beseech You, let the power of my Lord be great, according as You have spoken, saying, The LORD is long-suffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the sons to the third and fourth generation. I beseech You, pardon the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of Your mercy, and as You have forgiven this people from Egypt even until now. And the LORD said, I have pardoned according to your word (Nu 14:1-20 MKJV)."

The situation became that bad to the extent that they threatened to stone Moses, Aaron, Caleb and Joshua. Before they could act out their evil intent The Glory of The Lord appeared in The Tabernacle. God intervened and from The Tabernacle The LORD (JEHOVAH) spoke and once again, he offered Moses the grand opportunity of beginning a new nation with him. Moses takes a different approach in changing God's action. He does mention the Egyptians again with one addition and that being they would inform other nations how that God was unable to bring them to the land He had promised them. Moses was once again simply saying with all what the chosen people had experienced was futile, for ultimately He could not take them into the Promise Land. This time Moses does not appeal to God concerning The Covenant promises He had made to The Patriarchs. He pleads to God based on God's unending mercy, steadfast love and forgiveness. One again God relents and pardons His chosen people.

Once again, Moses refuses greatness. Did Moses do the right thing; does not promotion come from The LORD? I am of the persuasion he done the right thing. Our status in life is never to be the greatest amongst the least, we are called to serve. What is ultimate for our life is loving God and serving His people. Other than that, we should not climb the ladder of success and recognition at the demise of others. We are to care for each other and not to use other people's idiosyncrasies (unconventional behaviour) to gain popularity and position.

I said earlier in this chapter that it is one thing to hold in one's hands the destiny of God's people and another thing to hold God's good testimony in one's hand as well. Moses had powerful hands because he had a loving heart towards His God and the people of God.

Spiritual Application

As servants of the Most High God, we must endeavour by God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit to live out our dream. Our dream as ministers of

The Gospel is to live out the purpose why God has apprehended us. First and foremost our calling is to become like Jesus (Ro 8:29). Our priorities must be in chronological order. *Character must always precede ministry.* Secondly, as servants of The Lord we must endeavour to excel in our ministry for the simple fact we hold the destinies of God's people in our hearts and hands. Moses had a phenomenal ministry, however the strength and hallmark of his life was his servant's heart toward God and God's chosen people.

- Moses though often ridiculed, murmured against and even threatened with death via stoning did not retaliate. He sought God and God faithfully delivered him from his persecutors.
- Though we must spend much time in intercession on behalf of our congregation, articulation is not paramount. Intercession is not always words; it is more the spirit of man communicating with The Spirit of God. *IT IS SPIRIT TO SPIRIT COMMUNICATION.* God is not moved by eloquent words, He is moved by our love and care that we express in our intercession for His people. Prayer and more so intercession often is expressed through tears, sighs and groanings. Sometimes the pain that we feel for others can never be expressed in words (Ro 8:26).
- In ministry, there is rank. The Bible is clear on this, however we must never ever forget that the greatest in the kingdom of God are the servants (Mt 20:24-28).
- Position does not always bring power; in most cases, it brings added responsibility. There are those positions that do bring power and control over others, however we must always maintain a servant's heart-how can I serve my fellow brethren in this newfound position of authority.
- We must never attain positions through our fellow brethren demise. It is our Christian duty to restore our fallen brethren (Ga 6:1).
- Churches are not governed by democracy. Churches are governed by The Word of God. Jesus is the Head of The Church, He is the Word made flesh, and therefore all governmental principles are to be Word based.
- As much as we, the ministers of The Gospel hold the destinies of God's people in our hands of intercession, let also always bear in mind that like Moses we hold God's good testimony in our hand as well.

Finally let me once again end this chapter with a God given acronym of DREAM. Never ever, my fellow minister and brethren in The Lord give up on your DREAM.

D ... DREAMS

R ... REVEAL

E ... ETERNAL

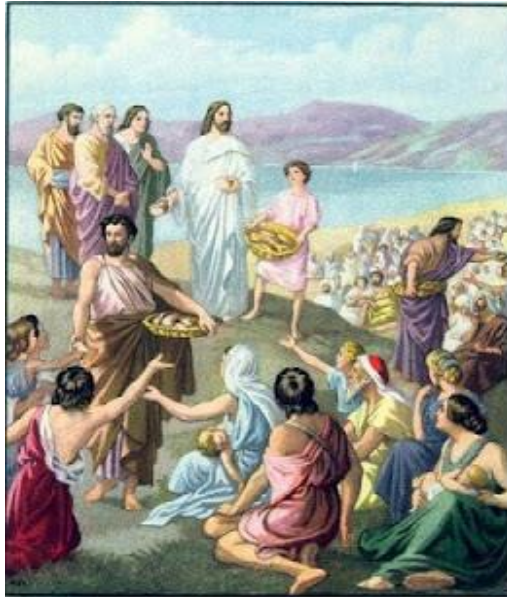
A ... ASPIRATIONS (GOALS, AIMS, AMBITIONS)

M ... MIRACULOUSLY

As servants of The Lord let us glean from Joseph, the great dreamer. Regardless of what he had been through; sold as a slave by his siblings, falsely accused and imprisoned, yet he fulfilled his God given dream. It has been said that you cannot keep a good man down, he may be knocked down several times in the fight of life, but praise be to our God never knocked out. Joseph's journey to the fulfilling of his dream was from the pit to the prison and finally the palace. As God's anointed and appointed servants let us never give up on our dream for the very important fact that like Joseph we too hold the destiny of God's people and the unsaved in our hands. Let me assure that your dream is not the impossible dream. Your dream is God given and God centred and therefore it will come to pass.

Chapter 7

The Hand of Multiplication



Preamble

I have always marvelled how it is quite a challenge for parents to teach their little children to share their possessions with other little children. Some children will howl and scream when told to let other children play with their toys, let alone share their sweets and delicacies.

I was very fortunate and blessed of The Lord to have grown up in a home where sharing was never a problem. My dear parents set forth a loving, caring and sharing example. Next to my dear wife, my parents were the most giving people I have ever known. We always had our parent's family, friends and strangers living in our home. In fact, our home was very affectionately known as Joe's and Maud's half way house.

My upbringing in a caring and loving home, where strangers and the destitute were welcomed and treated like a part of our family was a tremendous blessing. We were in no way a rich family. Both my parents worked to make ends meet. My siblings and I always wore hand me downs. However, we were the richest in the community, for we had that which money could never buy. We had in our home, the kindness of God.

Sharing with others, who are in need, is very challenging, especially when all you have is enough for yourself. A classic example of this is seen in the narrative of the widow:

And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. And he called his disciples to him and said to them, "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on (ESVUK)."

The Insignificant Lad

All four Gospel record the stupendous miracle of the feeding of the five thousand. However, only John's Gospel mentions the lad who had the five loaves and two fishes:

After this Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias. And a large crowd was following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing on the sick. Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a large crowd was coming towards him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?" He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little." One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?" Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, about five thousand in number. Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated. So also the fish, as much as they wanted. And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost." So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten (Jn 6: 1-13 ESVUK)."

Though the name of the lad was not mentioned, he plays a prominent role in the miracle. The lad was more than willing to give his lunch meal to Jesus. When asked by Andrew, there was no refusal on his part. He probably had witnessed several healings of Jesus and was wondering what Jesus could do with his five loaves and two fish (John 6:2).

To his amazement a miracle of multiplication took place with the very five loaves and two fishes which he had lovingly had given to Andrew. No doubt, here was a lad who grew up in a home that permeated with kindness. Here was a lad that was trained to share with others by caring and loving parents. How true are the Scriptures: "*Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it (Pro 22:6 KJV).*"

Mark's rendition of this miracle states that they were in a desert place, far away from the bread shops. The people were hungry and needed a meal immediately. The Apostles encouraged Jesus to send the people to the nearby villages that they may buy bread to eat. This was not necessary for The Bread of Life was there to meet the needs of His people (Mk 6:35-44).

I am of the persuasion that the unnamed and insignificant lad had a ringside seat of the proceedings. I believe he sat next to Jesus and furthermore he was the first to partake (you need not concur, this is my personal belief). Alongside the miracle worker, he witnessed how Jesus operated. There was order in the distribution of the bread and fish. The large crowd were told to sit down in groups of hundreds and fifties (Mk 6:39-40). This wise action made it easy for the Apostles to manoeuvre among the large crowd. This lad saw though Jesus acted in great power, yet there was dignity and order in the miracle.

Before the bread and fish was given to the Apostles for distribution Jesus looked up to heaven and blessed the bread and then broke the bread and handed them over for distribution (Mk 6:41). After everyone ate from the five loaves and two fish, the lad saw another miracle acted out before his very eyes. Twelve baskets were filled with the remainder of the meal. An insignificant lad, who was so giving, saw his bread and his fish feed five thousand people and have still twelve baskets remaining. Out of so little, came forth so much. Jesus took the little that was in his insignificant hands and multiplied it.

I can imagine how the insignificant boy shared his experience with his family and friends when he got home. He was so proud that Jesus used what was in his hands to perform a wondrous miracle.

SPIRITUAL APPLICATION

- As Christian parents, we must teach our children to share. They, through our teaching must discover it is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35).

- Not only is it true that out of the mouths of babes and sucklings has God ordained strength, but also out of their giving hands as well (Ps 8:2; John 6:1-13).
- An open giving hand is a blessed hand.
- Though miracles are supernatural God in The Feeding of the Five Thousand worked out the wondrous miracle with dignity and order (Mk 6:39-40).
- Jesus used what was given to Him. As little as it was, Jesus used it and multiplied it. As little as there is in our hands, all we have to do is give in to The Lord and He will make the miracle happen.
- As Christians, we are never too young nor too old to be used of God in the supernatural. All that is required of the young and old is to give to God to meet the needs of others.
- Like Jesus, whenever there is an urgent need for a miracle, let us look heavenward and pray God's blessing.
- Let us glean from the unknown lad that recognition is not always necessary. We must never be motivated by fame and fortune. Though many of us will not become famous for what we do in God's work, there is coming that wonderful day when we will hear the words of our Lord: *"His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master (Mt 25:23 ESVUK)."*
- At all times, we must appreciate God's provision. We must never waste. Whenever we have too much, we must not discard it. Whatever is left over must be gathered and shared among the needy and less fortunate.
- If what you possess you cannot share or give away to those in need then sadly *YOU DO NOT POSSESS IT, RATHER IT POSSESSES YOU*. The Bible teaches it is more blessed to give than receive (Acts 20:35).

Once again, let me end another chapter with an acronym:

H ... HEAVEN

O ... ON

M ... MY

E ... EARTH

Many people do not see the distinction between a house and a home. Both are dwelling abodes, and yet to the spiritually inclined there are those peculiar differences.

A house is where you lay your head to rest. It is a dwelling place. Though you lay your head down to rest and that can be anywhere in the world, you will miss your home. I love music and there are those special songs, I will play when stressed. Certain songs just do something good for me. My favourite singer, Elvis sings *HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS*, one of those special songs. Within the song, there is a line, which says - *HOME IS MY HEART IS AND MY HEART IS ANYWHERE YOU ARE*. Herein lies the distinction, you can lay your head anywhere in the world, but where your heart is, there is your home. It is not the building (the house) that matters, it is the people you love living in the building (the house) with you that makes it a home.

A house is but a structure, a home is where you and the people you love live together. A *HOME* is where Christian principles are taught and adhered unto. The lad who gave his bread and fish was raised in a Home and not in a house, no wonder he was more than willing to give to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Christian Homes and more so the Homes of God's Preachers are meant to be like lighthouses. A beacon of light that forewarns people of the dangers that will destroy them. The safe haven of rest and peace regardless of what is transpiring outside is The Church and those Christian homes that honour God.

Chapter 8

Hands of Ordination

New Testament Ordination and the Laying on of Hands

God's Word is the highest authority within The Body of Christ. It is the unadulterated Word of God that governs The Church. Jesus said that He would build The Church and the gates of hell would not prevail against The Church (Mt 16:18). Jesus, as we all well know is The Head and The Chief Corner stone of The Church (Eph 1:22; 2:20).

One of the major problems within The Church is understanding just how Jesus does govern. Many modern Apostles and Prophets are of the persuasion that The Church is governed by The Ascended Gifts of Eph. 4:11: Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers. Though this is true to an extent, what we must bear in mind that The Fivefold Ascended Gifts are subject to The Word of God. They govern as they submit themselves to the authority of the Word of God.

Over the years The Church has foolishly allowed itself to be governed by certain worldly systems of Government that are far removed from the teachings of God's Word. Democracy ruled God's Church, causing much harm and almost irreparable damage. No doubt the proponents (supporters) of Democracy base their Democratic system of Church Government on the revealed Word of God. Old Testament and New Testament Scripture were voiced to authenticate their belief.

The Old Testament book of Numbers chapters 13 and 14 paint a vivid picture of Democracy and how it failed miserably. Joshua and Caleb endeavoured to convince The Israelites they were more than able to conquer the inhabitants of The Promised Land. All that was required of the people was to place their trust and confidence in God. The other ten spies said it was an impossible task for the people of the land were mighty and there were giants among them. Ten said it was impossible, two said it was possible. Majority ruled and the nation succumbed to the voice of the majority. For forty years they wandered in the wilderness, all because they allowed the majority to persuade them.

Though many Local Churches have moved away from democracy and into what many deem Theocracy, there are still many denominations that follow democracy. They insist that there is Scriptural evidence that supports their method of governance:

Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word (ACTS 6:1-4 ESVUK).

The disciples were allowed to vote in seven deacons. No doubt this was a democratic expression. However, what many fail to see that although the disciples had the vote, their vote was conditional. Certain prerequisites were to be met. These prescribed prerequisites were set by The Foundational Apostles:

- Men of Good Repute
- Full of The Spirit
- Full of Wisdom

These Foundational Apostles were personally handpicked by Jesus. Our Lord and Saviour was their personal mentor. For close onto three and half years they accompanied Jesus, witnessing His wondrous miracles and teachings. It is on The Teachings of Jesus Christ and The Revelations imparted by The Spirit to these Foundational Apostles on which The Church stands and that from The Birth of The Church till the coming again of Jesus Christ (The Church Age).

"So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone (Eph 2:19-20 ESVUK)."

The Church throughout its existence is governed by Jesus Christ (The Word of God) and The Teachings of The Foundational Apostles received from Jesus. This is why The Foundational Apostles could set forth the prerequisites for the appointing of the seven deacons. Those who were chosen (Acts 6:1-4) by the people of God met the prerequisites and were appointed by The Foundational Apostles. Their ministries were confirmed by the Apostles laying their hands on them. This evidently should give the present day Body of Christ the understanding that Theocracy controls Democracy.

The laying on of the hands of The Foundational Apostles on the seven chosen Deacons sets certain imperative (very important, essential, crucial, necessary) precedents that The Church has to adopt in its governmental expressions.

God has not revoked (repealed, retracted, cancelled) democracy from The Church. However, through the governmental precedents set forth by The Foundational Apostles in the choosing of the deacons, the right and outcome of the vote of the people is administered by The Leadership of each Local Church.

Acts 6 being, the very first record of New Testament Ordination of Ministry sets forth the precedent of how all ministers were set apart in the early Church. *Hands were laid on the seven deacons by the Apostles.* This is clearly seen as we consider the ordination of Timothy:

Do not neglect the gift which is in you, [that special inward endowment] which was directly imparted to you [by the Holy Spirit] by prophetic utterance when the elders laid their hands upon you [at your ordination].

It is essential to note that those who laid hands on Timothy at his ordination service was the Elders (Leaders, who were Ephesians 4:11 Ascended Gifted Ministers).

This practice of the laying on of hands as the expression of ordination is also seen when we consider Paul's apostolic calling. However, before we discuss his apostolic calling, we have to set the record straight concerning Paul's (then named Saul) experience of being sent forth as an Apostle with Apostle Barnabas. There are certain scholars that regard the laying on of hands by Ananias on Paul as the setting apart of Paul as an Apostle. On close examination of the record of Scripture, this is most definitely not the case:

Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." And the Lord said to him, "Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying, and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight. But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem. And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name." But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." So Ananias departed and

entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized; and taking food, he was strengthened. For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus. And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God." And all who heard him were amazed and said, "Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem of those who called upon this name? And has he not come here for this purpose, to bring them bound before the chief priests. But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ (Acts 9:10-22 ESAUK).

Considering the above scripture in relation to Acts 6, the following is evident. The Foundational Apostles laid hands on the seven as an act of approval and ordination. Ananias is mentioned as a disciple, in fact the King James Version mentions him as a certain disciple. We have discovered that THE FIRST MENTION PRINCIPLE clearly stated that Apostles laid hands and not disciples. Furthermore Ananias laid hands for two specific reasons and that being for Paul to receive his sight once again and also to be filled with The Holy Spirit. Paul after his experience with Ananias began witnessing of Jesus. Ananias laying on of hands was most definitely not an ordination exercise. What is also of vital importance is that The New Testament does not record any ordinations that took place privately. The ordination of the seven deacons, the ordination of Timothy and the ordination of Paul was held in Local Churches in the presence of The Leadership (by the Leadership) and the congregants of Local Assemblies. Furthermore, Paul's encounter with the disciple Ananias took place three days after his encounter with The Lord (Acts 9:8-9). Paul was a novice of The Faith and The Word of God is explicit that the laying on of hands on novices to set people apart for ministry is strictly prohibited (1Ti 3:1-6).

Paul's apostolic ordination took place at The Antioch Church, several years after his conversion:

Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a member of the court of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off (Acts 13:1-3 ESVUK)."

It is interesting to note the Leadership were present at The Antioch Church Worship and Fasting Service. God's Word is precisely clear that Prophets and Teachers were present. Whilst worshipping The Lord, The Holy Spirit directs The Leadership (Prophets and Teachers in this case) to set apart Barnabas and Paul (then called Saul). It is remarkable to further note how the Leadership reacted. They were not prompt; they changed the order of the service from worship and fasting to that of prayer and fasting. Their actions were purposely specific. They had a time of appraising the directive from The Holy Spirit through prayer and fasting and thus confirmed the directive. The service takes another turn, it becomes an ordination service; hands are laid on Barnabas and Paul and thereafter they are released from The Antioch Church and sent forth as Apostles to the nations.

The Ordination of Elders, Bishops and Overseers

It has always been my persuasion that these three were Officers of The Local Church. They were the resident ministers of Local Churches. In our modern day they are termed Pastors and Overseers. Their ordinations follow the same pattern of The Deacons and that of hands being laid on them.

There are certain Independent Local Churches and Denominations that do not see Elders as Ascended Gifts. At the first Church I attended, I was privileged to serve as a Sunday School Superintendent and Deacon. This Church had its roots in the Apostolic Church of Great Britain. However, it was an indigenous, self governed, self supported and self propagated. They believed strongly in Fivefold Ministry, however, they did not accept Elders as Fivefold Ascended Gifted Ministers.

Whenever, we are not certain on issues that are conflicting, we must always allow The Word of God to speak for itself. God's Word will always bring clarity on any conflicting subject. I am sure by now that you as the reader of this book have come to the conclusion that I believe very strongly in what most theologians deem *THE FIRST MENTION PRINCIPLE. ONCE AGAIN LET ME REITERATE THE IMPORTANCE THEREOF. IT WILL ALWAYS SET A PRECEDENT.* At the first Church Council, which was held in Jerusalem, we note that The Elders and The Apostles were present. They discussed the weighty matter of whether Gentile converts had to be circumcised to finalize their salvation. Apostle Peter, on whom Jesus said I will build my Church (i.e. Peter's confession that Jesus was The Christ, The Son of The Living God) gave witness of his experience of what transpired at the home of Cornelius. Barnabas and Paul testified of the mighty signs and wonders that God had performed amongst the Gentiles. James (possibly the half brother of Jesus) writes a letter to those who were troubled by those promoting circumcision which should give us the understanding that The Elders and not just The Apostles were a part of the decision making body. The mere fact that The Elders were part of the decision making should convince us that they were GOVERNING ELDERS. Note the words penned: "*For it seemed*

good to The Holy Spirit and to us..... My question is who and to us? Without a doubt these are The Elders and Apostles, the then Governing Body of The Early Church (read Acts 15:1-29).

Old Testament Ordinations and the laying on of Hands

Born Again, Spirit Filled Christians cannot ignore The Old Testament. The Word of God is blatantly clear that all scripture is inspired of God (2Ti 3:16) and that simply means both The Old and New Testaments. There is a classic example in The Old Testament of ordination by the laying on hands. Moses ordained Joshua and that by the laying on of hands:

Moses spoke to the Lord, saying, "Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord may not be as sheep that have no shepherd." So the Lord said to Moses, "Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him. Make him stand before Eleazar the priest and all the congregation, and you shall commission him in their sight. You shall invest him with some of your authority, that all the congregation of the people of Israel may obey. And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall enquire for him by the judgement of the Urim before the Lord. At his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, both he and all the people of Israel with him, the whole congregation." And Moses did as the Lord commanded him. He took Joshua and made him stand before Eleazar the priest and the whole congregation, and he laid his hands on him and commissioned him as the Lord directed through Moses.

The Significance of the Laying on of Hands

Everything that is done has significance and more so that which is recorded in The Word of God. The laying on of hands in an ordination service portrays profound spiritual truth:

HONOUR: God told Moses to put some of his honour upon Joshua (Nu 27:20). Laying on of Hands is an impartation of an anointing which rests upon a Servant of God to another Servant of God. This is also seen in the relationship of Elijah and Elisha. Elisha asked for a double portion of God's anointing that rested upon his mentor.

RELEASEMENT: Barnabas and Saul (Paul) were ministering at the Antioch Church when The Holy Spirit spoke to The Leadership to set Barnabas and Saul apart for their ministry that He had called them into. This was a directive from

The Holy Spirit to The Leadership to release the two Servants of God from The Local Church. Their ministries were no more confined to a Local Church. Barnabas and Saul were functioning as Teachers, after the directive they were ordained as Apostles.

Spiritual Application

- The Church has to model The Old and New Testament examples of the laying on of hands when ordaining and releasing servants of God into the ministries of Deacons, Elders, Bishops, Overseers and Fivefold Ascended Gifted Ministries.
- Only servants of God who, prior to their ordination, were already engaged in active and faithful ministry should be ordained and set apart for respective ministry.
- Any of and only members of The Fivefold Ascended Gifts may be used of God to reveal the call of God upon a Servant of God. However, it is essential that the call be verified by other Ascended Gifts and once this is done all the members of the Presiding Eldership must lay hands upon the new minister and set him apart for his ministry (Acts 13:1-4).
- Only servants of God should be ordained and set apart for respective ministry, who prior to their ordination were already engaged in active and faithful ministry. Saul (Paul) is a classic example of this: *"So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians (Acts 11:25-26 ESVUK)."* Paul was called and separated unto Apostleship whilst ministering as a teacher at the Antioch Church (Act 13:1-4).
- All ordinations should be held at a public venue. Ordinations in The New Testament were never an isolated event. It was always in the eye of The Church.

It is remarkable how God honoured His servants. I am amazed that God said to Moses to take some of his honour and impart it to Joshua. God has graciously involved His servants in empowering His people to be effective ministers in the Church and in the world. I really wonder what honour you and I bestow through the laying on of hands when ordaining ministers. Let us hope and pray that it is nothing less than the glory of God that rests upon us.

Chapter 9

What Has God Placed In your Hand?



Preamble

Moses presented a shepherd's rod to God. The insignificant lad presented five loaves and two fish to God. Outstanding signs and wonders were wrought from what they gave God. What Moses and the insignificant lad presented was ordinary. However, when the power of Almighty God came upon it, God's supernatural wonders manifested.

I do believe it is one thing for us to present to God what is in our hand and yet it is another thing for God to place something within our hand. God has placed abilities and gifts within all of us. Some may have the hands of a surgeon with God-given ability to operate on people's bodies. Others are blessed with the hands of a carpenter, with which to build edifices. Our responsibility is to discover the talent God has blessed us with. God has deposited greatness in all of us.

The various types of preaching

There are several types of sermons. Most preachers do not focus on all the types. I am of the persuasion that a minister's peculiar ministry of perhaps being an Apostle, a Prophet, an Evangelist, a Pastor and a Teacher causes them to concentrate on specific types. I am acquainted with seven types of preaching:

- *Expository Preaching:* This type of preaching usually focuses on a particular book of the bible, explaining verse by verse or passage by

passage. This method of preaching is usually with Apostles, Pastors and Teachers. The intent of this method of preaching is to expose the meaning of the Word of God, verse by verse or passage by passage. This type of preaching is best exercised in the bible study service.

- *Biographical Preaching:* This deals with the lifestyle and ministry of biblical characters and usually conducted by Pastors and Teachers. This method of preaching is designed to build spiritual character. The good and the bad of the bible characters are disclosed so that the bad be avoided and the good are adopted in our life, thus moulding and shaping strong Christian character. Evangelists also excel in this method for their preaching centres around Jesus, the perfect man. They concentrate extensively on His Life, Death, Resurrection and healing ministry.
- *Historical Preaching:* This deals extensively with the history of the Jewish nation and the early Church. Without making spiritual application to the present day, this type can be mere information. However, when spiritual application is highlighted, this preaching can be very effective and challenging because comparisons may be made from the past to the present. This method of preaching is usually with the Prophet.
- *Topical Preaching:* This method deals extensively with the various themes and topics contained in The Bible. The purpose of this method is usually to develop good Christian spiritual ethics. Classic examples are tithing, forgiveness, eschatology, caring for each other, prayer and many more. This method is usually with prophets, pastors and teachers.
- *Textual Preaching:* This method, in many a ways is similar to Expository Preaching. However, while the preacher will concentrate on a given text, in most cases, it is not to complete a particular book. His text will change with each sermon. This method is usually with Apostles, Pastors and Teachers.
- *Typological Preaching:* Ralph W. Harris gives an excellent definition of Typology in his book-Pictures of Truth: "*A type is a person or thing in the Bible that God designed to represent a picture or some person, thing or event that would appear in the future.*" This interesting and captivating method is usually with apostles and prophets.
- *Allegorical Preaching:* This type of preaching reveals hidden meanings in and from the Word of God. Jesus, the master Preacher, often used parables, a form of Allegorical Preaching. Another common term for this method is Metaphorical Preaching. This method of preaching in our modern day Church is predominantly with apostles and prophets.

I have purposely itemised these various forms of preaching that I may present my thoughts on what God has placed in each of our hands. I have no other method of presenting this but via The Allegorical Method of Preaching. Often The Allegorical Method can be very misleading for it deals extensively with hidden meanings. Though Jesus, our Master Preacher, had used this method, in no way was it His purpose to formulate doctrine. In most cases, He used the method to highlight certain practical truths. A classic example of this was the parable of The Good Samaritan, which teaches us how we ought to treat our fellow man. No doubt, there were those occasions when Jesus spoke on The Kingdom of God that many of our modern day preachers firmly believe Jesus was presenting doctrinal truths. The purpose of this chapter is not to disagree with these dear ministers of The glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ, rather the purpose is to present *the possible hidden meanings of the allegory of the hand* of the minister of God using an Old Testament passage of Scripture to highlight what the Holy Spirit is doing in our day.

I must admit that I am very weary of Allegorical preaching for the simple fact that I strongly follow the literal method of interpretation. I believe that when God wants me to know certain truths of His Word, then He conveys it to me through His Written Word. As a man of God, I have no ability whatsoever to decode God's Word. It is The Holy Spirit that illuminates God's Word and therefore I present this teaching for your personal perusal that you may personally decide whether my allegorical presentation is of The Lord.

The resurgence of Fivefold Ministry

Presently The Church is experiencing a mighty deluge of God's abundant grace and power. There is a marvellous reawakening of The Ephesians 4:11 Ministry Gifts. Most Denominations and Local Churches have titled these essential Gifts as:

- THE ASCENDED GIFTS OF CHRIST
- THE FIVEFOLD MINISTRY GIFTS

These Five Ministerial Gifts are Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers. Many Church denominations only accept the ministries of Pastors, Evangelists and Teachers. They are of the persuasion that Apostolic and Prophetic ministries ceased with the close of The Apostolic Period and therefore their constitutions do not mention these ministries. I must concur that there was a definite closure of The Apostolic Ministry.

I am of the persuasion that there was a close of the specific ministry of the FOUNDATIONAL APOSTLES. These were The Apostles that were with Jesus and Paul who sees himself as one born out of due time: *"And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God (1Co 15:8-9 KJV)."*

Paul, sees himself as an Apostle that received his apostolic ministry after Jesus had chosen the original twelve Apostles and therefore he considers himself as an Apostle born out of due time. However, though Paul's apostolic ministry was out of due time, he was most definitely a Foundational Apostle, one who had received Divine Revelation from God (1Co 11:23). The other Foundational Apostles were first hand witnesses of Christ's ministry and received the Revelation of God's Word personally from Jesus (1Jn 1:4). Paul had a personal encounter with Jesus on the Damascus Road when he literally saw Jesus.

When we consider 1 Corinthians 15:8-9, it seems that Paul is setting a precedent for Foundational Apostolic Ministry. Foundational Apostles had to have seen Jesus (Acts 1:15-26). However, though that be authentic, we cannot deny the fact that even whilst the Foundational Apostles were still alive and ministering, there was another apostle, who was mightily used of God. This was Barnabas, who, with Paul, was sent to the nations from the Antioch Church. Barnabas was not a Foundational Apostle (Acts 13:1-4) and yet, together with Paul, planted several Churches throughout the known world. He did exactly what Paul and the other Foundational Apostles had done; he planted Churches and established the saints. Dr. Robert Munien in his book, "Apostles, Apostolic People and Churches", makes a valid point concerning the three sources of Apostolic Ministry (pages 6-8). He speaks of Jesus, The Apostle sent by God the Father (Heb 3:1), The Apostles (Foundational) of The Lamb (Jn 20:21) and The Apostles sent forth by the Holy Spirit being Barnabas and Saul, who later became Paul (Acts 13:1-3).

Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you (Jn 20:21 ESVUK)."

Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a member of the court of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off (Acts 13:1-3 ESVUK).

It is rather remarkable how the same word is used by The Holy Spirit to emphasize and authenticate The Apostles of The Father, The Apostles of The Lamb and The Apostles of The Holy Spirit: The word being *sent*. As minute as the word is, it has great significance. Doing a word study on the Greek word for sent, much present day truth is revealed. The word Apostle has its meaning rooted in *sent*. An Apostle is an emissary (ambassador, representative, messenger) representing the highest authority of his land with divine orders to carry out in a foreign land.

This no doubt sets a precedent for the present day Church. Modern day Apostles of The Holy Spirit (like The Apostle Barnabas) work alongside The

Foundational Apostles. How do modern day Apostles work alongside Foundational Apostles? The Foundational Apostles are dead and gone. They are no more among us. Though they are dead and gone, The Word, that is The Foundational Word, on which we stand, lives on.

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone (Eph 2:19-20 ESVUK).

Like Abel, though dead, The Foundational Apostles yet speak (Heb 11:4). Modern day Apostles, like all of God's Born Again, people stand on the foundational truths of the foundational apostles. It is their foundational word that modern day apostles resound, preach and teach. There is absolutely no need for another foundation. Modern day apostles have no new revelation from God. However, they possess a unique God ordained ability to illuminate the Word of God. They shed light on what has already been revealed through the foundational apostles.

Sadly, to this very day the Church is wrangling over the apostolic and prophetic ministries of Ephesians 4:8-16. As I present the allegory of the cloud I encourage you to put aside your preconceived ideas and notions of Fivefold Ministry. Ask God for an open heart and judge, not only according to the Word of God, (though this is the prime means of judgement), but also toward the dire need that is prevalent in our modern day Church for Apostolic and Prophetic ministries.

And Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink, for there is a sound of the rushing of rain." So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Mount Carmel. And he bowed himself down on the earth and put his face between his knees. And he said to his servant, "Go up now, look towards the sea." And he went up and looked and said, "There is nothing." And he said, "Go again," seven times. And at the seventh time he said, "Behold, a little cloud like a man's hand is rising from the sea." And he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare your chariot and go down, lest the rain stop you.'" And in a little while the heavens grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the Lord was on Elijah, and he gathered up his garment and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel (1Ki 18:41-46 ESVUK).

After three and a half years of severe drought, Elijah, the prolific miracle working Prophet of God pronounced to King Ahab the coming forth of the abundance of rain (KJV). He made this prophetic announcement and went with his servant to the top of Mount Carmel and prayed for the coming of the rain. He positioned himself in a unique fashion, seated and bowing on the

ground, his face between his knees and his hands clasped tightly between his knees, he began to pray for the rain to come. Seven times he sent his servant to look toward the sea for the coming of rain. At the seventh time of viewing, he servant mentioned a little cloud as big as a man's hand rising over the sea.

Considering spiritual application of the above scripture there has been a definite spiritual drought throughout The Dispensation of The Church. The waning (fading, declining) of the supernatural wonder works of The Holy Spirit cannot be denied, though throughout the history of The Church there has been definite revivals of the supernatural. God graciously had visited His Church with signs and wonders periodically.

To this day, many of God's people have enjoyed the spiritual benefits of The Azusa Street Revival of the early twentieth century. William J. Seymour, a son of former slaves was mightily used of God to awaken The Body of Christ to The Baptism into The Holy Spirit. Throughout the world there was a resurgence of the supernatural wonder workings of God. The Body of Christ was once again used of The Holy Spirit in signs and wonders. It was not just speaking in tongues; this great revival also produced great miracles of healing. Churches in America and England once again became mission conscious and throughout the world The Body of Christ experienced what had taken place in the upper room of Acts Chapter 2. In the mid twentieth century to about the latter part of the twentieth century there was an awakening of FAITH, The Confession of Faith, Prosperity, The Indigenous Principles of Self Governance, Self Propagation and Self Supporting, which led to a great exodus from Pentecostal Denominations to the birthing of Local Independent Churches and finally The Ascended Gifts of Ephesians Chapter 4, commonly termed as The Fivefold Ministry. God has generously poured out His blessings. He has wonderfully broken the spiritual drought time and time again emphasising certain spiritual truths.

Like many other Pentecostal and Charismatic ministers of The Gospel of Jesus Christ, I see a prophetic element of the cloud as big as the hand of a man. I must admit I do not see it as A Double Reference Prophecy. I simply see it allegorically, a happening with a possible hidden meaning to the actual context.

In the very Introduction of this book I wrote on the important role the hand plays in the life of humanity with the emphasis toward what spiritual significance the hand plays in spiritual matters. I also mentioned early in this chapter that it is one thing to bring to God what is in your hand and it is another thing to realize what God has placed in your hand. Let us now consider what Jesus has possibly placed in the hands of some of His Born Again children.

Viewing the diagram of the hand we see the following letters: A, P, E, P and T and may I humbly add that God personally gave me illumination (not revelation) on the significance of The Hand and what each finger represents toward spiritual awakening and truth:

A is for Apostles, the Governors of The Church. The Thumb is used as the seal of a person who is unable to write. I had previously stated that the marked distinction between Foundational Apostles and Modern Day Apostles was the fact that The Body of Christ is built on the writings (the foundational truths) of the early Apostles. I had further mentioned that Modern day Apostles do not receive nor give new revelations of truth to The Body of Christ. They do not add to The Revelation of God's Written Word. However, though that be vital, yet they illuminate The Written Word of God. *This is the thumb seal of their governmental authority.* Though they do not write of a revelatory nature, what they do write illuminates The Written Word and thus The Body of Christ is blessed and edified. The Apostolic Ministry (represented by the thumb of the human hand) may be seen *as the gift of Jesus Christ that breaks open the seal of God's Word.* It is their unusual gift to disclose what was once hidden. Let me use an illustration from Revelation 5:1-5 to strengthen what I am endeavouring to convey: *"Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. And one of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals."*

Just as Jesus is the only one in heaven and on earth worthy to open the seals, in a similar way Jesus has blessed The Apostolic Ascended Gift to open the seals of His Written Word. However, I must cite a word of caution. Whatever, is unsealed by The Modern day Apostle is subject to judgement and how do we judge but by The Written Word of The Foundational Apostles. This no doubt confirms the distinction of the two types of Apostles with a major illumination and that being the one that judges is always greater than the one being judged. In simple words, the

Foundational Apostle who judge through The Written Word is greater than The Modern day Apostle who illuminates The Written Word.

Though I have emphasized the distinction between the two types of Apostolic Ministry and that being Foundational and Apostles of Illumination, there is major truth of both types that are synonymous: Both types do the exact same work as disclosed in Ephesians 4:12-16: *" to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love (ESVUK).."*

Perhaps the acronym that The Good Lord gave me personally about 25 years ago may further elaborate on the extremely essential work of an Apostle:

A ... APOSTLES (or) ALWAYS

P ... PREACH

O ... ON

S ... SUBJECTS

T ... TOWARD

L ... LIFE

E ... EVERLASTING

So much more can be said of The Modern Day Apostle but time and space will not allow me, however I close with two important hallmarks of this ministry. One of the key expressions of Modern Day Apostles is setting Local and Denominational Churches in order according to prescribed governmental

principles embedded in The Written Word of God (Logos). This Ascended Gift has an unique God ordained ability of Administration; he sets Churches in order by writing their constitutions. I really appreciate the analogy The Lord gave me concerning this aspect of Modern Day Apostolic Ministry. The Apostle can be likened unto an orchestral conductor conducting a spiritual orchestra, each child of God having and playing their own unique spiritual instrument (gift), according to the prescribed music score and that being none other than the unadulterated Word of God. It is so wonderful to know and experience the various sounds of the various instruments and yet we all hear the same tune and chords. This is the wonder work of The Modern Day Apostle, through his unique gift of Governance, he brings Local and Denominational Churches into harmony, where though ministries differ they all sing the same song, for the simple fact they all are singing from the same music score - *The Unadulterated Word of God*.

The Word of God cautions The Body of Christ of charlatan (imposters, pretenders) Apostles: *"I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars (Re 2:2 KJV)."* The Body of Christ must be aware that there are Modern Day Apostles that are definite counterfeits. How will we know? The answer is so simple. Are they fulfilling the purposes of apostolic ministry as defined in the book of Ephesians? I am amazed how that these days almost every minister is an Apostle. It seems as if there are so many chiefs and no more warriors. Yes, it does sound laughable, but not meant to be. It is a serious matter, which has to be addressed. To my dismay and the detriment of The Body of Christ (not that any weapon against The Church can ever prosper), I have seen ministers divide Denominations to start Local Independent Churches. No doubt within certain Denominations there are hierarchal systems and principles of democracy that manipulate and control their ministers and thus many ministers have no alternative but to move on. However, even if this be the case, though they are within their God given prerogative to move on, they must never ever encourage members of the congregation and of the denomination to move with them. True Apostles never ever build on another ministry's foundation: *"Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation (Ro 15:20 KJV)."* Authentic God called and approved Apostles never ever break to build. Genuine Modern day Apostles will never divide The Church through strife and anarchy, that they may build new Local Churches.

Let's close this section on a positive note. There are most definitely Apostles today for this simple reason; how could the purposes of the relevant Fivefold Ministry be realized and come into fruition. And therefore I ask you, oh mighty man of God, what has God placed in your hand? Has Jesus, our Lord and Master, placed within your hands The Ascended Gift of Apostleship? Have you received The Seal of His Authority? Has Jesus given you the ability to equip the saints for the work of the Ministry? Has Jesus, the master builder, placed within your hand the gift to build up The Body of Christ? Has Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, placed within your grasp the God given anointing to unite The Church? I can go on and on asking pertinent questions, but I will stop for I do believe that many of you reading this book are called by Jesus as Modern Day Apostles, or should I rather say Apostles of The Holy Spirit (Acts 13:1-4). I also believe be it that you are already called of Jesus as an Apostle and you have erred in the scriptural expression of your ministry, that as you repent and allow The Holy Spirit to redirect you according to scriptural expressions of apostolic ministry, that The Lord will use you mightily for His namesake.

- P is for Prophets, the Governors of The Church. The index (pointing finger) signifies the ministry of Modern day Prophets. What applies to The Modern day Apostles, also applies to The Modern Day Prophets with one major distinction and that being, he gives direction to the Church. However, his direction is also subject to The Written Word of God. Like the Modern day Apostle, The Modern Day Prophet is not equal to The Foundational Prophets of Ephesians. His prophetic insights are subject to The Written Word of God. When viewing the hand we note that the fingers used for The Apostle and The Prophet are next to each other and may I add for a definite purpose. As unique as each finger of the hands is, only the thumb and the index finger are used for writing. When joined together, they express the thoughts of the mind. One of the uniqueness of The Prophet is to disclose the Mind of The Spirit of God.

The very first acronym I ever received from The Holy Spirit was that of The Prophet. I will never forget shopping with my dear wife, Dolores at OK Bazaars in West Street Durban. There on the shop floor, pushing the grocery trolley, The Holy Spirit spoke to my spirit. I managed to contain myself as I followed my wife on the shop floor. Tears flowed, but I knew: "*the spirit of the prophet is subject to the prophet (1Co 14:32 KJV).*" I dried my eyes and acted normal, just praying inwardly that God would help me remember what He had spoken. Praise God I never forgot:

P ... PROCLAIMING

R ... REVELATION

O ... OVER

P ... PROPAGANDA

H ... HERALDING

E ... ETRERNAL

T ... TRUTH

The Word of God tells us that there are many voices in the world (1Co 14:10). These being the voice of man, the voice of evil (demons and agents of the devil) and the voice of The Holy Spirit. It is the voice of The Holy Spirit (Re 3:22) through The Prophet that cancels out all the propaganda (misinformation, half-truths, fabrication) that permeates (infuses, floods, saturate) The Body of Christ through ungodly influences of man and demonic forces.

If ever there is a time that the truth needs to heralding, it is now. The Church is divided because of the influences of the voices of men and demons. Unity is strength. Division smacks of weakness. Unity speaks of togetherness and thus power. Haitians have a very unique analogy of denoting strength. They speak of a stick being easily broken, for it is alone, however when a bundle of sticks are tied firmly together they are powerful and will not be broken. The Haitian analogy of strength reminds me of what is said in Ecclesiastes 4:8-12: *"one person who has no other, either son or brother, yet there is no end to all his toil, and his eyes are never satisfied with riches, so that he never asks, "For whom am I toiling and depriving myself of pleasure?" This also is vanity and an unhappy business. Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken (Ecc 4:8-12 ESVUK)."*

It is the mandate (command, directive) of The Prophet to bring The Body of Christ together. One of his major thrust of his heralding ministry is to expose falsehood that influences the unity of The Body of Christ. No wonder there is a move within The Body of Christ spearheaded by the powers of darkness to discredit the ministry of The Prophet. Satan is well aware that disunity within The Church will weaken the influence of The Body of Christ within the world and therefore through all means possible he divides God's people. His influence has affected The Body of Christ to the extent that many Local and

Denominations do not accept the ministry of Prophets. There is the belief that there is no need for a prophetic voice to guide The Church for the simple fact that The Word of God is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path (Ps 110:119).

There is dire need for the resurgence of The Ascended Gift of The Prophet. Perhaps God has placed within your grasp this vital and needful ministry. God's people do love and honor The Written Word of God. However, as much as we love and honour The Logos Word (Written Word), there is an urgent need for The Spoken Word of The Holy Spirit, known as a Rhema Word: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches (Re 3:13, 22)." Has God placed this needful ministry in the palm of your hand? Have you within your hand the God ordained ability to direct The Body of Christ toward the perfect will of God? Who knows you might just be a Prophet of God.

On page 91, the second paragraph, I encouraged God's people to put aside preconceived perceptions of interpretation and to evaluate afresh whether there are Apostles and Prophets today. I am of the persuasion that The Body of Christ is fragmented and unless we through the intent study of the purposes of Fivefold Ministry and the acknowledgement of Fivefold Ministry; the Body of Christ will further fragment itself to the extent that we will lose our spiritual influence in this perverse world. Furthermore the rejection of The Apostolic and The Prophetic Ministries tantamount to the rejection of a precious gift that Christ has given The Church. Like so many of you, I am a Father and I worked hard to support my family, let alone to purchase them gifts with my hard earned sweat of the brow. Can you imagine one of our children coming to us and saying that they do not need the gift anymore? How does Jesus feel who shed His life's blood and may I add not just for our salvation, but also to grant us gifts for the benefit of not just one or two of us, but for all God's Born Again children. When we say the ministries of The Apostle and Prophet are redundant, we are actually saying to Jesus we do not need Your gift anymore.

There is a dire need for these two Ministries. The Body of Christ is divided. There is a long list of the purposes of Fivefold Ministry registered in Ephesians 4:11-16. However, there is only one of the numerous purposes that I want to highlight. Have we as The Body of Christ attained the UNITY OF THE FAITH? The answer is in the negative. No wonder we are losing our impact on this perverse world. Am I now sounding negative? My answer, a resounding no. I am just being realistic. I am reminded of the idiom: *UNITY IS STRENGTH*. I am an English speaking South African and proud of being one. We have eleven official languages and I am familiar with two, English and Afrikaans. I love the Afrikaans language and I love the old motto of The Orange Free State: "*EENDRAG MAAK MAG*", which simply means UNITY PRODUCES STRENGTH. As the Body of Christ are we going to continue in this vein of disunity? *I DO BELIEVE JESUS ORDAINED THE FIVEFOLD MINISTRY FOR THE PAST, THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE.*

E is for Evangelists, Governors of The Church

The middle finger represents the ministry of The Evangelist. It is the longest finger. It is often voiced in Church circles that The Evangelist is represented by the longest finger of the hand for the mere fact that out of The Fivefold Ministry, it is the Evangelist that goes the furthest into the world. Some disagree. They say that it is The Apostle. They cite the example of The Apostle Paul. The basis for their debate is Paul was an Apostle and he went the furthest. This no doubt sets a precedent (standard, pattern). The adherents, (believers, supporters) of this persuasion make this interpretation for they fail to realize that Paul actually expressed three gifts of The Fivefold Ministry: *"Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity (1Ti 2:7 KJV). "Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles (2Ti 1:11 KJV)."*

The three ministries of Paul are mentioned in chronological sequence and that being preacher, apostle and teacher. On doing a word study on the word preacher, the Greek word denotes a herald. On face value it would seem by using the word herald that Paul was also a Prophet, bearing in mind that heralding truth is the ministry of a Prophet (not that the other members of The Fivefold do not herald truth). This is most definitely not the case. Paul was an EVANGELIST, an APOSTLE and a TEACHER. How do I arrive at this conclusion? Is it an assumption on my part? Or is it a fact. Let us consider what Paul says in 1Co 2:14: *"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*

Paul was a man of God with great wisdom. He first preached evangelical messages to the unsaved where ever he travelled, knowing full well that he could not plant Churches with unsaved people. Unsaved people do have a measure of Faith to accept Jesus as their Saviour (Ro 12:3). However, the unsaved cannot understand spiritual matters. Their spirits have to quicken through the Born Again experience for them to understand The Word of God.

After the conversion of the people, Paul then formed a Local Church and once the new found Church was established in Apostolic Doctrine, Paul then taught The Word of God. This no doubt is a Divine order of planting Churches:

- Firstly, the preaching of The Gospel
- Secondly. establishing the new converts in Apostolic Doctrine
- Thirdly, the teaching of God's Word

Reflecting on 1Ti 2:7 and 2Ti 1:11 both Scriptures follow the same chronological order of Preacher, Apostle and Teacher. This sets a precedent (model) that the modern Day has to follow.

The Body of Christ is in desperate need of Evangelists. Church growth is very minimal because of the lack of this needful ministry. What The Church is experiencing is Transfer Growth, an exodus from one Local Church to another. Many Local Independent and Denominational Churches do not have Sunday Evening Gospel Services anymore. The life blood of The Church is Evangelism. Sad and yet true, there is an over emphasis of motivational preaching. Hell, The Second Coming of Christ and The Born Again experience is rarely preached these days. No wonder several Local Independent and Denominational Churches are stagnate.

The Cell Group concept has replaced Evangelical Cottage Meetings. Pastors are over emphasizing pastoral care teaching and no wonder Paul exhorted Timothy to do the work of an Evangelist: *"But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry (2Ti 4:5 KJV)."*

Each Ascended Fivefold Gift has a certain characteristic that makes it unique. Be it that a certain ministry is not operating then not only does The Body of Christ lose out, but often the world as well. The Evangelist has a great love for the lost, the destitute, the rejected and the degenerate. The unsaved world is losing out, they are continuing in their sin and be it that Evangelists are not operative, then sad to say Hell will be overpopulated with people who have not heard The Gospel and more so have not accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

Evangelists, like the Apostles, will go where others will fear to go. Genuine Evangelists have an inner compulsion to see the lost come to Christ and therefore they seldom count the cost of how far to go and where to go. This is clearly evident when we consider Philip the Evangelist. *"And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him (Ac 21:8 KJV)."*

Philip was an Evangelical Revivalist. He went to the multitude and the individual. He ministered to the despised and rejected (Ac 8:4-13). He ministered to the elite (Ac 8:26-39). He was a man for all men, regardless of status and ethnicity. Philip truly had the heart of an Evangelist. This was the heart of God, who so loved the world; the whosoever, the rich, the poor, the famous, the discarded and all ethnicities (Jn 3:16).

Philip was the first Ascended Gift that left the comforts of his home. He went to the Samaritans, who were despised and marginalized. Jews had no fellowship with The Samaritans. The Samaritans were viewed as a mix ethnicity by the Jews. They were part Jewish and part Assyrian. Their worship of Jehovah was frowned upon by the pure Jews of Judea. They only accepted the five books of Moses and showed disregard to the capital of Jewish worship which was Mt. Zion in Jerusalem. They had their temple of worship at Mt Gerazim.

Philip, most definitely had a heart similar to that of Jesus, the greatest Evangelist. Jesus ministered to the Samaritan woman, who brought out the entire village to hear Jesus preach. Often when we read God's Word we fail to note all of what The Word of God is saying. God's Word, when studied intently has revelations of truth that will astound the seeking heart. A classic example of this is recorded in John Chapter 4:4: *"And he must needs go through Samaria."* Taking this verse at face value will not reveal what was really implied. The Catholic Answers Website sheds much light on the rift between the Samaritans and The Jews:

"Because of their imperfect adherence to Judaism and their partly pagan ancestry, the Samaritans were despised by ordinary Jews. Rather than contaminate themselves by passing through Samaritan territory, Jews who were travelling from Judea to Galilee or vice versa would cross over the river Jordan, bypass Samaria by going through Transjordan, and cross over the river again as they neared their destination. The Samaritans also harboured antipathy toward the Jews (Lk 9:52-53)."

Jesus went where no Jew would go. Philip was like his Master. He had a heart for the whosoever, regardless of ethnicity and religion. This outstanding Evangelist fully understood what Jesus had said:

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth (Ac 1:8 ESVUK)."

Philip took these words of Jesus literally, and yet I do believe he saw also saw a hidden twist to it. Jerusalem, a type of one's personal home and family. Judea, a type of one's neighbouring area, where your friends and other members of your extended family live. Samaria, where you enemies live. There is a definite chronological order that Philip the Evangelist followed and that being first loved ones, second, friends, third enemies and finally the world.

Philip, not only expressed the heart of Jesus, he also explicitly followed the example that Jesus set forth in His ministry. Crowds thronged Jesus where ever Jesus went. He was extremely busy, but never busy enough to leave the multitude to be alone with a discarded, a so called dropout of society. God appointed Evangelists will minister to large crowds and yet they love Personal Evangelism. They are well aware that it is always the individual who will testify of the grace and power of God's loving kindness to others and lead them to see and hear Christ. This is exactly what the Samaritan woman had done (Jn 4:28-30). Philip, was no different in the midst of revival, he left and ministered unto The Ethiopian eunuch (Ac 8:26-39). Great signs and wonders took place at the Samaritan revival. Philip, a God appointed Evangelist knew when his work with the Samaritans was over. They accepted Jesus as their Saviour, they were healed of their maladies (problems, weaknesses, sickness), and they were

Water Baptized. He handed the converts over to the Apostles Peter and John and went on to his next assignment and that to minister The Gospel to the Ethiopian eunuch, who like the Samaritan woman took The Gospel to his fellow countrymen

If ever there was a man of God that exhibited the loving character of Jesus, it was the Evangelist Philip. He was not afraid of what others would say of his ministering to the "*so called unclean*". He in no way thought of himself and his reputation, the need of The Samaritans far outweighed what others would think of him. Jesus sat beside the well at Samaria and ministered to a woman who had had five husbands and the man she was living with was not her husband. In our modern day we would call the man she was living with her partner. This woman came to the well at high noon, at a time when the sun was at its brightest, simply to avoid the mockery of the other women, who drew the water early in the morning. She was not accepted in the circle of the so called decent women. It is with this woman of low reputation and low self esteem that Jesus communicates with; let alone her being a Samaritan. Jesus was not like the Jewish Rabbis of His day, who when seeing women approaching them on the same road, would cross over to the side of the road to avoid them. No Rabbi would ever place their reputation on line the way Jesus had. They would never ever want to be seen alone with a woman, let alone one with her reputation.

An Evangelist has a heart of gold. They love the unlovable. They place the spiritual need of salvation of others way above what others may think of them. Like their Master they are willing to make themselves of no reputation (Php 2:7). Allow me the privilege of sharing another acronym that I received from The Lord.

E ... EVANGELISTS

V ... VOCALIZE

A ... ALMIGHTY'S

N ... NEVERENDING

G ... GRACIOUS

E ... EFFECTUAL

L ... LOVING

I ... INSPIRED

S ... SOTIEROLOGICAL (salvation)

T ... TRUTHS

The important and relevant question is what possible Ascended Fivefold Gift has Jesus placed in your hand? Do you have a sincere love for the discarded? Does your heart break when you see God's image and likeness bound by sin? Do you fret over family, friends, neighbours, countrymen and the rest of the world going to Hell? Is there a continuous urge to share The Gospel with all ethnicities? Are you one of the few that do not concern themselves with the opinions of others when you attach yourself to those who others will not associate with because of their bad reputations? Do you often lie awake at night weeping before The Lord that The Spirit of Revival may sweep once again throughout this wicked and perverse world? If your answers to all the above questions is a resounding yes, then most likely God has called you as an Evangelist, a man and a woman of God that will take this glorious Gospel of Forgiveness and Deliverance to the ends of the earth and the individual man and woman all alone, lost in their sin and isolation. We, The Church need your ministry desperately; the blood of the unsaved is on our hands. Please, my brother and my sister in The Lord, I beg you to cleanse our hands of defiled blood. Many of our Local Independent Churches and Denominations are in a state of stagnation. Evangelism is the life blood of The Body of Christ. WE NEED YOUR MINISTRY NOW.

P is for Pastors, Governors of the Church

To my amazement I have discovered that the word Pastor is only mentioned once in The Word of God and that in The Old Testament:

"As for me, I have not hastened from being a pastor to follow thee: neither have I desired the woeful day; thou knowest: that which came out of my lips was right before thee (Jer 17:16 KJV).

However, the word Pastors is mentioned seven times in The Old Testament and once in The New Testament. (Please note King James Versions).

It is remarkable to note that the words Pastor and Pastors are associated with the feeding, the watering and protecting of a flock of sheep (Ps 23). Many translations use the word Shepherd instead of Pastor. The New Testament refers to people of God and The Church eight times as a flock, thus connecting the flock to a Shepherd/Pastor. Of the seven times Pastors are mentioned in The Old Testament, four times it is clearly associated with a Shepherd/Pastor.

Considering all of the above we conclude that the ministry of a Shepherd/Pastor is to *lead the flock to grazing ground, lead the flock to drinking water and to protect the flock*. The ministry of a Pastor may thus be summed up in one word: CARE. The Pastor cares for his flock/congregation. He feeds them on the finest

of the wheat (Ps 81:16). He leads the sheep to still waters (Ps 23:2). He protects the sheep from the wiles of the enemy (Jn 10:11-18).

After all what has been said of the role of The Pastor it is extremely essential that the ultimate spiritual truth of the role of The Pastor is not missed or overlooked. There is one word that beautifully sums up the imperative role of The Pastor, the word being - *lead*. *HE LEADS HIS PEOPLE*. The Pastor leads them to green pastures, to still waters and to paths of righteousness (Ps 23). Some scholars may not agree with me, but I do believe the ultimate role of a Pastor is to lead his congregation. They cannot lead themselves, in fact they are not meant to lead themselves. As the congregation is fed by the Pastor, as he introduces them to the still waters of The Holy Spirit and separation from the evils of this perverse world, there will no doubt come a time that they will mature and be able to stand on their own two feet, not being swayed by every wind of doctrine (Eph 4:14).

In the Introduction of this book I had mentioned how fortunate I was to have been taught and trained by such great men as Dr. Don B .Coleman, Pastor Paul Seaberg and Apostle Edwin Gray. One of these three stalwarts of The Faith gave an amazing teaching on the role of the Pastor, highlighting the shepherd's protection of the sheep.

In Bible times many of the shepherds were in cohorts with thieves and robbers. Together with the thieves, the shepherd would stage mock thefts. The thieves would beat the shepherd, no doubt being very careful not to do too much harm and then move off with some of the sheep. The shepherd then battered and bruised would present himself to the owner of the flock convincing the owner that he had put up a good fight to protect the sheep, however, because he was out numbered he lost some of the sheep. No doubt at times this was very convincing, yet there were those certain times that the owner saw through the ploy.

The heart rent part of the teaching was when Christ was presented as The Shepherd of Shepherds. His flock was attacked by the powers of darkness and ravaging wolves. They flogged His back with a short whip with lead balls and sheep bones tied into leather tongs. They crowned him with a crown of thorns, drove nails into His hands and His feet and nailed Him to a cross. They pierced His side and numbered his bones. The Good Shepherd went to the owner of the sheepfold and presented Himself, showing God our Father his horrendous wounds and exclaimed joyfully that none of the sheep had been stolen by the thieves and robbers:

"While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled (Jn 17:12 NKJV)."

"that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, "Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none (Jn 18:19 NKJV)."

Jesus, our perfect Shepherd/Pastor willingly gave his life for His sheep. He personally said that no man could take His life. Like Jesus, The Ascended Gift of Pastors is a life lived for the betterment of his congregation. Not only is his ministry on the altar of sacrifice, his life is also only the altar. The following acronym given to me by The Holy Spirit truly sums up the role of the Pastor:

P ... PASTORS

A ... ALWAYS

S ... SERVE

T ... TOWARD

O ... OUR

R ... RIGHTEOUSNESS

Of The Fivefold Ministers, the pastor is the only resident minister. His unique ministry is not usually directed to The Body of Christ, he concentrates on the Local Church. Many scholars refer to his relation with the Local Church as a husband and wife relationship. They see him as married to The Local Church, just like a husband that always wants to be close to his beloved wife, never wanting to leave her side. His life and ministry centres around his congregation and like The Good Shepherd that he emulates, he too is touched with the feelings of the infirmities of his flock (Heb 4:15). He cares for his flock (1Co 12:25). He is their burden bearer (Ga 6:2). He is their intercessor (Jas 5:16). He is their protector (Jn 10:11). He is their spiritual provider (Ps 23). He is their promoter (Ps 75:6).

Though often referred to as a husband, among the spiritually inclined he is also seen as a Father. The three P's of succesful spiritual parenting is prominent in his caring ministry:

PROVIDER

PROTECTOR

PROMOTER

As a spiritual Father he excels:

F ... FATHER'S

A ... ALWAYS

T ... TEACH

H ... HEAVEN'S

E ... ETERNAL

R ... RIGHTEOUSNESS

He is a man of God with great empathy. The pain and heartache of his congregants weigh heavy upon his heart and shoulders. He does not sympathize, he empathizes. He is at one with his congregants, their pain is his pain. Their joy is his joy. Their demise is his demise. Their promotion is his promotion. Their sin is his sin. Their victory over sin is his victory of sin. He is at one with his flock.

C ... CARING

A ... ALWAYS

R ... REVEALS

E ... EMPATHY

T is for Teachers, Governors of the Church

Considering the allegory of the hand depicting the Fivefold Ministry, we note the Teacher is represented by the smallest finger. Maybe with this in mind some of us may believe that of the five ministries the Teacher is the least significant. This is not the case, like all of the Fivefold Ministers the Teacher plays a prominent role, in fact when we consider 1 Corinthians 12:28 we see the imperative position the Teacher has in The Church: *“And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.* Furthermore we previously noted that the Apostle Paul had a teaching ministry as well (1Ti 2:7). Jesus our beloved Saviour was constantly called Rabbi, the Hebrew word for a scholar and a Teacher. Nicodemus addressed Jesus as Rabbi and Teacher: *The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles*

that thou doest, except God be with him (Jn 3:2 KJV). No doubt this should convince us of the vital role of the Teacher in the Body of Christ.

The Great Commission of Jesus Christ surely emphasises the vital role of the Teaching ministry: *“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen (Mt 28:19-20 KJV).”*

When I personally consider the role of the Teacher, I see a great collaboration between the apostolic and teaching ministries. The Apostles lay down the doctrines of The Body of Christ and the Teacher instructs the Church in the apostolic doctrines.

Perhaps the acronym that The Holy Spirit shared with me will help shed light on the important role of the Teacher:

T ... TEACHERS

E ... EMPHASIZE

A ... ACCURATELY

C ... CHRIST'S

H ... HEAVENLY

E ... ETERNAL

R ... RIGHTEOUSNESS

It has always been my personal perception of all the Fivefold Ministers the gift that has that special grace to cause people to understand The Word of God is none other than the Teacher. I once heard a man of God say the pinkie finger goes where no the other finger can go and if they do try and go where the pinkie goes, they cause damage. He wisely used an illustration of the pinkie removing dirt from the ear.

Often when the Prophet, the Evangelist and the Pastor endeavour to teach, they may cause confusion. They do not have that special grace that the Teacher has. The Teacher has the unique ability to convey truth by using the various methods of teaching:

The Lecture Method,

The Story Method,

The Question and Answer Method,
The Law of Apperception Method and
The Recitation Method.

Which no doubt helps the congregation to clearly understand The Word of God.

The most important gift of the Fivefold Ministry

Of the human hand which of the fingers are the most important? All are important, as all play a definite unique role. One finger does not supersede the other, for the simple fact though each finger is distinct from the other, they are joined together to make up the hand. All the fingers act as a unified hand.

Considering the Fivefold Ministry, which of the five gifts is the most important? Most of us will probably say the Apostle, and no doubt back it up with 1 Co 12:28. Surely, we cannot debate what Scripture clearly states. There is a definite order of rank in 1 Corinthians 12:28, which cannot be overlooked. However, we need to see the possible overall message that is presented in this portion of Scripture.

Local and Denominational Churches are to be set in order by Apostles and Prophets. It is the Apostolic and Prophetic Ministries that sets forth the doctrine and governmental principles of Local and Denominational Churches. This is the special grace resident in Apostolic and Prophetic Ascended Gifted Ministry. They further set Churches in order by writing the constitutions of the Churches based on the teachings of Jesus and The Foundational Apostles and Prophets (Eph 2:20).

It is in this regard of their specific ministries that they are first and second. It is not the Evangelist, the Pastor nor the Teacher that set Churches in order. Regardless of all the various names and titles given to The Church of Jesus Christ, we must always realize that the founder of the Church was The Apostle of God our Father (Jn 20:21) and furthermore we are built upon the teachings of the Apostles and Prophets (Eph 2:20). To this very day Jesus Christ has delegated Apostolic and Prophetic Ministries as first and second in authority in regards of setting His Church in order.

No doubt, there will be those amongst us that will emphasize that it is only the Apostolic Ministry that sets The Church in order. They rightly quote 1 Corinthians 12:28 which clearly designate the Prophet as second. We cannot argue the fact and further more if we are realistic in our interpretation we must admit that Ephesians 2:20 speaks of Foundational Apostles and Prophets and

not Modern Day Apostles and Prophets and with this in mind we can say that it would be best to adhere to that which The Word of God declares that the Apostolic Ministry of our day supersedes the Prophetic Ministry of our day in rank and order and therefore we should see The Apostle as first in rank in setting The Church in order.

I therefore do not have a problem with only the Apostle setting the Churches in order in our day. However, I must admit that two are better than one (Ecc 4).

Considering the rank of the Prophet, this ministry has the special grace of giving direction to The Church. He points to the way The Church should move in specific times. We are well aware that throughout The Church Age, The Church has experienced certain sprinklings of renewed truth, such as The Just Shall Live by Faith, The Baptism into The Holy Spirit, Faith etc. It is the role of The Prophet to direct The Church to what The Holy Spirit is emphasising in our time.

The Teacher is third in rank according to 1 Corinthians 12:28 and rightly so. The ranking and order of the Evangelist and Pastor are not clearly stipulated. In conclusion to this vital question of just what Fivefold ministry is the most important, let me share my personal opinion with one encouragement, and that being you judge my opinion according to God's Word (1 Co 14:29).

As a young Born Again child of God I often listened to the ongoing debates of what of the nine spiritual gifts of The Holy Spirit was the most important (1 Co 12-14). If ever there was a confused Christian it was me, for the simple fact every person had a different gift as the most important, although it seemed that there was a majority that leaned toward The Gift of Prophecy. As the years went by and as I grew in the knowledge and grace of God I soon discovered the most important gift. To my amazement I discovered it was simply the gift needed at the hour. If a child of God was seriously ill, there was no need for the Gift of Prophecy to be voiced over the sick person, rather The Gift of Healing was to be manifested. Be it that a child of God was in a valley of indecision then healing would not be the gift needed to be manifested; rather the Word of Knowledge and the Word of Wisdom need be manifested.

In like manner when the Church is in the need of direction then the ministry of the Prophet should be in the fore. Be it that the Church is not growing numerically, then the ministry of the Evangelist should come to the fore. Be it that the Church is hurt and bruised, then the ministry of the caring Pastor should come to the fore. Be it that the Church is plagued with every wind of doctrine, then the ministry of the Teacher should come to the fore. Be it that new

Churches are being planted, then the ministry of the Apostle should come to the fore , for it is the Apostle that is *first in setting the new found Churches in order with Apostolic Doctrine which is securely based and founded on The Word of God as revealed By Jesus, and The Foundational Apostles and Prophets.*

Just as there are five fingers that make up the human hand, there are five ministerial governing gifts that make up the Fivefold Ascended Gifts. Just as the five fingers function as a unit, in like manner should The Fivefold Ministry function as a unit? Just as each finger of the human hand plays a specific role, in like manner should each Fivefold Ascended Gift function according to the measure of grace resident in each particular Fivefold Ascended Gift.

The possibility of one person possessing the entire Fivefold Ministry

I was very fortunate in receiving my fundamental Bible education in an apostolic Local Church. At this Church there was a strong Men's Fellowship Group that met regularly. One of their favourite topics of discussion was The Fivefold Ascended Gifts. The majority of the brethren believed that it was possible for one individual to possess all of the five ministerial gifts. I did not concur with them, however, at that time my knowledge was very limited and therefore all I done was to listen and ponder on what they were saying. Over the years through study and the help of The Holy Spirit I formulated my personal perception of Fivefold Ministry.

There was only one person ever to express the entire five and that was Jesus Christ. Paul, the most prolific Foundational Apostle exercised three of the five and that being Evangelist, Apostle and Teacher (1 Ti 2:7; 2 Ti 1:11). God knows the frailty of man and therefore He has wisely distributed the Ascended Gifts (1 Co 12:29). God is well aware of the danger of one individual having the entire five. The possibility of an individual possessing all of the Ascended Gifts would cause the individual to be totally independent and therefore there would be no need for other men to be used in the Fivefold Ministry in the Local Church. Just as the human hand is dependent on all the fingers of the hand to work effectively, in like manner so has God set in order the ministerial gifts of The Fivefold Ministry? Each Ascended Gift should be dependent on the other Ascended Gift to function effectively as an Ascended Gifted Ministry Team.

SPIRITUAL APPLICATION

- Though the Allegorical method of preaching is frowned upon by many in The Body of Christ; as students and theologians we should always

bear in mind what the Apostle Paul wrote to his son in the Lord: *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (2 Ti 3:16-17)*. However, the seasoned student and theologian have the understanding that the Allegorical method like Typology is not always conducive for the formulating of doctrine and when the Allegorical and Typological Methods of preaching and teaching are employed; the preacher should inform the congregation that the preaching and teaching is subject to judgement.

- Though there are major distinctions between The Foundational and Modern day Apostles; The Body of Christ should realize that their mandates are one and the same. Both are sent forth into the world to herald the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Mt 28:19-20) and to fulfill their purposes as defined in Ephesians (4:12-16).
- The ministry of Modern Day Apostles and Prophets are vital to the well being of The Body of Christ for the simple fact that they have a special grace (Eph 4:7) to illuminate The Word of God.
- It is God's will that all Local Churches and Denominations in The Body of Christ realize that it has always been the intention of Jesus Christ for His Church to be apostolic. Local Churches and Denominations that adhere to The Great Commission (Mt 28:19-20) are truly apostolic.
- The highest authority in The Body of Christ is Jesus Christ and He governs His Church through The Word of God. Jesus has set in order the Governors of The Body of Christ (Eph 4:7-11; 1 CO 12:28). These Governors should govern Local Churches and Denominations according to the revealed Word of God. The constitutions of Local Independent and Denominational should be based on the revealed The Word of God. Principles of governance embedded in The Word of God should be the hallmark of that which constitutes The Body of Christ as Local Independent and Denominational Churches.
- Of The Fivefold Ascended Ministries the most important is the ministry needed for the hour and therefore there will always be the different ministries coming to the fore at various periods of time. A wise Fivefold Ministry Team will give their full support to the particular ministry at this given point in time. Whenever Fivefold Ministry works

as a united team Local Independent and Denominational Churches benefit greatly.

- Each Fivefold Ascended Gift has a special grace that is unique, just as the fingers of the human hand all have a different function. Though there are different graces and functions; what is of paramount importance is that each different grace and function compliments the graces and functions of the other gifts to complete each other.
- Every Local Independent and Denominational Church has a resident Apostle and that being Jesus Christ (Jn 20:21). Jesus has Himself confirmed this: *“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them (Mt 18:20).”*
- Jesus warns His Church of false Apostles: *“I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars (Re 2:2).”* With every resurgence of truth there will always be an attack from the forces of darkness (Eph 6:10-18). Many in our day are claiming to be Apostles and we have to try them as The Word of God encourages us to do. True Apostles will always unite The Body of Christ; in fact it is one of the hallmarks of their unique ministry. Too many who call themselves Apostles break Local Independent and Denominational Churches to start their own Churches. *Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation (Ro 15:20).* Genuine Apostles are men of God of great integrity and ministerial ethics. Every endeavour of theirs is always to build and never to break.
- God ordained Apostles and Prophets like Jesus and Paul will always have a core of men, young and old from their Local Church and Denomination, who will accompany them on their apostolic endeavours. These men will receive on hand training of how to minister cross culturally. Another unique hallmark of apostolic and prophetic ministries is the reproducing of their own kind. Apostolic ministry reproduces apostolic ministry. Prophetic ministry reproduces prophetic ministry.

- Apostolic and Prophetic ministry will set Local Independent and Denominational Churches in order by appointing Elders (Pastors) in the Churches they plant (Acts 14:23; Tit 1:5).
- Modern Day Apostles cannot ignore the signs that authenticate their ministries. Some may debate the fact that the signs of apostolic ministry embedded in The Word of God relate to the Foundational Apostles and not Modern Day Apostles. Be it that the purposes of both sets of Apostles have the same purposes, it stands to reason that in fulfilling these purposes that both face the same opposition. Paul, the suffering Apostle, makes special mention of his sufferings: *“Are they Hebrews? I also! Are they Israelites? I also! Are they the seed of Abraham? I also! Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as beside myself,) I am more! I have been in labors more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in prisons more, in deaths many times. Five times from the Jews I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked. I have spent a night and a day in the deep. I have been in travels often; in dangers from waters; in dangers from robbers; in dangers from my race; in dangers from the heathen; in dangers in the city; in dangers in the wilderness; in dangers on the sea; in dangers among false brothers. I have been in hardship and toil; often in watchings; in hunger and thirst; often in fastings; in cold and nakedness; besides the things outside conspiring against me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is caused to stumble, and I do not burn? If it is right to boast, I will boast, I will boast of the things of my weakness. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I do not lie. In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king guarded the city of the Damascenes, desiring to lay hold of me. And I was let down in a basket through a window through the wall, and escaped their hands (1 CO 11:22-33 MKJV).”*
- Modern day Apostles should follow the example of Apostles Peter and Paul: *“Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind (1Pe 5:2 KJV).” “Did I commit sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you free of charge? I robbed other churches, taking wages from them to minister to you. And when I was present with you, and in need, I was a burden to no one, for what I lacked the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied. And in everything I kept myself from being burdensome to*

you, and so I will keep myself (2 Co 11:7-9 NKJV)." Modern day Apostles should trust God to meet their needs. It is so sad how that many men of God constantly beg for money and this is not a sign of apostolic ministry.

- Modern Day Apostles, like the Foundational Apostle should be firm in disciple and sound in grace: *"It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles--that a man has his father's wife! And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus (1 CO 5:5)."* *"But if anyone has caused grief, he has not grieved me, but all of you to some extent--not to be too severe. This punishment which was inflicted by the majority is sufficient for such a man, so that, on the contrary, you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow. Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him (2 CO 2:5-8 NKJV)."* It is common in our day to see saints of God who have caused havoc and mayhem in their Local Churches accepted in other Churches. No investigation is carried out just why they had left their Church. Often we are excited that our Local Church is growing and yet failing to understand that these saints of God carry a spirit of rebellion on them and in due season what harm and chaos they had caused in their previous Local Church, they will bring to the new Local Church and often with greater despair and heartache. Apostolic ministry safeguards The Body of Christ and whenever people who have caused despair and heartache endeavour to join other Churches, the wise Apostle will always contact the previous leadership and be it that those who have left were under discipline and they cannot be reconciled to their former Church leadership, the wise man of God would show respect by continuing the discipline in the troublemakers new found Church. In the likely case of reconciliation the new leadership should show forth the grace of God and accept them with open arms. Apostolic Ministry in our day should be firm in discipline and gracious in forgiveness and acceptance.