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Introduction

Faithful Witness: Revelation 1 and Psalms 22

Our dear Lord Jesus Christ came to earth as a newborn, lived, died, and rose again as the faithful witness who perfectly represented the Heavenly Father.

Through the cross, Jesus revealed the mystery of God as a faithful witness. Psalms 22 prophesied the Messiah who was to suffer on the Cross. In Revelation Chapter 1, Jesus Christ is introduced as the faithful witness. He was faithful unto death.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Psalms 22:1

*But I am a worm and not a man,
scorned by mankind and despised by the people.
All who see me mock me;
they make mouths at me; they wag their heads;
"He trusts in the LORD; let him deliver him;
let him rescue him, for he delights in him!"*

Psalms 22:6-8

*Many bulls encompass me;
strong bulls of Bashan surround me;
they open wide their mouths at me,
like a ravening and roaring lion.
I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like wax;
it is melted within my breast;
my strength is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;
you lay me in the dust of death.*

*For dogs encompass me;
a company of evildoers encircles me;
they have pierced my hands and feet —
I can count all my bones —
they stare and gloat over me;
they divide my garments among them,
and for my clothing they cast lots.*

Psalms 22:12-18

Psalms 22 clearly prophesies our Lord Jesus Christ who died on the cross, and through this death he became the faithful witness.

*and from Jesus Christ **the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth.***

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.

Revelation 1:5-7

*He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to **the Shepherd** and Overseer of your souls.*

1Peter 2:24,25

By accepting the Word of Testimony proclaimed by Jesus Christ on the Cross as the faithful witness, we as lost sheep returned to the Shepherd. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, became the Shepherd to lead us on the earth until he returns to the earth and beyond to eternity.

Great Shepherd: Revelation 2,3 and Psalm 23

As described in Psalm 23, Jesus Christ became the Great Shepherd, leading

the seven churches by the Holy Spirit until His return, as depicted in Revelation Chapters 2 and 3.

*For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. **For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.** He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. **For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.***

1 Peter 2:19-25

Jesus Christ became our Great Shepherd when he died on the cross. He is our way! We follow him to the cross. As Jesus became the faithful witness of Father God through the cross, so too will we become the faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ our Lord by following the Lord Jesus, our Great Shepherd, with the help of his Spirit. As Jesus was led to the cross, we also will be led to the cross.

*The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters.
He restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;*

*you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
forever.*

Psalms 23

As our Shepherd, he will lead his church to the green pastures and beside still waters, but He will also lead us to the valley of the shadow of death. We will be led by him to the table prepared by the Lord in the presence of our enemies. He will eventually take us to meet the enemy, whose skull must be crushed under our feet, Hallelujah! Passing through the valley of the shadow of death is a fundamental prerequisite for confronting the mountain.

*A voice cries:
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
**Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;**
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.
And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."*

Isaiah 40:3-5

His discipline and rebuke will comfort us and direct us to the righteous path. And that path leads us through the valley of the shadow of death and ultimately to the table prepared by the Lord in the presence of our enemy. We will be equipped, ready to fight, and ready to open the gate of eternity so that our Lord of glory can come in to rule over the earth for a thousand years.

Revelation Chapters 2 and 3 depict how the Great Shepherd shepherds the seven churches of the earth and prepares them for the final battle with praises, exhortations, rebukes, and promises. He counsels us to the Lord's counsel as the Great Shepherd and the Wonderful Counsellor!

The churches of the world in different places and eras in history are

represented by the seven churches in Revelation chapters 2 and 3. The seven churches reflect the entire church of Christ on Earth in time and space.

To Laodicea church, lastly introduced among seven, the seven churches, Jesus said,

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

Revelation 3:20

The Church is called to open the door so that the Lord would come in. Jesus knocks and waits for the church to open the door.

Righteous Coming King: Revelation 4-22 and Psalm 24

And his people go up to the mountain of God to open up the gate of eternity so that the King of Glory may come in.

*The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof,
the world and those who dwell therein,
for he has founded it upon the seas
and established it upon the rivers.*

*Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?
And who shall stand in his holy place?
He who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who does not lift up his soul to what is false
and does not swear deceitfully.
He will receive blessing from the LORD
and righteousness from the God of his salvation.
Such is the generation of those who seek him,
who seek the face of the God of Jacob. Selah
Lift up your heads, O gates!
And be lifted up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.*

*Who is this King of glory?
The LORD, strong and mighty,
the LORD, mighty in battle!
Lift up your heads, O gates!
And lift them up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.
Who is this King of glory?
The LORD of hosts,
he is the King of glory! Selah*

Psalms 24

Upon following the Shepherd, his people will ascend to the mountain of God where they will open the ancient gates of eternity, allowing the King of Glory, our coming King, to come in! His second coming is very much tied to our obedience. It is the revealing of the sons of God, which all creation awaits, that decides the arrival of our King Jesus.

Only when his people are ready will the seven seals be broken. Are we ready to suffer with gospel? Are we ready to open the door so that our Lord can come?

The slain Lamb already has the authority to break the seals and open the scroll, and release to the earth what God has yet to fulfil on this earth. But are WE ready to go up Mount Zion? Only those who have clean hands and pure heart, and who do not lift up their souls to what is false and do not swear deceitfully can go up to the mountain of God.

The return of our righteous King depends on the readiness of his people. It is when the body of Christ reaches the fullness of Christ that our Lord Jesus returns.

In the first verse of Revelation, it says,

The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place.

Revelation 1:1

The revelation that Jesus Christ received from God was given to communicate the things that must soon take place. These things have to be communicated with the servants of Jesus Christ; for the revelation of Jesus to

take place, it has to be communicated. This revelation is not merely the description of what will happen. This revelation is very much connected with our obedience and urges us to take action. The will of God must be done on the earth as it is in heaven. And it should take place 'soon'. God's will is not to delay. When will we understand this?

Chapter 1

The Revelation of Jesus Christ - The Testimony of Jesus Christ

The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.

Revelation 1:1-3

This revelation (or prophecy) is more than a description of what is to come. It wouldn't be called 'the things that must soon take place' if it was merely a description of what will happen. And if these things were to happen without any connection to our involvement, for what purpose would this revelation be delivered to us? Prophecy is not only a prediction of things that will happen: it requires our obedience. In the commandment of Jesus Christ, there are prophecies which contain the will of God. The book of Revelation is the word of grace and authority that requires the obedience of this last-day church of Christ.

The revelation of Jesus Christ was revealed by God to his servants of the things that **must soon take place**. God made it known by sending his angel to his servant John.

The will of God is destined to be accomplished on the earth. However, for the will of God to prevail on this earth, it has to be revealed. This mystery of God can only be revealed through Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the mystery of God. The will of God is accomplished on this earth only through the faithful testimony of Jesus Christ, the Faithful Witness.

John **bore** witness to the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

“Blessed is the one who **reads** aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who **hear**, and who **keep** what is written in it, for the time is near.”
Revelation 1:3

There are three distinct tasks mentioned here that depict what it means to be a witness; a disciple of Jesus Christ.

- 1 'read' - One who reads aloud or proclaims the words of this prophecy, for others to hear. (tongue of the disciple)
- 2 'hear' - Those who give ear and listen to this prophecy. (ear of the disciple)
- 3 'keep' - Those who hear the words of this prophecy and who obey it. (ear = obedience of disciple)

*The Lord GOD has given me
the tongue of those who are taught,
that I may know how to sustain with a word
him who is weary.
Morning by morning he awakens;
he awakens my ear
to hear as those who are taught.
The Lord GOD has opened my ear,
and I was not rebellious;
I turned not backward.
I gave my back to those who strike,
and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard;
I hid not my face
from disgrace and spitting.*

Isaiah 50:4-6

The word of God is to be read aloud and proclaimed so that people could listen. And so that people can take heed to it and obey it.

God's divine plan and purpose were to include us in fulfilling this Word. We are part of this prophecy! We have a part to play. The prophecy of Jesus can only be fulfilled by our **obedience**. We fulfil the Word by our obedience.

This revelation of Jesus Christ which *must soon take place* should be 'read' by the messengers of Jesus, be 'heard' by those who have ears to hear, and be 'kept (or obeyed)' by the faithful witnesses.

*"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is **accomplished**."*

How can the prophecy be fulfilled or accomplished? By obedience. Jesus fulfilled the prophecies through His obedience.

Our obedience plays a very crucial part in fulfilling the prophecy in these last days. The time of Jesus' return and our readiness is very much correlated. These things that must soon take place can only come to pass when one reads aloud the word, so people can listen and obey it. Only by our obedience will this prophecy ever be fulfilled.

Just as the mystery of God was revealed by the obedience of Jesus Christ, the mystery of Jesus Christ will be revealed by the obedience of the church.

Perfect fellowship - foundation of the perfect representation

John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

Revelation 1:4-8

John wrote to the seven churches,

"Grace to you and peace from:

- 1 Him who is and who was and who is to come
- 2 And from the seven spirits who are before his throne
- 3 And from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and everyone shall see him, even

those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen."

Father God - "I am who I am" He was the 'I Am' in the past, and He is 'I Am' now, and He will be "I am" forevermore.

*The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases;
his mercies never come to an end;
They are new every morning;
Great is your faithfulness.*

Lamentation 3:22, 23

The steadfast love of the Lord never changes. His faithfulness has no end! He is always there to express his love to us. Even so, the expressions of his love and mercy are new every morning. His love is incalculable and astounding: his deeds, unforeseen. His works are new every morning. This is what makes his works a mystery. He cannot be bound!

His works are expressed through the seven spirits of God which is the Holy Spirit. No one can predict the works of the Holy Spirit. This is why Jesus compares the Work of the Holy Spirit to the wind,

"The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

John 3:8

Holy Spirit - seven spirit / seven golden lampstands

Biblical numbers bear significant meanings and symbolism that hold importance in understanding the word of God and its depth. The number 'Seven' (completeness; perfection) represents the perfect work of God that is to be accomplished on the earth. This perfect work of God has always been performed and sustained through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Since the beginning of mankind, there has been a war raging between the will of God and the will of **man** on the earth. The number 'Six' is the number of the 'man'. When the number of the man is combined 3 times, '666', it symbolizes the 'perfect will of man'. The perfect will of man opposes everything that has to do with the will of God. If '6' is not denied, '7', which is the completion of the will of God, cannot be revealed on the earth.

*And he said to me, "What do you see?" I said, "I see and behold, a lampstand all of gold, with a bowl on the top of it, and **seven lamps** on it, with seven lips on each of the lamps that are on the top of it. And there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left."*

Zechariah 4:2,3

*Then he said to me, "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: **Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit**, says the Lord of the hosts. Who are you, **O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel, you shall become a plain.** And he shall bring forward the top stone amid shouts of 'Grace, grace to it!'"*

Zechariah 4:6,7

For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. "These seven are the eyes of the Lord, which range through the whole earth." Then I said to him, "What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?" And a second time I answered and said to him, "What are these two branches of the olive trees, which are beside the two golden pipes from which the golden oil is poured out?" I said, "No, my lord." Then he said, "These are the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

Zechariah 4:10-14

And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth.

Revelation 11:3,4

The 'seven eyes of the Lord' mentioned in Zechariah are the seven Spirits of God who roam the earth carrying out God's work. The seven Spirits of God are the very instrument God uses to do his work. He accomplishes his work, not by might, nor by power, but by His Spirit. The seven Spirits are symbolized by the rainbow that encircles the throne of God. The seven Spirits of God are the Holy Spirit. Jesus himself had to be baptized by the Holy Spirit to begin his ministry on the earth. (Isaiah 11:1-4)

Zechariah 4 mentions seven golden lampstands. Next to the seven golden lampstands stand two olive trees; one on its right and one on its left. For the golden lampstands to burn and produce light, the two olive trees must

provide the oil. The two olive trees are the two witnesses; the two lampstands standing before the Lord of the earth. (Revelation 11:3-4)

As portrayed by the two olive trees, the two witnesses provide the oil. The calling of a witness is to activate the power of the Holy Spirit. A faithful witness obeys till the end.

A witness is the one who testifies, who speaks out, and who obeys; echoing the voice that was at the beginning of creation, "Let there be light!" Proclaiming the word of God activates the power of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Christ - the Faithful Witness

The faithful witness - The Son of Man! This is the original plan of God towards man. Only man can be a faithful witness. Why is Jesus called the Son of Man? It is because he is the perfect man. He is the ultimate man intended by God.

Yes, we are created to be witnesses to the goodness of God. We are created to carry his image who speaks, who testifies, who speaks out 'let there be light'. Through this, the power of the Holy Spirit can be released to the darkness! Jesus became the Faithful witness and we are called to be like him as faithful witnesses who obey until the end. And ultimately these witnesses are to share in His suffering.

Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrew 5:8-10

Obedience is to witness. Obedience is the word that became flesh! Obedience is the trumpet sound, the trumpet sound on the mountain Sinai(Exodus 19:16). Obedience is the word of testimony of the brethren which defeats the dragon(Rev 12:11). Jesus came as the faithful witness and he calls us as faithful witnesses. Jesus is the only begotten Son of God, who represents Father God with perfection! And he has begotten us to be the male child who will defeat the dragon. A witness of God has to be born of God.

Jesus became '*firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth.*'(Rev 1:5) Hallelujah! He was not only born of the dead, but he is the **firstborn** of the

dead! He is the beginning of the resurrection, and we are to follow in his footsteps! He opened the door for the resurrection through his death. Jesus, the creator of the earth, the rightful king, the king of kings, came to the earth. However, the false kings of the earth saw him and killed him. Nonetheless, through the resurrection, the legitimacy of the kingship of Jesus Christ was vindicated.

"Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, and you know - this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. God raised him, loosening the pangs of death because it was not possible for him to be held by it."

Act 2:22-24

Let all the house of Israel, therefore, know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.

Act 2:36

His resurrection became the vindication for His kingship and for those who follow him until death. He became the firstborn of the dead, so that we, who follow him, can be born of the dead after him. We join in his resurrection, by joining the fellowship in his suffering.

that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Phlippinian 3:10,11

The saying is trustworthy, for:

If we have died with him, we will also live with him:

If we endure, we will also reign with him;

we deny him, he also will deny us;

if we are faithless, He remains faithful -

for he cannot deny himself.

2Timothy 2:11-13

He loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a

kingdom, priests to His God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever! The cause of our salvation is to not only be rescued from the hellfire but to be part of his kingdom and become priests to his God and Father!

The faithful witness, our Lord Jesus Christ, testified to our Lord God, the one who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty, through his cross!

Jesus - He who speaks to the Church

I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."

Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this. As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

Revelation 1:9-20

John introduced himself to the readers of this message as 'your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus'. He was exiled to the island called Patmos for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:10

Patmos - the place where the Lord gave John the message to the seven churches.

Now and then, God leads us to our 'Patmos', so that he can release his message to the churches.

Oh, Lord, prepare me for my 'Patmos', that I may be a messenger for you! Even though this be my place of exile, Lord, I will not be afraid to be in my 'Patmos'. I will willingly go, if my purpose is found in exile I can be of more use to you, and if there I can look upon your face.

In Patmos, but at the same time in the Spirit, John heard the voice like a trumpet from behind him.

This voice, like a trumpet, spoke to Israel, his people, on Mount Sinai. The Word was spoken to his people with the voice like a trumpet. This voice like a trumpet was, I believe, the voice of our Lord Jesus. The word of God. The same word of creation, "Let there be light!". The voice which activated the power of the Holy Spirit, the power to destroy the darkness!

And the kingdom Gospel was proclaimed by the voice of a trumpet (Matthew 5-7)! What a blessing it would be to hear the voice like a trumpet, the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ. Open my ears to hear, Lord!

The voice said, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and Smyrna and Pergamum and Thyatira and Sardis and Philadelphia and Laodicea."

The voice from behind stops me in my tracks! The voice destroys the darkness! The voice disturbs our sleep and slumber!

When John heard that voice from behind, he turned around to see the VOICE! And he saw the voice who was like the Son of Man, amid the lampstands. Our Lord Jesus stands among the lampstands, the churches on the earth.

To see the Lord Jesus, the Glory of God, we have to listen to the voice like a trumpet, the voice of our Lord Jesus. The Word of God.

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

Isaiah 40:5

When the voice like a trumpet, the word of Jesus stops me in my tracks, we need to turn around to see the voice. Repentance from my way to the voice of the Lord. Only then will we see Him.

What does He look like?

1. He is amid the lampstands, one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. - the Son of Man who takes the authority on the earth to rule as a righteous king with his church on the earth.
2. The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. - infinite, divine wisdom (Daniel 7:9, Leviticus 19:32, Proverb 16:31; 20:29)
3. His eyes were like a flame of fire, - from his fiery eyes, nothing can be hidden. Fire of God. Consuming fire (Hebrew 12) will not allow any other thing than what's unshakable, that which is the kingdom of God. All things that don't belong to the kingdom of God, shakable things will be exposed before the eyes with flames of fire. (Rev 2:18-19 against seducing spirit)
4. His feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace - 'feet': my action. 'Your word is a lamp to my feet (Psalm 119:105). feet refined in a furnace - obedience learned through suffering. And that feet are like burnished bronze, which will crush the enemy. Our obedience crushes the head of Satan. This Relates to the shoes of the gospel of peace.
5. His voice was like the roar of many waterfalls. - 'many waters', the voice of the nations! Through his blood, he ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and he has made the kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth. (Revelation 5:9,10)
6. In his right hand he held seven stars - He held seven messengers of God to the churches and strengthened them in his right hand. (Isaiah 41:10 - In the right hand of God, there was Israel, YAHWEH's witness,) In the right hand of the Lord, there are the witnesses and the messengers of the Lord. We are called as the seven stars of God, who are strengthened in the right hand of God. In these last days, he will strengthen us to witness for Him!
7. from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword - when we allow the two-edged sword to expose our heart and we come to repentance(Hebrew 4:11-13), we will be saved from the coming judgment of the two-edged sword of Jesus himself(Revelation 19:11-21). If we fall upon the rock, the rock will not come upon us(Matthew 21:42-44).
8. His face was like the sun shining in full strength. - The light that comes from the face of the Lord is indeed brighter than the sun. When Paul

described the light that confronted him on the way to Damascus, the light was brighter than the sun during noon. At noon, the sun has the most powerful light during the day. But a light, brighter than the noon sun shone over Paul. (Acts 26:13) That light blinded him from the world of the flesh and opened his eyes to the spiritual realm. The light from the sun enables us to see the things of this world, all that is under the sun, as wisdom says, "There is nothing new under the sun." (Ecclesiastes 1:9) New things are only found beyond the sun, not under the sun. New creation comes from the Spirit. New things are only found in God. Only through him can we become a new creation. Only by encountering the face of the Lord, which shines brighter than the sun, will our eyes be opened. We will not live by sight but by Spirit! Only when we seek his face will our shame disappear! (Psalm 34:5) Adam hid his face from the face of God after the fall. Moses also hid his face from the face of God in the beginning, knowing that by seeing his face, he would die. But as he tasted the goodness of God, he dared to ask, "Show me Your Face!" To Moses, seeing God's face was more precious than life!

When John saw the Lord, he fell at his feet as though a dead man. Jesus didn't reveal himself like this when he was on the earth with his disciples, except for the time on the mountain of transfiguration (Matthew 17), Jesus didn't reveal himself like this. The cost of seeing Him is one's life, and this leads to the resurrection of Jesus. That's why the precondition of being an Apostle is 'seeing the resurrected Lord! (1Corinthians 15:1-9) Jesus did not reveal his resurrection to everyone. The resurrection of the Lord is a message of judgment for those who took part in the crucifixion of Jesus. However, those who embrace the cross are the ones who can see the resurrected Jesus face to face!

Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will have not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

1 John 3:2,3

Seven stars in his right hand

Who are the seven stars in the right hand of Jesus himself?

As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven

lampstands are the seven churches.

Revelation 1:20

'The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches.'

The word 'angel' is of Greek origin, meaning messenger. Whether the text was referring to angelic beings or mortal men remains unclear.

However, I believe that the text was referring to people who were sent as messengers to the 7 churches to deliver the message of the Lord Jesus Christ and be witnesses.

Israel, as the witness of the Lord, was promised to be strengthened in the righteous right hand of God.

*"But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen,
the offspring of Abraham, my friend;
you whom I took from the ends of the earth,
and called from its farthest corners,
saying to you, "You are my servant, I have chosen you and not cast you off";
fear not, for I am with you;
be not dismayed, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."*

Isaiah 41:8-10

His right hand strengthens us. His right-hand holds the seven stars. In Revelation, Jesus upheld John with his right hand, who, upon seeing Him, fell at his feet as though dead. There is no fear in Him who is the first and the last. Nothing is hidden from Him. There is nothing unknown to Him. Though he died, behold he is alive forevermore. He, who is the Life, went through death, and through this, He has the key of Death and Hades.

Now, the Lord Jesus speaks to the seven stars, who are the seven messengers of the Lord to the seven churches. What is John urged to write? "The things that you have seen, those that are, and those that are to take place after this."

Knowing the Lord is the foundation of understanding the things that were, things that are, and also things that are yet to come to pass. To know Him, who is the first and the last, who holds the past, present, and future, enables

us to witness His will throughout the ages.

Chapter 2

Jesus speaks to the 7 churches

Jesus is the one who speaks to the angels(messengers, voices) of the churches, and he addresses himself in each church differently. Jesus who was introduced in chapter one is the foundation of the message to the churches. Beholding him is the foundation of the revelation. When the light shines, all the darkness would be exposed and it will call for repentance, otherwise there will be the judgement of God and the lampstand will be removed from the church. Right now He is among the 7 lampstands which are the 7 churches of the earth, but the churches need to heed the message of the Lord for repentance. He speaks to those who have ear to hear!

- Introduction of Jesus as...
- Praise
- Rebuke and exhortation
- He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches
- To the one who conquers.....

Who can hear the praise, rebuke, and exhortation of the Lord? The one who has ears to hear! Only he who has ears to hear can come to repentance and obey His voice. The ones who repent and obey are the ones who overcome.

The Lord God has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with a word him who is weary. Morning by morning he awakens; he awakens my ear to hear as those who are taught. The Lord God has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious; I turned not backward. I gave my back to those who strike, and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not my face from disgrace and spitting. But the Lord God helps me; therefore I have not been disgraced; therefore I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame.

Isaiah 50:4-7

The ear to hear the voice of Jesus leads us to obedience. The obedience of Jesus led him through the suffering of the Cross and the Cross of Jesus is the victory! Hallelujah!

1. Ephesus

Jesus: The one who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands

Praise: I know your works, your toil, and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false. I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary. / you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

*Rebuke and exhortation: You have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember therefore from **where you have fallen**; repent and do the work you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.*

Jesus, the one holding the seven stars in His right hand, is holding the seven messengers; His witnesses. They are under the authority of Jesus, as they are representing Him and being His witnesses. When we see the church, Jesus should be at its center.

It is to be an apostle of Jesus that one bears witness to Jesus. Jesus is the Morning Star who represents and witnesses Father God. Jesus is the faithful witness!

Jesus Christ is the mystery of God(Colossians 1:27) revealed, and the church of Christ is the mystery of Jesus Christ revealed on the earth(Ephesians 3:4,10). As the Father God was represented by Jesus Christ the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ is supposed to be represented by the church of Christ. The fullness of Christ is the calling of the church which will be perfected by the apostolic leadership in the last days(Ephesians 4:11-13). But if we don't repent to that calling of the Lord, our lampstand will be removed from us.

The Church in Ephesus was praised by Jesus for her works, toil, and patient endurance. Among their achievements was their ability to discern false

prophets and share in the same judgment as Jesus. They were able to discern the false teachings and works of the Nicolaitans, which the Lord despised.

But all these things that are acceptable to God: endurance, good works, discerning evil, and deception of false apostles, all this can be done without the FIRST LOVE! We need to heed the warning of the Lord. Without the FIRST LOVE to the Lord, discerning evil, and deception of false apostles, endurance even good works are possible.

In keeping with our calling, we must remember not to defend Jesus or his doctrine, but to follow him to the Cross with the FIRST LOVE.

He wants us to follow Him and remain faithful to our first love, that is Himself. Without repentance, we can't stay in the calling of the Lord. We have to go back to the First Love! Otherwise, he will remove the lampstand from its place.

But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptised by him (John the Baptist).

Luke 7:30

The purpose of God for our life can be realised only by repentance. The religious leaders who didn't received the message of the repentance from John the Baptist, rejected the will of God. We don't repent, the lampstand will be removed from us. The Lord is calling us to repent to Himself.

We can defend him with sacrifice, but what he wants is our obedience.

If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have no love, I gain nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:3

Yes, we can let our body be burned but have no love, then we would gain nothing. Our first love, oh Lord! What was Christ's witness to us? It was the Love of God! Love supreme! Our first love!

Pure love should result in endurance and patience. Refined obedience! Jesus himself learned obedience through suffering (Heb 5:8). However, suffering can also result in a hardened heart full of pride, self-confidence, stubbornness, subtle disappointment, and bitterness. Consequently, we will not be able to represent (or witness) Jesus Christ himself anymore, but we will represent ourselves instead. It's not the leaves Jesus seeks, but the fruits. Jesus, who

holds the seven stars in his right hand, will not tolerate this. If we refuse to repent, he has no choice but to take away our lamp. As a result, we can no longer represent Him.

Repentance is only possible to those who have ears to hear! Oh Lord, I am deaf. I desire to hear. I will not try to defend myself. I am not called to defend what I perceive to be 'right', rather I am called to follow Jesus who paved the way to the cross!

Oh, Lord, I will not pursue 'right things,' but you, the tree of life!

When I claim to be 'right', my heart turns cold; and the anger, bitterness, and pride that arose in Cain arises in me. Oh Lord, what you want us to be isn't merely to be 'right,' but in love with you so that we may follow you.

The fruit of the tree of life is obedience born of love! It is only the fruit that represents Jesus, not the leaves.

From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day, he was raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you." But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man." Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.

Matthew 16:21-27

Jesus, you alone are my supreme love! Repentance alone will restore me to God's original purpose for my life. Seeking the things of God is only possible when we abide in His love.

Denying what I perceive as 'right' and following Jesus is only possible when we love him above all else.

Jesus is my supreme love.

Oh, Lord, I don't want to represent myself; I want to represent You! Oh, Jesus, I don't want to be a hindrance to your coming!

To those who conquer, Jesus will let him eat of the tree of life. To those who do not follow what he perceives to be right, but rather live by Love! To those who deny the tree of knowledge and submit to the tree of life!

2. Smyrna

Jesus: the first and last, who died and rose again

Praise: I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.

*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.*

Our Lord Jesus Christ has been there since the beginning. In the beginning, was the Word! And this Word is eternal. Everything will fade away, but the word of God remains forever. As a result of this truth, Jesus did not resist the suffering and death that he went through on this earth.

He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave Him glory so that your faith and hope are in God. Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever." And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

1Peter 1:20-25

Jesus is the eternal word and this truth was proven by His death on the cross and ultimately by His resurrection! Death was not able to stop the power of His love. He is the first and the last! Even death couldn't stop him. He defeated death by His resurrection. Our salvation is based on Him who is the

first and the last. Nothing can defeat him. Nothing can subdue him. He is alive forevermore. We can follow him even unto death. He who walked the path of suffering, died, and rose again speaks directly to the church in Smyrna, who suffers under terrible persecution. Jesus says, "I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich)!"

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:3

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Matthew 5:10-12

Because of (not despite) being poor and persecuted for righteousness, the church of Smyrna is blessed. The message that Jesus gave to the church of Laodicea was the opposite of the message Jesus gave to the church of Smyrna. When the church of Laodicea claimed, "I am rich", Jesus rebuked her, saying, "you are poor", yet when the church of Smyrna confessed, "I am poor", Jesus exalted her, saying, "you are rich."

(The richness of the Lord will be further discussed in chapter 3, which is about the church of Laodicea.)

The only way for one to become rich is to "buy from Jesus gold refined by fire" (Revelation 3:18). Gold can only be refined through fire, which is suffering and persecution.

Slander and false witnessing are made against the Smyrna church by those who claim to be Jews but are members of The Synagogue of Satan. They claim to be the sons of Abraham but are really from the sons of the devil, Satan.

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?" Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. I know that you are offspring of Abraham, yet you seek to kill me because my

word finds no place in you. I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father." They answered him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing the works Abraham did, but now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did. You are doing the work your father did." They said to him, "We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father - even God." Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me. Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my words. You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

John 8:31-44

In John 8, the Jews, who believed Jesus, claimed that they were Jews and descendants of Abraham, to which Jesus replied, "You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning.." Those who persecute the church will be possessed by the same desire and purpose as their father, the devil, whose sole desire is to kill the sons of God. The religious leaders at the time were the ones who killed Jesus. It is those who claim to be of God who will persecute the church. Those who have 'no room' for the word of Jesus.

The Lord is warning us who 'believe' Jesus like those Jews who 'believed' Jesus and claimed to be the descendants of Abraham, but were proven to be 'sons of Satan'.

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the monuments of the righteous, saying, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.' Thus you witness against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers. You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell? Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town, so that on you may come all the righteous bloodshed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar."

The last of the eight blessings in the Beatitudes is that we will endure persecution for righteousness' sake. (Matthew 5:10-12) And the last of the eight woes is that we will persecute the people of God, the true church. (Matthew 23:29-35)

In the end, the hypocrites are the ones who will persecute the church. Hypocrisy is the leaven of the Pharisees which is rooted in the fear of man. The leaven of the Pharisees can turn unleavened bread into leavened bread in no time. It can quickly spread throughout the entire body. Getting caught up in hypocrisy, which is rooted in the fear of man, puts us at risk of becoming persecutors ourselves.

Hypocrisy can only be eradicated by the fear of God. (Luke 12:1-5)
We can claim to be Jews, the descendants of Abraham or children of God, even the church when in reality, we end up being members of the synagogue of Satan or of those whom John the Baptist calls brood of vipers! (Matthew 3:7-9)

Let us rejoice in the fact that we are the ones who are persecuted! Suffer with the gospel! Do not fear what you are about to endure! Be faithful unto death! The Lord does not spare us from death, but through death He will lead us to the resurrection. The Lord Jesus Himself died and rose to life. These words are the first and the last! Once we pass through suffering and martyrdom, Jesus will reward us with the crown of life.

Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel, for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound! Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us; if we are faithless, He remains faithful - for he cannot deny himself.

2Timothy 2:8-13

The one who conquers will pass through the first death, but be saved from the second death!

Although Jesus didn't promise that we wouldn't be hurt by the first death, he did promise that we wouldn't be hurt by the second death.

Even though we go through the suffering and the cross, the death of this world, we will be given the crown of life!

Jesus said, "Be faithful unto death!". He didn't promise to spare the Smyrna church from death or persecution. Instead, He encouraged her to remain faithful unto death!

Who is this Jesus? He is the Christ who died and was raised from the dead! He is the eternal Word that even death cannot overcome! He is the first and the last! And He beckons his church to join him in the fellowship of his suffering!

3. Pergamum

Jesus: The Words of the one who possesses a two-edged sword.

Praise: I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. Yet you hold fast my name, and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

Rebuke and exhortation: You have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality. So also you have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth.

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.

To Pergamum church, Jesus was introduced as the one who possesses a sharp two-edged sword.

Again I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, a flying scroll. And he said to me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see a flying scroll. Its length is twenty cubits, and its width is ten cubits." Then he said to me, "This is the curse that goes out the face of the whole land. Everyone who steals shall be cleaned out according to what is on one side, and everyone who swears falsely shall be cleaned out according to what is on the other side. I will send it out, declares the Lord of hosts, and it shall enter the house of the

thief, and the house of him who swears falsely by my name. And it shall remain in his house and consume it, both timber and stones."

Zechariah 5:1-4

A double-sided scroll! This scroll resembles the two-edged sword as the word of God. God judges through His Word. And that Word is Jesus.

So, when we meet Jesus, we are confronted with God's judgment through His Word. This Word is a two-edged sword that pierces and exposes our hearts.

Hence, we are brought to repentance by His Word.

The two-edged sword exposed the mystery of Israel's lawlessness and led them to repentance, and the wickedness was sealed in the basket until a house was prepared for it in the land of Shinar. This house represents Babylon.

(Zechariah 5:5-11)

Let us, therefore, strive to enter that rest so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Hebrew 4:11-13

Only through the power of this two-edged sword, which exposes and discerns the thoughts and intentions of the heart, can we repent from our disobedience, and thereby, enter the rest.

Nothing can be hidden from the Word. This sharp two-edged sword can discern what is of the soul and what of the Spirit. That which is of the soul cannot mingle with that of the Spirit. Many times the work of the flesh (soul) is disguised as spiritual. The work of the flesh has to be exposed by the Word of God as a two-edged sword. When we embrace God's judgment that comes as a two-edged sword, we learn righteousness and obedience through repentance.

My soul yearns for you in the night; my spirit within me earnestly seeks you. For when your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness

Isaiah 26:9

When we allow the Word of God to judge and expose our heart, the Word of God leads us to repentance which brings us to forgiveness and salvation. This will save us from the final judgment on the earth; the wrath of God. This judgment will likewise be carried out with the two-edged sword from the mouth of Jesus.

*Then I saw heaven open, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness, he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. **From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron.** He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and his thigh, he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.*

Revelation 19:11-16

There is still time for us to repent. It's time to allow the word of God to expose our hearts! It's time to let the two-edged sword slay us so that we may live in His resurrected life!

Pergamum was the place of Satan's throne. Where the throne of Satan resides, there are more blasphemous decrees that bring great pressure upon the disciples of Jesus to compromise. The will that proceeds from Satan's throne be enforced.

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers;

Psalms 1:1

who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.

2 Thessalonians 2:4

We give our throne to the Lord. We want to have the throne of God, not the throne of Satan. The place where the throne of Satan is established is where the will of Satan will be released. The church will be the enemy of society,

because the kings of the earth are conspiring against God himself, and to set Satan's throne! Where the throne of God is there is righteousness, but where the throne of Satan is there is blasphemy and unrighteousness. There is a conspiracy against God.

The church of Pergamum didn't deny their faith, despite the difficult social pressure. Antipas was killed among them because he was a faithful witness like Jesus. Jesus is calling us to be faithful witnesses. Where the throne of Satan is established, the faithful servants are killed.

Despite their perseverance, there were also compromises in their teaching. The pressures combined with temptation were very prominent in society. There was the teaching of Balaam, and he taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel. This teaching lured Israel to eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality. The teaching of Balaam justified these sinful actions. This is the teaching of the Nicolaitans. Dangerous deception regarding 'grace'! 'Once you are saved, you can't be lost. Whatever we do, our salvation will not be lost.' This is not biblical teaching. Yes, the grace of God can defeat all forms of sins. Grace is the power of God that enables us to obey the word of God.

The reason Balaam couldn't curse Israel was that the Israelites were under the law of God, governed by the Word of God. Proverbs 25:28 says, "A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls." If a man has self-control, which means 'governed by the law of God'. If the man's king is the Lord God, he is protected, yes he has a wall of protection around him. So to make Israel vulnerable to the curse, they had to be in disobedience. This would then remove their wall of protection. Right after Balaam departed from Balak, Israel began to violate the covenant with God, whoring with the daughters of Moab, eating and bowing down to their gods, yoking themselves to Baal of the Poor. Their disobedience kindled the anger of the Lord against Israel. (Numbers 25:1-3)

The teaching of the Nicolaitans seems to share the same tone as the teaching of Balaam. Essentially, the teaching of the Nicolaitans led the church to disobedience.

The Lord warns the Pergamum church, "Repent, if not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth." (Revelation 2:16) When Jesus comes back, he will strike the nations with a sharp sword that comes from his mouth (Revelation 19:15).

We need to repent from the teaching of the Nicolaitans, which is the teaching of Balaam, and return to obedience to the Word of God. Our hearts need to be confronted by the two-edged sword and exposed under His light. This will lead us to enter the rest.

And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient? So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.

Hebrew 3:18,19

And again in this passage, he said, "They shall not enter my rest." Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, again he appoints a certain day, "Today," saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts."

Hebrew 4:5-7

Let us, therefore, strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Hebrew 4:11-13

If we are not confronted with the two-edged sword of the words of Jesus' today and repent, we will be confronted with the two-edged sword of his mouth when he returns as the Judge! It would then be too late to repent and enter the rest!

There would be a strong trend of the teaching of Balaam and the teaching of the Nicolaitans where Satan's throne resides. That kind of teaching will be tolerated in that society. We must be warned now, as our culture is heading in this direction.

To the one who conquers, the Lord will give the hidden manna. To those who come out of Egypt, separate themselves from the power of the throne of Satan, refusing the bread of this world, will be given the hidden manna from heaven. Our Lord Jesus who is the eternal bread from heaven will be given to them. The world might name them as losers of this world, but Jesus, our Lord of

glory will give them a white stone which signifies 'victory'! Jesus will name them and call them 'victors'! Only those who have the white stone can enter the banquets of the Lord!

Those who enjoyed the adulterous orgies of this world, drunken by the wine of the Babylon, will not be able to enter the banquets of the Lord because they will not have the white stone which will be given to the victors named by Jesus our Lord. To those who hold fast the name of Jesus ("I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. Yet you hold fast my name, and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells." v13) will be given the new name. And the revelation of this new name can only be known to those who receive it. Only those who endure by holding fast the name of Jesus can receive the revelation. Faith can make us endure to the end. Faithful witnesses will endure and be faithful unto death. And only through this endurance the revelation will be given to them. Revealing of the mystery of God which will be fulfilled in the days of the trumpet call, sounded by the seventh angel, is only possible when the witnesses are killed. Only through those who were faithful unto death the mystery of God can be revealed and fulfilled. (Revelation 10:7) The secret of the Lord can be revealed only to those who hold fast the name of the Lord.

4. Thyatira

Jesus: The words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze.

Praise: I know your works, your love and faith and service, and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first.

Rebuke and exhortation: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants to practice sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality. Behold, I will throw onto a sickbed, and those who commit

adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation unless they repent of her works, and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you according to your works. But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan, to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden. Only hold fast what you have until I come.

The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I have received authority from my Father. And I will give him the morning star.

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Jesus, whose eyes are like a flame of fire, searches the heart and mind. Nothing escapes his eyes. And He will judge according to the work of the heart.

His feet are like burnished bronze that will crush his enemies.

Thyatira church was praised for their works, love, faith, and service as well as their endurance, but one thing they lacked: discernment. This is quite the opposite in the church of Ephesus.

The Lord Jesus rebukes the Thyatira church for her tolerance for that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. She goes about teaching and seducing the servants of God to practice sexual immorality and eat food sacrificed to idols.

Although Jesus confronts Jezebel herself, this does not absolve others who are seduced by Jezebel of responsibility.

Each individual is responsible for his or her sin.

The corruption of Israel was caused by King Ahab, not Jezebel of Tyre.

Although Jezebel seduced King Ahab into leading Israel astray, God held Ahab accountable.

Elijah was called to deliver the people from Jezebel's deception.

Love is not true love unless it is accompanied by the truth, because love rejoices in the truth. (1 Corinthians 13:6).

It is possible to have unity without truth by incorporating everything. True unity, however, can only be found in Jesus. (Eph 1:10)

When we are united without truth, we bring about the prostitute Babylon into the church.

Love 'without' discernment, a love that is not exclusive, but inclusive to all forms of sin, can lead the church to become like a tree where many birds dwell.

He put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

Matthew 13:31-32

And he called out with a mighty voice, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place for demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable beast. For all nations have drunk the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the power of her luxurious living." Then I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues;"

Revelation 18:2-4

True unity is only found in Jesus. We must separate ourselves from Babylon. Our hidden agendas must be exposed before the fiery eyes of Jesus. But when we are deceived by what we see, then the leaven of Pharisees can easily creep into our lives. Hidden wicked and adulterous hearts in hypocrisy will lead the church to deception.

*And the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and to test him they asked him to show them a sign from heaven. He answered them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' And in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. And an evil **and adulterous generation** seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah." So he left them and departed.*

Matthew 16:1-4

In the meantime, when so many thousands of the people had gathered together that they were trampling one another, he began to say to his disciples first, "Beware of the

leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. Therefore whatever you have said in the dark shall be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in private rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops. I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him! Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. Why even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows."

Luke 12:1-7

He also said to the crowds, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, you say at once, 'A shower is coming.' And so it happens. And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, 'There will be scorching heat,' and it happens. You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?"

Luke 12:54-56

The plagues in Egypt were directed against Egypt and Pharaoh, not the Israelites. In the same way, the great tribulation is intended for the destruction of the prostitute, Babylon and the infrastructure of the kingdom of the antichrist, not the church.

Nevertheless, if we fail to repent, we will be thrown together with Babylon into the great tribulation, having committed adultery.

Our concealed immorality and adulterous heart, which is veiled beneath hypocrisy, must be confronted and exposed now before the burning eyes of our Lord, Jesus Christ, lest we reject Him and come under God's wrath. The fear of man is the foundation of hypocrisy and the fear of the Lord is its remedy.

Man judges the outward appearance, which is why the fear of man is the root of hypocrisy. God, on the other hand, judges us according to our hearts, which instills in us a healthy fear and awe for the Lord. As a result, the fear of the Lord brings restoration. If we don't break free from this terrible hypocrisy, then the church will become a den of demons, that is, the prostitute Babylon. People are led to deception by hypocrisy, which stems from a fear of man. Only the fear of God can provide us with wisdom to discern the times. Hypocrites are unable to interpret the present times. (Luke 12:56).

False prophets will deceive a large number of people. Who exactly are the false prophets? Let us now hear from Jesus Christ, our Lord, and Savior, who gives us discernment.

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves."

Matthew 7:15

False prophets dress up as lambs but inwardly are ravenous wolves. They look like lambs but are wolves in their hearts. This is Hypocrisy. Hypocrites are incapable of guiding people to the truth.

"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in."

Matthew 23:13

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves."

Matthew 23:15

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness. So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness."

Matthew 23:27, 28

Jesus searches the mind and heart with eyes like a flame of fire, and he will judge us according to the fruits of our hearts. All that's hidden will be exposed. We must cling to the teachings of Jesus and adhere to them. We will refuse to listen to any teaching that contradicts His. There is no other gospel. There is no need to look into 'the deep things of Satan'. The Lord does not ask us to occupy ourselves to study the mysterious and superfluous things of this world. We already have all we need! The teaching of Jesus. Our gospel is the gospel of the Cross. And the Cross reveals the greatest mystery; the mystery of God.

*And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.** And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

Matthew 28:18-20

Jesus gave us no other teaching to impart to the nations, other than his own. Jesus commanded us to go and make disciples of all nations by 1) baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and by 2) teaching them to observe **all that Jesus has taught (commanded)**. He didn't command us to teach complex doctrines or theology; instead, he told us to impart his solid teachings and commandments.

"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been found on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

Matthew 7:24-27

Those who have ears of a disciple keep the works of Jesus, walking in obedience until the end.

And they will attain authority over the nations and will rule them with a rod of iron, like when earthen pots are broken in pieces. And this authority is the exact authority the Lord Jesus received from the Father God (Psalm 2). The remnant of God, the one who shares in His suffering (Philippians 3:10), those who drink from Jesus' cup of Gethsemane, will reign with Jesus (Matthew 20:20-22). They **are** introduced again in Revelation 12 as a man child, who will rule all the nations with a rod of iron (Revelation 12:5).

Those who learn obedience through suffering (Hebrew 5:8) will rule over all nations alongside Jesus. Those who hear the words of Jesus and act on them are the ones who will rule with Jesus.

The saying is trustworthy, for:

If we have died with him, we will also live with him;

*if we endure, we will also reign with him;
if we deny him, he also will deny us;
if we are faithless, He remains faithful -
for he cannot deny himself.*

2 Timothy 2:11-13

The feet of Jesus are like burnished bronze! The perfect obedience, God's work, which will crush the enemy. May the feet of Jesus like burnished bronze be our obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ! Burnished bronze, Obedience obtained through suffering, completed!

Chapter 3

5. Sardis

Jesus: the one who possesses the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.

Rebuke and exhortation: I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God. Remember, then what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you.

Praise: Yet you still have a few names in Sardis, people who have not soiled their garments, and they will walk with me in white, for they are worthy.

The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels.

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

The seven spirits of God are the power of God on the earth. Through the seven spirits of God, God is doing his work on the earth. Not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of God (Zechariah 4:6).

Work done without the spirit of God, but my flesh is a dead work (Hebrew 6:1). It may appear to be 'living,' yet it is dead.

Many times, a good idea of a man looks good. But any work not led by the Holy Spirit is dead. Without the Holy Spirit, even the best plans, strategies, and methods for church growth are rendered useless.

Some churches are known for having lively worship, exciting programs, or vibrant services.

There may appear to be a lot of activities, and you feel good when you're there! However, this does not imply that the work is indeed alive! Only the Spirit gives life.

For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Romans 8:6-8

It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

John 6:63

The seven stars are the messengers of the Lord to the churches. They are the faithful witnesses who provide the oil to the seven lampstands. The word of God is the spirit that gives life.

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Command the people of Israel to bring you pure oil from beaten olives for the lamp, that a light may be kept burning regularly. Outside the veil of the testimony, in the tent of meeting, Aaron shall arrange it from evening to morning before the Lord regularly. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generation. He shall arrange the lamps on the lampstand of pure gold before the Lord regularly.

Leviticus 24:1-4

Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

Isaiah 53:10

As a true witness, Jesus was crushed in Gethsemane. The name Gethsemane means "oil press" (Hebrew gat shemanim). As Jesus was in the garden, He gave himself up to be crushed. Pure oil is made from crushed olives. This provides oil for the lamp. This is the only way life can be formed! The Spirit gives life and being led by the Spirit is the only way to life. The way to life is ultimately the cross.

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

Matthew 10:39

How does one find the way to life? It is through Jesus. There is no other way but through Him. When we go our way and follow what we perceive to be the "right way", we will end up losing our life. When we eat from the tree of knowledge, good and evil, we will end up in death. We are called to eat of the tree of life: Jesus.

Repentance from dead works (Hebrew 6:1) leads to faith in God. Those who turn from their ambitions and good plans to the instructions of the Lord Jesus Christ find the way of life. Wake up to the simple teaching of Jesus Christ. If we fail to do this, He will come like a thief when He returns. He is not meant to be a thief to us, but rather the bridegroom who will come to marry us, His bride.

We must therefore repent, turn to the word of Jesus and bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

He will then clothe us in white garments, and lead us by the right hand! White garments are the righteous deed of the saints (Revelation 19:8). Only those who are dressed in white garments have access to the wedding feast of the Lamb (Revelation 19:6-9, Matthew 22:8-14).

With dead works, even if they appear to be alive, it makes no difference whether they are spectacular miracles or beautiful ministries; if there is no fruit of repentance and obedience, your name will not be written in the book of life.

Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.

Luke 10:20

6. Philadelphia

Jesus: The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens

Praise: I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one can shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who says that they are Jews and are not, but lie-behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you. Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth.

Exhortation: I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown.

The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my new name.

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Jesus is introduced as the holy and true one, who holds the key of David. He opens and no one can shut, who shuts and no one can open. He praises the church of Philadelphia for obeying and keeping His word and for not denying His name.

This is His word for His beloved church: He will set an open door, which no one can shut. The promise for obedience is an open door that no one can shut. Obedience is a key to unlocking doors. No doors remain shut before the obedient. Obedience can open doors that power cannot. True obedience is unstoppable. Even death is powerless to stop obedience. Death was unable to stop Jesus from obeying the Father until the end of his life.

*Thus says the Lord GOD of hosts, "Come, go to this steward, to Shebna, who is over the household, and say to him: What have you to do here, and whom have you here, that you have cut out here a tomb for yourself, you who cut out a tomb on the height and carve a dwelling for yourself in the rock? Behold, the LORD will hurl you away violently, O you strong man. He will seize firm hold on you and whirl you around and around, and throw you like a ball into a wide land. There you shall die, and there shall be your glorious chariots, you shame of your master's house. I will thrust you from your office, and you will be pulled down from your station. In that day I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah, and I will clothe him with your robe, and will bind your sash on him, and will commit your authority to his hand. And he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. And I will place on his shoulder **the key of the house of David**. He shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.*

Isaiah 22:15-22

Shebna was the former steward of the kingdom of Israel at his time.

Nonetheless, his power would be stripped from him and handed to Eliakim, who was deemed faithful.

Shebna's calling would be transferred to Eliakim. That was the prophecy of

Isaiah. The key to the house of David will be given to the faithful steward. The key of the house of David signifies the authority given by the Lord over the kingdom in which the reign of the Lord is established. Those who obey, even those with little power, will be handed stewardship over the earth.

Jesus warned the Ephesian church that He would remove her lampstand unless she repents (Revelation 2:5). If we fail to repent in humility, our calling from the Lord could be taken away and passed on to others.

As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. He said therefore, "A nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return. Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten minas, and said to them, 'Engage in business until I come.' But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.' When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered these servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by doing business. The first came before him, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.' And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.'

Luke 19:11-17

The Lord told the Philadelphia church, "you have but little power, yet you have kept my word and you have not denied my name.". For their faithfulness in keeping the word with patient endurance, the Philadelphia church received the key of David, which is the authority to reign.

As Jesus told this parable to the people in Luke 19, they assumed the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. Because Jesus was headed to Jerusalem, they thought Jesus would immediately ascend to the throne in Jerusalem and usher in the kingdom that had been prophesied. But first, Jesus had to die on the cross and His people had to go through the process of preparation in order to receive the authority and reign together with Jesus.

They would be given 'little' at first so that they could learn how to handle the Lord's business before being given authority over cities.

"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

Luke 12:32

The remnants of God who seek the kingdom first, the little flock are the ones

to whom God will grant the kingdom. They are the ones who will rule over the earth with Jesus in the millennium on the mountain Zion.

The synagogue of Satan lie, calling themselves Jews when they are not. They say they serve God, but in reality, they serve themselves.

“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. But if that wicked servant says to himself, ‘My master is delayed,’ and begins to beat his fellow servants and eats and drinks with drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know and will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 24:45-51

Before the Lord comes back, He is expecting the faithful and wise servants to feed his household with the proper food at the proper time. They are the servants who will be given the key of David. Ultimately, what they do on earth will determine how much authority they will be given in His kingdom hereafter.

People in the synagogue of satan are like the wicked servants in Matthew 24, those who don't believe that the Lord will come back soon. And they persecute the faithful servants who believe and hope in the return of Jesus. The synagogue of satan will persecute the real church, as the Jews persecuted the Apostles. But Jesus says that some of those from the synagogue of satan will be made to come and bow down before the feet of the saints of the Philadelphia church.

Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth(v.9).

What is the meaning of this phrase: ‘my word about patient endurance’? The Word of Jesus requires the endurance for the second coming of Jesus which brings the vindication of the righteous God.

But the ones who endures to the end will be saved.

Matthew 24:13

Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Romans 5:2-5

Those who have hope have endurance. Those who lack hope will not endure; instead, they will compromise and choose the world. Those who have hope will not settle in this world, but endure and await for the promise of a new heaven and earth; a new world. It is in the coming of the righteous King that we hope!

If we keep His word of endurance, He will guard us against the deception and evil that will arise from the hour of trial that is approaching the whole world, testing those who dwell in it.

Yes, this testing is necessary for 'gold to be refined by fire'. This testing will prove our faith. Suffering produces endurance and endurance produces 'character'. The greek word of 'character' in Romans 5 is 'δοκιμή (dokimē)', which means 'proof' or 'tried character'. And James 1:2-4 says,

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing (δοκιμή dokimē) of your faith produces steadfastness (endurance). And let steadfastness (endurance) have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

James 1:2-4

Apostle James encourages us to rejoice when we meet trials of various kinds, because they are for our good. Through those trials we will be refined, proven and perfected. Jesus himself learned obedience through suffering and obtained perfection.

Although he was a son, he learned obedience through he suffered. And being perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him.

Hebrews 5:7,8

Through these trials, we become faithful witnesses who express Jesus Christ in fullness.

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,

Ephesians 4:13

“You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Matthew 5:43-48

To be perfect— to be like God — that is our calling. That is why He created us according to his image. The son of man was destined to be the representation of God on the earth, but having failed, the first Adam was succeeded by the second Adam, Jesus Christ, the Son of Man. Unlike the first Adam, He was able to completely express and witness the Father God through His obedience on the Cross!

In order to be a witness of God, in other word, to be perfect, we need to go through suffering. Suffering leads us to endurance, allowing us to be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing (James 1:4). When we love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us, we become sons of our Father God. We can be perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect.

The trials and testings will determine and differentiate those who carry ‘the image of God’ and are faithful witnesses of God and Jesus Christ. These trials will come upon the whole earth, to try those who dwell on the earth. Those who have kept Christ’s word about patient endurance will be kept by the Lord. And having endured till the end, they will be proven as faithful witnesses.

The trial which will come on the whole earth is to put ‘*those who dwell on the earth*’ to the test. So we are not called to dwell on the earth. We are called to

dwell in the house of the Lord. Who are the faithful who keep the word of the Lord about patient endurance? They are the ones who dwell on the earth. In the coming chapters (chapter 6 and chapter 8) we will talk more about those who dwell on the earth.

I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown.

Jesus is coming back soon! This is very important to know. Our endurance is possible, because we believe and hold on to the hope of His return. If we don't believe that he is coming back soon, we can't hold fast to the promise. The Lord was faithful in all his promises.

Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you — unless you believed in vain.

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

We can hold fast to what we have because of the certainty of His promise, which is the hope of His return as the righteous King.

Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and he will return in accordance with the Scriptures.

There is a designated crown which will be given after the race is finished. But it can be seized by others, when we fail to guard the crown. The first born right was designated to Esau, but it was seized by Jacob.

The conviction that Jesus will come very soon is a very powerful key in our endurance, keeping us steady in the right place. The wicked servant who believes 'the master is delayed' beats his fellow servants, those who await 'the master's swift return', and compromises with Babylon's authority. (Matthew 24:45-50)

The one who conquers, I will make him pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.

What a promise! Because the Philadelphia church was steadfast like a pillar in the house of God on earth, they will be the pillars of His temple when the Lord Jesus returns. They will be aligned to the new Jerusalem. They will remain in the house of God, not departing from it. On them the name of God will be written. They will be the permanent possession of God. They will be the pillars who will sustain the temple of God. Keeping Christ's word with endurance is the character required to be the pillars of God's temple. The pillars are standing there sustaining the building. Without pillars the house can't be built! Enduring and keeping the word of God on earth is the process of becoming a pillar in the temple of God. Those who hold fast to the word of endurance become the pillars of the house of God on earth.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

John 15:4,5

As we abide in him and remain in him faithfully, he will also abide in us. When we make him our dwelling place, he will make us his dwelling place. His new Jerusalem! When we faithfully abide in him on the earth and bear fruit of endurance, we will remain in his dwelling place forever. We will be made pillars of the temple of the Lord, and thus never depart from it.

Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, "Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God,

Revelation 21:9,10

One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues showed the Bride of the Lamb which is the new Jerusalem. The Bride of the Lamb is the holy city Jerusalem. The dwelling place of God.

And through the obeying church who hold fast Christ's word of endurance, the Christ Jesus, our Lord will be revealed in new name! Christ's wisdom, righteousness and sanctification and redemption which are unheard of in this world will be revealed through the enduring and obeying Philadelphia church. His own new name will be written on them.

*And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God,
righteousness and sanctification and redemption,*

1 Corinthians 1:30

*But, as it is written,
"What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,
nor the heart of man imagined,
what God has prepared for those who love him"*

1 Corinthians 2:9

The name of our Lord Jesus, which no one can understand, will be inscribed on them. As a fresh revelation, Jesus' own new name will be revealed by his faithful church and written on them.

His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself.

Revelation 19:12

7. Laodicea

Jesus: The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation.

Rebuke and exhortation: I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into him and eat with him, and he with me.

The one who conquers, I will grant him so sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne.

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Jesus is the 'Amen' to the will of God: he says "yes" to all that is of the will of God. In Gethsemane, Jesus said, "Not my will, but Your will be done."

Jesus became the faithful and true witness to the will of God. He remained faithful until death, and having risen from death, He became the perfect representation of Father God. He, being present at the beginning of time, is the creator of all things. Jesus Christ is the word of God, speaking into existence the will of God. At the beginning of creation, God spoke these words, "Let there be light!"

Jesus shed His light as he hung on the cross, as this was the will of the Father. Christ became God's faithful witness on the cross!

Jesus chastises the church of Laodicea for being lukewarm, neither hot nor cold.

Jesus, who is 'Amen' to the will of God, rebukes the Laodicea church, who says, 'yes' to herself. According to her, she is rich and well-off and has nothing to lack. As a result, she refuses to say 'yes' to the Lord; instead, she does so always to satisfy her own desires. The will of God cannot be known to the wisdom of the world. God reveals His will only to those who obey Him.

The attitude of indifference predominates the understanding of the Scriptures. However, it must be understood that the message of repentance is directed at us, not anyone else. If the message is understood as merely the description of theoretical doctrine, there would be no breaking hearts or sincere repentance. One should distance himself from intellectual pride. Those with intellectual pride lack the desperation to repent. They are trapped in the deception that implies, 'We are okay. We have everything. We understand the doctrine and can analyze the situation with our knowledge. We have a good system. We are spiritually well balanced.'

It doesn't matter how much knowledge one possesses. What we consider to be wisdom is foolishness to God. The truth cannot be found through intellectual competence. What is the secret to discovering the truth? Repentance.

So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. Have nothing to do with foolish,

*ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. **God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth**, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.*

2Timothy 2:22-26

Young passions want to prove themselves 'right' and cause a quarrel. This leads to foolishness. We are unable to gain knowledge of the truth in this way. The desire to be right and the pursuit of righteousness are two very different things.

*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.*

Matthew 5:3, 4

When our hope is not set in heaven, we end up setting our hope in this world, which will ultimately pass away. We begin to enjoy the riches of this world, satisfying ourselves with our every desire, boasting of our wealth and success. We would call ourselves blessed.

This is no blessing in the eyes of God.

But because we hold fast to the promise of the Lord, we choose to be poor in spirit. We long for the treasure in heaven. Nothing in this world can compare to the riches we gain in Christ.

Regarding 'seeing', John 9 says,

Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir, that I may believe in?" Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and it is he who is speaking to you." He said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him. Jesus said, "For judgment, I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind." Some of the Pharisees near him, "Are we also blind?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, 'We see,' your guilt remains.

John 9:35-41

The attitude of the Pharisees In John 9 is like that of the Laodicea church. They were not aware of their blindness. When Jesus pointed out their blindness to

them, they refused to be corrected. Their guilt remained because they said, "I can see".

But when we realize and confess our blindness to the Lord, saying, 'I cannot see', the Lord can deal with our inability to see. This confession stems from a poor and contrite spirit of our desire to see our Lord. This will lead to repentance, for we cannot perceive God without a pure heart.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Matthew 5:8

Our main purpose is to see God. To see Him, we must first listen to Him. Before we can see, we must first hear. The voice of the Lord directs us to the face of God.

Those who look to him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed.

Psalms 34:5

We must be clothed in light if we are to be free of shame. Gazing upon the face of God enables us to be clothed in light.

The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

Romans 13:12

Before the fall, Adam and Eve were not ashamed, because they looked upon the face of God every day.

It was only after they sinned against God, that they hid from His face. They heard the voice of the Lord, but they didn't turn to the face of God but turned away in shame. (Genesis 3:8-10)

They sought to deal with their shame by sewing clothing out of fig tree leaves.

Ever since the fall of man, it has been man's nature to hide behind a covering in order to deal with his or her shame. No religion, education, riches, or man-made endeavor can be used to cover up the shame rooted deep within.

Freedom from shame is only found when we turn back to our Lord. When we turn our faces toward God, he begins to work in us. He instills the Lord's discipline in our lives. He gives discipline to those whom he loves.

"I counsel you..." Jesus is our Wonderful Counselor! The counsel of the Lord comes from the throne of God. We can only learn the will of the Lord for our lives from the Cross, which can be revealed only by Jesus. When we receive counsel from the Lord, it is the time to repent and come into the counsel of His will.

In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will

Ephesians 1:11

His counsel leads us to the will of God. The counsel of God is revealed through the Wonderful Counsellor, our Lord Jesus Christ.

*For to us, a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called*

Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

***Of the increase of his government and of peace, there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord on hosts will do this.***

Isaiah 9:6-7

The will of God is expressed by His government. The kingdom is at hand! Repent! God's counsel comes through repentance. Jesus came as a child to this earth and on his shoulders, he carried the government of God, His kingdom. Christ, as the Wonderful Counselor, counseled the people when He came to earth as King. But the leaders of Israel rejected the counsel of God for themselves by refusing the baptism of John the Baptist which was the baptism of repentance.

But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him (John the Baptist).

Luke 7:30

When we receive the counsel of God, the government of God expands in our lives. That is why repentance, the turning point in my opinion to God's counsel, is the key to entering the kingdom of God. "Repent, the kingdom of God is at hand!"

Take the counsel of God and repent. And the increase of the government and of peace, there will be no end!

*Blessed is the man
who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners,
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;
but his delight is in the law of the Lord,
and on his law, he meditates day and night.
He is like a tree
planted by streams of water
that yields its fruit in its season,
and its leaf does not wither.
In all that he does, he prospers.
The wicked are not so,
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;
for the Lord knows the way of the righteous,
But the way of the wicked will perish.*

Psalms 1:1-6

The first man chose the counsel of the wicked and refused the counsel of God. Adam accepted the counsel of the old serpent; he stood in the way of sinners and sat in the seat of pride. By doing this, he was competing with God (to be like God). Satan has been trying to unite the whole world with his own counsel in order for the people of the world to choose the way of sinners. The man of lawlessness will eventually sit on the ultimate seat of the scoffers. This will be the throne of the antichrist.

Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.

2 Thessalonians 2:3,4

But the Lord invites us to the throne of the Lord to sit with him.

even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ - by grace, you have been saved - and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

Ephesians 2:5,6

When we repent and receive the counsel of God through our Wonderful Counsellor, Jesus Christ, we come out of death and into life. We are moved to the throne of Christ and are seated with Him.

The Wonderful Counsellor is counseling us so that we can receive the Counsel of God which resides from the throne of God.

How was our Lord Jesus Christ able to be our Wonderful Counsellor? By surrendering to the counsel of God. Gethsemane is the place where the absolute counsel of God, the will of God replaced the will of man in surrender to the counsel of God. "Not my will, but your will be done!"

In Eden, the counsel of the wicked was accepted by man, and in Gethsemane, the counsel of God prevailed and on the cross, the counsel of God was revealed.

What was the counsel of the Lord Jesus, the Wonderful Counsellor, to the Laodicea?

1. 'to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich'

The Lord says,

*"Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters;
and he who has no money,
come, buy and eat!*

*Come, **buy** wine and milk
without money and without price.*

*Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labor for that which does not satisfy?*

***Listen diligently to me**, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.*

*Incline your ear, and come to me;
hear, that your soul may live;
and I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.*

Isaiah 55:1-3

How can the poor buy gold? Only from the Lord, we can buy gold without money. How often have we wasted our time, money, and effort on useless things that do not benefit us at all?

It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

John 6:63

The Lord is saying 'listen diligently to me'! Yes, to buy gold from Jesus is to listen diligently to the Lord. The Word is the Spirit and the Counsel of God. Listening to the Word and the counsel of the Lord with an open ear and a listening heart will produce fruit with endurance. (Luke 8:15) This is the gold that we buy from Jesus.

'Gold refined by fire'. Gold that has not been tested by fire is not gold. It may appear to be gold, but it is not refined gold. It must be proven by fire.

In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith - more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire - may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

1Peter 1:6,7

The tested genuineness of our faith, which is more precious than gold only can be attained through Jesus who is the author of our faith. Faith will always be tested. When our faith is tested, refined by fire, it is proved precious.

By faith, we are saved. But Jesus says, "But the one who endures to the end will be saved." (Matthew 24:13) Who can endure to the end? The one who has faith can endure. Yes, only those who endure to the end will be saved. Who will endure? Those who have faith!

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full

effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

James 1:2-4

Gold which is refined by fire can be compared to 'the obedience learned by suffering and became perfect'. (Hebrews 5:8,9)

That's why Revelation 2:9 says,

"I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

Revelation 2:9

Through tribulation (fire) the Smyrna church became 'rich' by possessing refined gold.

2. 'to buy white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen'

Clothe yourselves with the light, not with the fig tree leaves. Fig tree leaves are not what Jesus required, but the fruit. Only through the blood of the Lamb, can we be clothed and covered from our shame. White garments are not hypocrisy but true obedience.

Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out,

"Hallelujah!

For the Lord our God

the almighty reigns.

Let us rejoice and exult

and give him the glory,

for the marriage of the Lamb has come,

and his Bride has made herself ready;

it was granted her to clothe herself

with fine linen, bright and pure"-

for the fine linen are the righteous deeds of the saints.

Revelation 19:5-8

3. 'to salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see'

"As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." Having said these things, he spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent),

So he went and washed and came back seeing,

John 9:6,7

Jesus, the light of the world, anointed the man's eyes with the mud made with His saliva, and the blind man was sent to the pool of Siloam, which means 'Sent'. The Man who was created with dust and the word (saliva of Jesus) which is from the mouth of God, must go to the 'Sent One', Christ, Shiloh (Genesis 49:10) The restoration is coming from the Sent One, the Christ, Shiloh!

When the blind man was anointed with the mud with the saliva of Jesus, he had to go to the pool of Siloam (Shiloh) and wash. When we listen to the word of conviction, stating we are blind, then we can come to our healer who is sent to us, our Lord Jesus, our Shiloh! But when we reject the word of Jesus that exposes our blindness, then we will stay blind, and not come to the Shiloh.

The light which came out of the face of Jesus Christ blinded Paul when he met the Lord on the way to Damascus.

.... and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

Revelation 1:16

At midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, that shone around me and those who journeyed with me.

Acts 26:13

The light from the sun enables us to see the things under the sun, but the light from heaven, brighter than the sun blinds our eyes from this world and opens the eyes of our hearts to enable us to see the spiritual realm.

having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,

Ephesians 1:18

"Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent." Jesus reprove and discipline those whom he loves!

And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons?

"My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son who he

receives." It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, then we may share his holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it

Hebrews 12:5-11

Understanding the love of God expressed by reproof and discipline is so crucial. If we don't receive the rebuke of the Lord and the correction of the Lord, we would fail to accept the counsel of God to us and finally reject it. Modern Christianity is so conditioned to not talk about rebuke and discipline, but instead, comfort and sweet words. Real love speaks rebuke and discipline.

Can we see the Love of God in these scriptures?

If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body goes into hell.

Matthew 5:29,30

"I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities and lack of bread in all your places, yet you did not return to me,"

declares the Lord

*"I also withheld the rain from you
when there were yet three months to the harvest;
I would send rain to one city,
and send no rain on another city;
one field would have rain,
and the field on which it did not rain would wither;
so two or three cities would wander to another city to drink water, and would not be satisfied;
yet you did not return to me,"*

declares the Lord,

"I struck you with blight and mildew;

*your many gardens and your vineyards,
your fig trees and your olive trees the locust devoured;
yet you did not return to me,"*

declares the Lord.

*"I sent among you a pestilence after the manner of Egypt;
I killed your young men with the sword,
and carried away your horses,
and I made the stench of your camp go up not your nostrils;
yet you did not return to me,"*

declares the Lord.

*"I overthrew some of you,
as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,
and you were as a brand plucked out of the burning;
yet you did not return to me,"*

declares the Lord.

Amos 4:6-11

The call for repentance is the voice of the God of love. Truthful love calls for the repentance of those whom He loves. The great desire of God of love who doesn't want to see those whom he loves goes to hell. Through his discipline, he calls those whom he loves to repent. False prophets claimed false peace and false comfort, but a true prophet of God pronounces the judgment of God and provokes the adulterous heart to be awake and repent!

Not with a calculating heart, but passionate and zealous, not distant and reserved, but engaging and vulnerable because you don't care how you look but want to be real.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into him and eat with him, and he with me."

He only comes in when we allow Him to come in. He never breaks the door. God's love, which even death cannot stop, can be stopped when we say no. When we don't open the door, his love can't come in. The counsel of God can be rejected by our rejection. Repentance has great power to allow his counsel to come into our life. When he came into the world 2,000 years ago, he was rejected by his own, but to those who accept him, he came in and gave them the right to be children of God. (John 1:11, 12)

The ones who open the door are the children of God. The sons of God are the ones who will open the door for our Lord Jesus Christ to come back.

For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.

Romans 8:19

The unveiling of the sons of God signifies that the church has reached the fullness of Christ!

to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the fullness of Christ.

Ephesians 4:12,13

The sons of God are the ones who will open the gate so that the King of Glory, our Lord Jesus Christ can come back to the earth. He will return as the righteous King who will rule over the earth for 1,000 years with his righteous ones!

*Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord?
And who shall stand in his holy place?
He who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.
He will receive blessing from the Lord
and righteousness from the God of his salvation.
Such is the generation of those who seek him,
who seek the face of the God of Jacob. Selah
Lift up your heads, O gates!
And be lifted up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.
Who is this King of glory?
The Lord, strong and mighty,
the Lord, mighty in battle!
Lift up your heads, O gates!
And lift them up, O ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.
Who is this King of glory?
The Lord of hosts,
he is the king of glory!*

Psalms 24:3-10

The ones who go up to the mountain of God, which is mountain Zion, are the sons of God whom the creation is waiting for. And when they appear on the mountain of the King of glory (Zion, the hill of the Lord), they will open the ancient gate! So the body of Christ to be in the fullness of Christ is the condition of the second coming of Jesus! The ones who hear the voice of the Lord will open the door and He will enter. Blessed the ones who walk not in the counsel of the wicked, but accept the counsel of the Lord and receive the Lord, by opening the ancient gate, so that the King of glory can enter in! Jesus has been knocking on the door for the last 2,000 years. And now is the time for the body of Christ, as sons of God, to be ready for the fullness of Christ to open the door.

And Jesus will come in and have a fellowship with the one who opens the door. He will eat with the one who opens the door and the one who opens the door with him. Union with the Lord. Fellowship with him.

Jesus Christ became the great Shepherd for the church through his suffering and the cross (Psalm 22 and 23) and He leads His flock beside still waters and restores our souls. He leads us in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. He leads us through the valley of the shadow of death with rebuke and correction (with his rod and staff) so that we may receive the counsel of God through repentance, and return to the Lord himself (Jeremiah 4:1). He eventually leads us to the table prepared by Him in the presence of our enemy ready to fight the good fight to crush Satan through our obedience. Through the perfect obedience (union) by joining in the fellowship of His suffering, we will be ready to sit together with the Lord Jesus and rule with Him. Jesus, being our example, was also perfected by learning obedience through suffering, and He ultimately conquered and sat beside the Father on his throne.

Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him,
Hebrews 5:8,9

And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am

baptized?"

Mark 10:37,38

When John and James came to Jesus with their mother, they asked Him to seat them next to Jesus, in His reign over the earth. (to be the highest cabinet members of Jesus in the Millennium reign of Jesus Christ). To this, Jesus replied, the condition of sitting together with Him is 'fellowship of his suffering'.

*Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. The saying is trustworthy, for:
If we have died with him, we will also live with him;
if we endure, we will also reign with him;
if we deny him, he also will deny us;*

2Timothy 2:10-12

The message to the Laodicea church is the message for the last day church before the second coming of Jesus. Jesus as the Wonderful Counsellor counsels us now so that we can open the door! And the King of Glory will come in! Let's listen and accept the counsel of the Lord by buying the refined gold of Jesus so that we can be rich like the Smyrna church who was rich through tribulation and fire, and by buying the white garments, true obedience without hypocrisy, and by confessing we are blind and go to the Sent one to open our spiritual eyes. Prepare the way of the Lord!!!

Chapter 4

To the throne of God - beginning of the counsel of His will

After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."

Revelation 4:1

The voice like trumpet, which is the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ came to John once again. The powerful voice, the sound of righteousness, the sound of power that comes to destroy the darkness. The sound brought order into chaos and darkness. "Let there be light!" The voice that came upon the Mount of Sinai and brought the law of the Lord to His nation, His portion. That voice spoke again to John, "Come up here!" And that voice was there to tell John what must take place! The prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ must take place. The prophecy will take place through our obedience, which becomes a faithful testimony of the faithful witness.

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished."

Matthew 5:17, 18

John was called before the throne, where the council of God's Will was proclaimed. God's will is declared and proclaimed from the throne of God.

Structure of the Throne of God

At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald. Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, and before the throne

there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal.

And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say,

*"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty,
who was and is and is to come!"*

And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

*"Worthy are you, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they existed and were created."*

Revelation 4:2-11

- 1 Throne of God - God is seated on the throne. Around the throne was a rainbow, burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, the Holy Spirit.
- 2 twenty-four thrones - 24 elders seated on each.
- 3 Around the throne, one on each side of the throne, - four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind. The first - like a lion, the second - like an ox, the third - like the face of a man, the third - like an eagle in flight. Each of them has six wings. Day and night they never cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!"
- 4 Before the throne, there was as if it were a sea of glass, like crystal.

We don't see Jesus Christ on the throne-like we saw in chapter 1. Jesus was introduced in Chapter 1 as a faithful witness. By breaking the seals on the scroll in Chapter 5, we will learn the reason. In chapter 4, we are provided with the background of God's Will being released on the earth by the breaking of the seals.

The Throne of God is where the will of God is decided and released through proclamation. Before creation, God established His throne. The decree of the

King is released from the throne of the King.

*In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to **the counsel of his will**,*

Ephesians 1:11

The will of the Lord is executed from the throne. The Lord summoned John to the throne of God to reveal how the will of God is to be released.

We need to understand that we are part of the counsel of His Will. God established the throne of God to release the counsel of His will, and the process of carrying it out involves the 'Elohim,' those who bear God's image, in the process of releasing God's will. The 'Elohim' are the ones who speak and who can carry out the word of God. The heavenly beings often carry the message of the Lord and appear to men as messengers of the Lord.

So God (Elohim) created man in his own image, in the image of God (Elohim) he created him; male and female he created them.

Genesis 1:27

God is known as the one who speaks. He spoke the whole world into existence. And as His image-bearers, we were created as beings who speak, speaking spirits.

It is evident that the Heavenly Beings are involved in releasing God's will. The 24 elders and the 4 living beings also play very important roles. Of course it is no question that the Holy Spirit as the 7 Spirits of God has very important role in carrying out the will of God on the earth. To be able to understand how the will of God is carried out from the throne to the earth, it is very important to understand the structure of the throne of God.

The Sea of glass mentioned in Revelations 4:6 is the floor of heaven and simultaneously, the ceiling of the universe created.

According to Ezekiel 1:22, Cherubim are under the sea of glass. The four living beings over the sea of glass in Revelation 4 are most likely Seraphim. (Ezekiel 1 and 10.) Ezekiel 28 calls Satan (Lucifer) the fallen Cherub. (Isaiah 6 describes the Seraphim and I believe that the four living beings in Revelation are the Seraphim.)

The Four Faces of the Seraphim and Cherubim (One Cherub has four faces, and one Seraph has one face each.)

The Lion - The King - Gospel of Matthew

The Ox - Servant (Priest) - Gospel of Mark

The Man - Apostle (The one who is sent - the begotten Son, Expression of God the Father, image-bearer of the Father) - Gospel of Luke

The Eagle - Prophet (Voice from the throne, perspective from the throne) - Gospel of John

In Isaiah 6, we can read about the Seraphim.

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said:

*"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
the whole earth is full of his glory!"*

Isaiah 6:1-3

Description of the Seraphim in Isaiah 6 is almost same with the 4 living beings in Revelation 4.

In both places, these heavenly beings (seraphim) praise triune God, with the overwhelming shout, "holy, holy, holy"! The true worship is coming from the revelation of God himself. When we get to know God through overwhelming revelations, we can worship and praise him with awe and joy! Because our God is so great, eternity is not enough to understand him. So that's why he is new every morning, even for the seraphim who worship him day and night. That worship, 'holy, holy, holy' is coming from the expansion of the understanding triune God in each moment.

In Isaiah 6, the seraphim worship the Lord who is holy, holy, holy and the whole earth is full of his glory! In the whole earth, in all *space* his glory is there!

And in Revelation 4, the seraphim, the 4 living beings praise the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come! In all *time* he is 'I AM'! He is in all time! There is no time when His being is not present! He is always I AM.

The 24 elders whose thrones were around the throne of God fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever!

When they worship they cast their crowns before the throne! With the understanding of who he is! He is the one who is to receive glory and honor and power, because all things are created by him and by his will which comes from the throne! The will of God which comes from the throne were proclaimed and according to his will everything was created and existed.

*In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to **the counsel of his will**, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.*

Ephesians 1:11,12

We are to play a very important role in this picture of the throne of God, because the counsel of His will which comes from the throne of God will be perfected through our obedience. We are called to be the praise of his glory! Through our obedience the counsel of His Will will be completed and that completion of His Will will reveal the glory of God!

Chapter 5

A scroll with seven seals - the will of God yet to be released from the throne of God

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 mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?"
Revelation 5:1

In the right hand of him who sat on the throne was a scroll with writing on the inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals(v1). The will of God which must take place on the earth.

At the beginning of chapter 4, the reason John was called up to the throne, was to show him what must take place.

The breaking of the 7 seals of this scroll is essential. Releasing the will of God on the earth requires the breaking of the 7 seals.

The will of God must take place on the earth. The seven seals of the scroll that is held by the hand of the one who is seated on the throne, must be broken.

But who is able to break the seals and open the scroll(v2)? Who can release the will of God on the earth? The Faithful witness is the only one who can release the will of God on the earth. The one who remains faithful unto death! Death itself cannot stop the faithful witness. The cross of Jesus is the key to breaking the seven seals of the scroll.

The throne of the Lord is where the righteous will of God is released. His justice is declared on his throne. His righteous verdict is declared on his throne.

*But the Lord sits enthroned forever:
he has established his throne for justice.
And he judges the world with righteousness;
he judges the people with uprightness.*

Psalms 9:7,8

The opening of the seals also signifies the release of God's verdict over the earth. When the seals are opened, all the seemingly meaningless sufferings

and injustice will attain overwhelming meaning and value with rewards and judgments. The revealing of the will of God and His vengeance will shut the mouth of all who question the goodness of God.

How can God's will, God's judgment, and God's verdict become our salvation? Only the cross of Jesus Christ offers the possibility of salvation in this judgment and the release of God's righteous will!

Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.

Steadfast love and faithfulness meet; righteousness and peace kiss each other.

Faithfulness springs up from the ground, and righteousness looks down from the sky.

Psalm 85:9-11

Without the cross, the revelation of the righteous will of God cannot become our salvation. Without the cross, the revelation of the righteous will of God will only be the wrath of God and the judgement of God! So the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ IS the mystery of God revealed.

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 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."

And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. And he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne.

Revelation 5:3-8

After being questioned by the angel, "who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?", John was not able to find anyone who can open the seal. He began to weep because he hungered and thirsted for righteousness. The longing for the righteous king to bring His justice to the earth is the legitimate desire of the righteous of the Lord who live by faith.

The desire to see the will of God be unfolded! That desire made John weep.

Only the One who has done God's will by obedience in his or her life can be found worthy of breaking the seals.

As John wept, one of the 24 elders said, "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."

1. Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David

*Judah, your brothers shall praise you;
your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies;
your father's sons shall bow down before you.
Judah is a lion's cub;
from the prey, my son, you have gone up.
He stooped down; he crouched as a lion and as a lioness; who dares rouse him?
The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,
until tribute comes to him; (until Shiloh comes,-Hebrew)
and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.*

Genesis 49:8-10

The promised one, Shiloh, which means 'the one who is sent, the true Apostle of God' is the one who will bring the righteousness of God to the earth. He is the one who was prophesied to crush the head of the serpent.

David as a descendant of Judah is the foreshadow of the messianic King whom the Jews were waiting for. That's why when the blind Bartimaeus heard that 'Jesus of Nazareth' was there, believing Jesus was the Messiah, he cried out to Jesus, 'Son of David' (Mark 10:47)! In this context, 'Son of David' refers to the Jewish Messiah.

In Matthew 16, right after Peter confessed Jesus as the Christ, Messiah, Jesus began to speak to his disciples regarding the suffering, death, and resurrection that He would have to go through, Peter began to rebuke him. He was standing against the cross! The expectation that Peter and the disciples had of the Messiah was a righteous King who would defeat the unrighteousness of the earth and rule over the earth with righteousness. This was no wrong expectation; yet, before He could come as a King, He had to first come as the Lamb of God.

The Lion of Judah represents the victory of God, but the Lamb of God represents the way of that victory. And that victory is to be expressed by the

church of Christ. (Matthew 16, Matthew 18)

2. A Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Sprits of God sent forth into all the earth.

The scroll with seven seals can only be opened by 'human' since the authority of the earth was given to man.

The heavens are the Lord's heavens, but the earth he has given to the children of man.

Psalms 115:16

That authority was given right after the creation of man. The authority that God gave to man was intended to be an extension of God's righteous reign on earth. When man obeys God, the righteous reign of God is supposed to be extended to the whole world. God gave us the authority as men (humans) to rule with Him over the earth.

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Genesis 1:26-28

*When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,
what is man that you are mindful of him,
and the son of man that you care for him?*

*Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings
and crowned him with glory and honor.*

*You have gave him dominion over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field,*

the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the

seas.

Psalm 8:3-8

But when man 'listened' to the old serpent in the garden, rather than to God, the reign of the serpent began to extend on the earth through men's disobedience. As long as men listen and do the will of the serpent, the reign of the serpent would be released on the earth. The authority of the earth was given to the serpent by men since the authority was given to men in the first place. This was how the serpent was able to trick man into handing over the authority. It was not God who gave this authority to the serpent, but it was man, to whom God gave the authority. That's why the serpent is also known as 'the prince of the power of the air'(Ephesians 2:2). He claimed to have the authority and the glory of the world when he confronted Jesus in the wilderness (Luke 4:6). The claim of the serpent was not a total lie. The authority was passed to the snake as a result of men's disobedience to God, which signifies submission to the will of the serpent. Since then, the will of Satan has been represented by the will of men. As a result, the unrighteous reign has caused suffering to all of creation. Romans speaks about this issue in Chapter 8,

For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

Romans 8:19-21

We, humans, are intended to be the sons of God and represent the reign of God on the earth. That is only possible by obedience. Obedience is the witness and testimony of God.

Even though Jesus was the Son, He was perfected by learning obedience, and thus became the author of Salvation (Hebrews 5:8-9). By the disobedience of the first Adam, we lost the authority over the earth, but by the obedience of the second Adam, he took back authority of heaven and on the earth (Matthew 28:18-20).

Jesus taught the Prayer in Matthew 6,

Pray then like this:

"Our Father in heaven,

*hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven. ..."*

Matthew 6:9,10

"Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.." God's will is already done in heaven because the heavens belong to God. His will is not done on the earth yet, because the earth belongs to man: man gave this authority to the serpent. That's why the Lord's prayer says 'your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.' When my will becomes His will, His will is done on the earth. But my will is occupied by the old serpent: the will of the serpent is represented by 'the will of man'. So in order to witness the will of God, 'my will' has to be denied. That's why Jesus taught us to follow Him by denying ourselves. The ultimate battleground between 'my will' and 'his will' was in Gethsemane. "Not my will but your will be done", Jesus prayed and the ultimate expression and testimony of that obedience were the Cross! The Cross is the place where 'I' that represented the 'will of satan' died so that the will of God can be done.

When Peter tried to defend Jesus from the cross, he became a representative for Satan, not Jesus. He was representing the will of man, not the will of God. (Matthew 16:21-23)

The Lamb of God, who went to the cross and was slain, was the only one who was able to take back the authority of the earth through obedience by His death.

The will of God is able to be released by the Lamb who obeyed until the end. He is worthy of breaking the seals on the scroll.

When God created the earth, he didn't put all the earth under His authority from the beginning. He created man according to His image and He let man conquer the earth. Through the rule of man, the reign of God was intended to spread to the end of the earth (Genesis 1:26-28). He blessed man, and commanded them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and *subdue* it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." That is why all creation is waiting for the fullness of the Sonship (Romans 8).

In order for God to conquer the earth with His righteous rule, He needed an opening to earth. There should be a place where God's rule is enforced. For

the seed of His reign, His word had to find a place to dwell in. The good soil is where the word of God is accepted: where His law and His word are obeyed; a place where the law of God and the word of God is established. Jesus came to the earth and became that opening, being the perfect representation of God himself through perfect obedience. He became the good soil that received God's word as absolute! (Matthew 13:8) By Jesus' total obedience, God was able to enforce His Word to the land! Jesus himself was the kingdom of God. All the word of God was accomplished in his life.

Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, "The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you."

Luke 17:20, 21

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished."

Matthew 5:17, 18

Jesus became the good soil that was under complete obedience to the word of God. The fruit is a perfect representation of the seed.

The perfect representation of the kingdom of God was Jesus, the Lamb of God who went to the cross, loyal until death, demonstrating perfect obedience. Only through the submission of the Lord Jesus, the Lamb who was slain was God able to express the full meaning of His total dominion on earth. The reign of the Lion of Judah, the righteous king, could only be accomplished through the sacrifice of the Lamb in obedience to God.

In order to conquer with the reign of God as the Lion of Judah, Jesus had to be conquered by the reign of God as the Lamb who was slain first.

Into the chaos and darkness, he spoke the light to invade the darkness and chaos which was not under his rule. The light represents the reign of the righteous king, the reign of God. Through the obedience of Jesus, the light came into the world. Jesus became the light of the world and he called us as the light of the world.

In order for Jesus Christ to be the Lion of Judah for us, he had to be the Lamb who was slain. And the Lamb was with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. The Lamb was led by the perfect Spirit of God, not by might, not by strength, but by whom the will of God only can be released on the earth as the seven spirits of God. (Zechariah 4:6)

Then he said to me, "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts. Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain. And he shall bring forward the top stone amid shouts of 'Grace, grace to it!'"

Zechariah 4:6,7

The scroll which has 7 seals left the throne of God to the Lamb who was slain and stood among the 24 elders. According to the divine order, the will of God is being released. That divine order was established by the Lord and enforced throughout the universe. The divine order was established on the throne of God.

A harp and golden bowls full of incense

And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

Revelation 5:8

The four living creatures and the twenty-four elders each hold a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. In Chapter 4, the four living creatures and the 24 elders worship God who sits on His throne.

A harp has to be presented to the Lord. True worship is the key for breaking the seal!

But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

Revelation of God leads to true worship. Without the revelation of God, we cannot give true worship to the Lord. If we don't know him, how we can praise him and worship him! According to the overwhelming revelation of God, worship can be brought! To know how wonderful is our God is the foundation of our worship! Proclaim this truth, "Our God is worthy, worthier than my life!" That is the worship! Worship is to proclaim, "You are worthy, even worthier than my life!" Only with this worship, caused by the revelation and the truth of God, "Our God is worthier than our lives", we can be faithful unto death. Only these faithful witnesses are the ones who will not receive the mark of the beast. The ones who want to survive, who love their lives more than the Lord, will receive the mark of the beast. Worship and trade have a similarity. Both proclaim 'the worth'! That is why satan will use the financial means of selling and buying, the mark of the beast, to bring the worship of the people on the earth to himself.

That is why without the true worship, the seals cannot be broken! Because the breaking of the seals will reveal the heart of the people on the earth. If we are not ready with the true worship, we cannot resist the great rebellion of the earth against the Lord. The deception only can be exposed and overcome by being faithful unto death. Only the Cross can expose the great deception which lead the people of the earth to the great rebellion.

Worship from the 4 living creatures:

*"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty,
Who was and is and is to come!"*

Revelation 4:8b

Worship from the 24 elders casting their crowns before the throne:

*"Worthy are you, our Lord and God,
To receive glory and honor and power,
For you created all things,
And by your will they existed and were created."*

Revelation 4:11

Our God is the beginning and the end. Nothing happens without His

knowledge. And nothing can stand in the way of His will. The 24 elders declare His will to be prevalent. This worship is addressed to our Heavenly Father in Chapter 4.

However, in Chapter 5, the worship is directed to our Lord Jesus Christ, the slain Lamb, who stands amid the 24 elders. By his obedience, Jesus released the will of God on earth. The power of the Cross testifies to the prevalence of God's will on earth.

*And they sang a new song, saying,
"Worthy are you to take the scroll
and to open its seals,
for you were slain, and by your blood
your ransomed people for God
from every tribe and language and
people and nation,
and you have made them a kingdom
and priests to our God,
and they shall reign on the earth."*

Revelation 5:9,10

What makes this a new song?

This song sings of the new things that will be released on the earth in accordance to the will of God. Great and wonderful is the work of the Lord. His salvation is new. No eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined. (1 Corinthians 2:9) These new things were in fact designed by God from the beginning of the creation of man. Just as man was created in the image of God in order to represent God himself, which was the original purpose of man, the Son of Man is the representation of God on earth, which he created. No one can see God, yet God intended to show and witness his reign on earth through the Son of Man. Releasing the will of God is only possible when the government of God is established in the world.

Jesus, the Lamb who was slain, is the only one who can break the seals. He is worthy of praise! And by His blood, He ransomed us from every tribe, language, people, and country for God, and He has made us a kingdom and priests to our God, so that mankind may rule on the world. By His death and blood, Jesus, the Lamb of God, invited men to partake in releasing the will of God by becoming the government of God! Through the Cross of Jesus, the Lamb who was slain, the long-awaited advent of the sons of God, the perfect

embodiment of God on earth, has now become a reality. Hallelujah!

That is why each of the 24 elders and the four living creatures comes with a harp and a golden bowl containing the prayers of the saints on Earth. The prayers of the saints are given to the Lamb, and the breaking of the seals begins.

The incense is the prayer of the saints. Jesus taught the prayer, "Your kingdom come. Your will be done on the earth as it is in heaven!" (Matthew 6:10). And Jesus set the example in Gethsemane, saying, "Not my will, but yours, be done." 22:42 (Luke)

If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruits and so prove to be my disciples.

John 15:7,8

When I abide in him, unite with him, and allow his words to seep into me(his words in me), his desire becomes my desire, and the Lord's prayer becomes the manifestation of God's purpose on earth. The fruit of this prayer is obedience to the word of God. When his will becomes my desire, this prayer comes naturally, "your will be done on the earth, not my will!" And the answer to this prayer is the will of God shown on earth as obedience.

In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 5:7-10

What was the prayer of Jesus on Gethsemane? 'Not my will, but yours, be done.'

And this prayer was answered by His obedience on the cross. The Cross was the answer to this prayer. The will of God is released on the earth through obedience. This only can be done through the prayers in the Garden of Gethsemane. It requires much incense!

This is the will of God.

*Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders
the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands,
saying with a loud voice,*

*“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain,
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might
and honor and glory and blessing!”*

*And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea,
and all that is in them, saying,*

*“To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb
be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!”*

And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped.

Revelation 5:11-14

Overwhelmed by the revelation expressed by the new song sung by 24 elders and 4 living creatures (seraphim), innumerable angels surrounded the throne. The 24 elders and 4 living creatures began to praise with a loud voice. Because of His complete obedience expressing absolute government of God that overcame even the death, the Lamb who was slain is worthy to receive power, wealth, wisdom, might, honor, glory and blessing to expand the kingdom of God, the government of God to the whole universe as the righteous and loving King with his co-heirs who were ransomed by His blood and became a kingdom and priests to our God. Oh, how wonderful to see the righteous government of God growing and bringing freedom and righteousness to the universe, to the darkness ready to be conquered! And we will sing the song of freedom into the glorious reign of the Lord.

*But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought
into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he
has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the
nations.*

*The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shone.*

*You have multiplied the nation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you*

*as with joy at the harvest,
 as they are glad when they divide the spoil.
 For the yoke of his burden,
 and the staff for his shoulder,
 the rod of his oppressor,
 you have broken as on the day of Midian.
 For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult
 and every garment rolled in blood
 will be burned as fuel for the fire.
 For to us a child is born,
 to us a son is given;
 and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
 and his name shall be called
 Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
 Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
**Of the increase of his government and of peace
 there will be no end,**
 on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
 to establish it and to uphold it
 with justice and with righteousness
 from this time forth and forevermore.
 The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.*

Isaiah 9:1-7

And the praise expands to every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea! Rightly they praise unto Him who sits on the throne in absolute power and love whose will is so awesome and glorious, which is declared on the throne to be released, and praise unto the Lamb who actually revealed the Father God through the absolute obedience on the Cross, otherwise no one can see the Father God.
 In response, 4 living creatures said, "Amen" and the 24 elders fell down and worshiped!

Chapter 6

Divine Order

The first 4 seals, broken by the Lamb, are spoken by the Seraphim (4 living creatures around the throne of God), with a voice like thunder.

As the Lamb breaks the seals among the 24 elders, 4 seraphim appear in the outer rings and say, "Come!".

The voice of the seraphim calls for each rider to come forth. The sound of authority must be released in accordance with the divine order. According to the divine order, there was no way to open the seal of scrolls if the Lamb had not been slain. It is only by the Lamb that the scroll can be opened. The delegation from the throne of God is first given to the twenty-four elders. As mirrored in the description of the throne room in Revelations, this delegation continues to the outer ring of the seraphim.

Jesus, the Lamb who was slain, is the only one who can break the seals. For this to take place, the 4 living creatures (the Seraphim) and the 24 elders all have to stand before the Lamb; each must carry a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. Worship with the new song and the prayer of the church is required to activate the opening of the seals. The church of Christ plays a very important role in the opening of the scrolls. The authority of the church on the earth has an impact on the heavenly realm.

Great Rebellion

The first 4 seals are 'permissions' for the evil beings to be released. "Come!" Without the permission of the Lord, evil cannot be released to the earth. When we are ready, this 'great rebellion(2 Thessalonians 2:3)' will be released. Witnessing the seals being broken is not bad news; it is good news. Psalm 2 describes a great rebellion against God.

*Why do the nations rage
and the people plot in vain?
The kings of the earth set themselves,
and the rulers take counsel together,
against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying,
"Let us burst their bonds apart
and cast away their cords from us."*

Psalm 2:1-3

This project was already tried with the tower of Babel(Genesis 11). Under the leadership of Nimrod, the whole world was united to rebel against God. By the grace of God, this plan was disrupted by confusing the languages. As a result, the people were divided. But the evil plan and the mystery of lawlessness didn't cease. However, will not be permitted to appear fully with its full intention until the appointed time. Only when the seal is broken will one of the seraphim call, 'Come!' and its power will be unleashed step by step.

First seal.

And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

White horse and its rider who had a bow and a crown which was given to him. And he came out conquering, and to conquer.

Revelation 6:1,2

This white horse and its rider came out conquering and to conquer without violence. It appears to be a political power aiming to impose its 'peaceful and uniting' influence upon the world.

Under the power of the mouth of the dragon, the world will be united. The dragon, the old serpent, is the accuser of the brethren. The mouth of the dragon will produce lies and false accusations against the brethren. And with his cunning tongue, the dragon will unite the world, bringing it under his power. As Nimrod was able to unite the entire world with his deception (which could be expressed in the modern world as 'propaganda' with one

language, but was unable to complete due to God's intervention), the antichrist will unite the entire world with his cunning tongue, which has the power of the dragon's mouth. And this time God will not stop their project if the church is prepared to face this dark power.

*May the Lord cut off all flattering lips,
the tongue that makes great boasts,
those who say, "with our tongue we will prevail,
our lips are with us; who is master over us?"*

Psalms 12:3,4

When Jesus was asked by his disciples regarding 'the sign of coming of Jesus and of the end of the age', Jesus answered,

"See that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray."

Matthew 24:4

The revealing of the man of lawlessness, the antichrist, is yet to come. Upon breaking the first seal, I predict that the antichrist will not be revealed, instead, preparations for his appearance will be made. The Antichrist will come in the name of Christ, deceiving many with a lying tongue. The whole world will unite under the power of the mouth of the dragon. This uniting power and its propaganda will appear as a glorious triumph of human achievement and salvation from the world issue. Many will fall for this great deception.

Many messianic claims (solutions) will be provided by this evil leader, (or this evil system) offering salvation and providing an escape route to all world problems. And the people of the world will subtly be forced to follow and give their solidarity to these "solutions".

Second seal.

And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

Revelation 6:3,4

Bright red horse: Its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth so that people should slay one another, and he was given a great sword.

Lying lips and propaganda will not be the last mean which will unite the whole world. The next step of the process will be domestic and international conflict. 'Peaceful' unity will be replaced by the way of 'violence,' ushering in the next phase of rebellion.

In Matthew 24, Jesus continually says,

"And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom,..."

Matthew 24:6,7

The evil power released by the breaking of the second seal will show more bluntly the mystery of lawlessness that has been at work. It will come forth in accordance with the voice of a seraph "Come".

After the manipulation and deception of this evil power, military power will be used for the next step in this evil plan of rebellion against God.

Third seal.

And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

Revelation 6:5,6

A black horse: Its rider had a pair of scales in his hand. A voice in the midst of the four living creatures, said, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not harm the oil and wine!"

As a result of the war and violence, the overall economic situation throughout the world would deteriorate. The cost of wheat and barley will be 8 to 10 times more expensive. Olive oil and wine, both considered luxury items, would be unaffected. Essential items will become extremely costly, while futile (luxurious) items will remain unaffected.

A typical characteristic of inflation. It would not be possible to fix the situation without resetting the economic system. The rider on the black horse holding a pair of scales can signify a controlled economy. An example of such control being 'government distribution of ratio' to the people. When individuals have no ability to buy their necessities, the government has to 'step in' to solve the problem.

Forth seal.

And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

Revelation 6:7,8

A pale horse: its rider's name was Death, and Hades followed him. And they were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth.

This progress of this evil plan is intentional, not random nor coincidental. And this intention is not from God our Lord, but is from the evil one who was allowed by the voice of the seraphim 'come'. In this 4th seal also, the killing of one-fourth of the earth with sword, famine, pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth was intended and planned by 'Death', which in greek is 'Thanatos'. It is not easy for many to accept the fact that there are some entities who plan these kinds of disasters with sinister intentions. All the brokenness on this earth are the result of unrighteousness and lawlessness. 'Sin' is the work of Satan, the evil one. Disobedience is the beginning of disorder and chaos. Adam and Eve's disobedience was the start of all the misery on the earth. Whether light or darkness, behind them both, there are intentions. If this were not the case, there would be no one to hold accountable. And there would be no forgiveness. Forgiveness is the power of destroying the power of sin. Jesus came to demolish 'Sin' by destroying the work of Satan. In order to destroy the work of satan fully, the work of Satan must be exposed in its fullness.

The 1st seal to the 4th seal will happen as 'events caused or planned by men'. Conspiracy from the kings and leaders of the world who are manipulated by

Satan and fallen spiritual entities, referred to, by Apostle Paul in Ephesians 6:12, as "the rulers, the authorities, the powers over this present darkness, the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places."

Satan and his spiritual forces require human vessels on Earth, as does God, who requires human vessels on Earth to carry out His will. There will be a clear distinction between the two vessels: those who choose to live in rebellion as vessels of Satan and those who carry out obedience as vessels of God.

These two will confront each other. The first four seals (Seals 1–4) represent the rebellion of the evil ones, the human vessels, and their intentions, which were permitted by the voice of the seraphim to 'come' to the earth. The fifth seal is the response of the 'obedience of the saints' to the rebellion of the evil ones.

Obedience - faithful witness (Response to the great rebellion)

Fifth seal.

And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

Revelation 6:9-11

From the 1st seal to the 4th seal, there were voices of the living creatures which stood outside of the 24 elders' throne. And the 4 living creatures that speak 'come', are seraphim. The scroll with the seven seals that was on the throne came to the Lamb, who broke the seals, and the seraphim's voice unleashed the four riders. However, there is no living creature (seraph) that speaks to release God's will in this fifth seal. Whose voice unleashes the 5th seal? The voice of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. The voice that releases the will of God is now the voice of the ones who are faithful to the Lord until death. God intended for our obedience, even to the point of death, to be a voice in releasing the will of God in the fifth seal. Blood speaks. The Scripture says, the blood of Abel spoke first. And the blood of Jesus is still speaking powerfully.

By faith, Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks.

Hebrews 11:4

and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

Hebrews 12:24

Abel's blood spoke and testified. By faith, Abel was able to speak the powerful truth. But the death of Jesus, the cross of Jesus Christ is much more powerful. Jesus Christ is the faithful witness unto death.

And now in this 5th seal, the blood of those who were faithful to death in response to the conspiracy of the evil one, represented by the 4 seals, speaks and testifies.

Abel's blood spoke 'righteousness' against the sin of Cain. The blood of Jesus Christ spoke 'righteousness' against the rebellion of Israel. And the blood of the faithful ones will speak 'righteousness' against the global 'rebellion' against God before the return of Jesus. The sound the 5th seal releases holds great significance. The voices of 'elohim' are involved in releasing the will of God coming from the throne of God in divine order. The voice 'come' spoken by the 4 seraphim is also the voice of authority of the divine order.

But the sound of the 5th seal is the cry coming from the blood of the faithful witnesses. They, who were made a little lower than 'elohim,' were elevated up to the place of authority by their obedience, and they have a far greater influence on a cosmic level. This sound releases the next step of the will of God according to the divine order. In fact, the reason the first 4 seals are broken and the 4 riders are allowed to come and reveal the full measure of the evil plan, is because the sons of God have prepared themselves to stand against the evil one. The evil ones are released because the people of God are ready to fight. When the measure of the maturity of the body of Christ reaches to the fullness of Jesus Christ, the evil will be unleashed in order for the church to stand against it.

So when we see the opening of the first 4 seals, we have to understand that this is the time to prepare the body of Christ to be matured to the fullness of Christ. This prophecy of Jesus Christ written in Revelation is not just described events which will happen, but this is the commandment of God's battle plan for the church.

Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint but blessed is he who keeps the law.

Proverbs 29:18

We really need to understand the significance of the 5th seal, the voice of the martyr, which can release the brilliant will of God on the earth. And we have time to prepare ourselves as the body of Christ when we see the signs of the last days as it begins to unfold.

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds, and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain 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 the deceitful scheme. 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.

Ephesians 4:11-16

The fullness of Christ means that the body becomes the perfect representation of Jesus Christ. When the body of Christ becomes the faithful witness of Jesus Christ, the fullness of Christ is manifested.

Although he was a son, he learned obedience through that he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 5:8-10

To be perfect, Jesus had to learn obedience. The completeness of Christ comes from the obedience learned through suffering as was portrayed in the life of Jesus Christ. In order for the body of Christ to reach the fullness of Christ, the church also needs to be ready to go through the suffering of Jesus as Paul mentioned in his letters.

that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and may share his sufferings,

becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Philippians 3:10,11

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh, I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. To them, God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

Colossians 1:24-29

Suffering and tribulation caused by the great rebellion against God from the first to the fourth seal will be utilised to teach the church obedience in order for them to reach to the fullness of Christ. Before breaking the 7 seals, the evil plan was hidden and restricted, but breaking the seals will expose and complete the plan of evil.

But according to Ephesians 4:11-16, in order for the body to mature, we need apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds and teachers. In Colossians 1:24-29 Paul also says that he became a minister according to the stewardship from God, proclaiming Christ, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that everyone can be presented mature in Christ!

God planned to mature the body of Christ through the five fold ministries, which are the gifts of Jesus Christ which were given when Jesus ascended to heaven and the true stewardship of God for the church. It is not the gift of the Holy Spirit that matures the church, rather the gift of Jesus Christ who ascended to heaven. And these stewards of the Lord will represent Christ himself through apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds and teachers. The restoration of stewardship in the church will take place, not as institutional and professional leadership, but as messengers of God as the seven stars in the right hand of Jesus. This is critical for the body to be ready to wage this battle so that we might be the sound unleashed in the fifth seal.

"Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his

household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. But if that wicked servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed,' and begins to beat his fellow servants and eats and drinks with drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know and will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites. In that place there will be seeking and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 24:45-51

The faithful and wise servant is the leader who equips the body of Christ to reach to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-16), proclaiming Jesus Christ, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom urging everyone to mature in Christ (Colossians 1:24-29). He knows when to give their food at the proper time. Blessed is that servant whom Jesus will find so doing when he comes back. We need that kind of leadership as we see the return of Jesus drawing nearer. The restoration of that kind of leadership and stewardship is the necessity for the coming of the Lord. The fullness of Christ, the perfect representation and the witness of Jesus Christ is the condition of the second coming of Jesus.

However, the wicked servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed.' This kind of wicked leadership doesn't believe the imminency of the second coming of Jesus. They don't teach urgent preparation of the church for the second coming of Jesus. And the wicked servant will begin to beat 'his fellow servants'. According to the word of Jesus, the leadership that doesn't believe the imminent coming of Jesus will persecute the leadership who believes. And the evil leadership in the church will eat and drink with drunkards. In other words, they will compromise with the prostitute Babylon.

Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who is seated on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth have committed sexual immorality, and with the wine of whose sexual immorality the dwellers on earth have become drunk."

Revelation 17:1,2

According to 2 Peter 3:3,4, scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires and will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation." So the reason for the denial of second

coming of Jesus is because of their own sinful desires!
Jesus said, that the wicked servants will be judged and be put with the hypocrites.

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean."

Matthew 23:25,26

Hypocrites, they are full of greed and self-indulgence on the inside. They will accept the Babylonian system to their church system, because of their greed. This will, of course, be disguised with a spiritual outfit.

When Jesus came to Israel two thousand years ago, the existing leadership of Israel at that time was also unable to accept the Messiah. They looked spiritual on the outside, but inside were full of death and decay. They claimed that they were the ones who prepared the way of the Messiah, but in the end they killed the Messiah.

In order to see the powerful voice of the authority in the 5th seal, we need to see the body of Christ reach to the fullness of Christ. For this to happen, the restoration of the apostolic leadership and stewardship is required. Even so, there will be wicked servants who will remain in God's house, posing as apostles and calling themselves "servants of God," but they will persecute the true servants of God.

But the question is whether true leadership, which will assist the body in maturing to the fullness of Christ, will be restored.

True stewardship does not depend on how much of the gift of Holy Spirit is in operation. In these latter days, true stewardship requires the perfect representation of Jesus Christ. This is a result of the gift of Jesus Christ given to the church when He ascended to the heavens. (Ephesians 4:7-18)

The seven stars in the right hand of Jesus Christ are the messengers of Jesus sent to the churches. I believe they are the apostolic stewardship given to the church to help the church to reach the fullness of Christ.

As previously mentioned, this prophecy of Jesus Christ is not only a description of coming events, but also a battle strategy given by God for the church that must be carried out.

The obedience learnt through suffering is the voice of the faithful ones who died for the word of God and for the testimony they carried.

The voice of the ones who obeyed has the power to destroy the Jericho wall.

The voice of this 5th seal has the power to shift to the next events according to the cosmic order.

Now is the time to prepare and pray for the restoration of the apostolic leadership who can help the church to mature to the fullness of Christ.

Few years ago (in 2017) I was in Pakistan waiting to get on stage in one of my friend's church to preach. While I was praying I felt the Lord saying to me, "Why are you here? Are you here because you were invited or are you here because I sent you here? If you are here because you were invited by these people, you will speak what they want to hear, but if you are here because I sent you here, you will speak what I want you to say. Remember! You are here not because you were invited, but because you were sent."

Apostles are not invited, but they are sent by our Lord. I felt the Lord speaking to me that day. "I will restore the apostolic ministry. There are a lack of apostles now, but I will send more apostles. The time is coming!"

Our Lord Jesus Christ was also 'sent' by God. He was not invited, as was shown by the time of His birth, where there were no room for Him to be born. He was eventually killed. He was the Lamb of God who was sent to us. And Jesus sends us as lambs again to the world. We are not invited, but sent. The literal meaning of 'apostle' is 'the ones who are sent'. This coming apostolic leadership will carry the scar of the cross. They are the ones who understand 'the fellowship of his suffering'.

The leadership who are in hypocrisy will be exposed. They will compromise and lead many to deception. Main stream Christianity will follow this hypocrisy and they will begin persecuting the real church.

The true restoration of the five fold ministry will begin shortly with persecution and suffering, preparing the martyrs' voices to shake the universe with authority.

They cried out with a loud voice, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.

These brothers, fellow servants, whose voice was released in 5th seal are each given a white robe, and it appears that they are the forerunners of the witnesses who will come afterwards.

‘until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.’ There will be one more group of people whose number will be added to completion of the martyrdom. That one last wave of sacrifice will complete the testimony on the earth. To the voice of the blood the Lord will come back with revenge and vindication. That last group of the remnant will cause the Lord to come back! They are the witnesses who will represent the fullness of Christ in the last three and a half years. We will talk more about the remnant of God in the coming chapters.

The voice of the faithful witnesses, crying out for righteous vindication, has legitimate power to evoke a response from God as a holy and true judge.

And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?”

Luke 18:7,8

The prayer of the righteous. The prayer of those who are thirsty for righteousness. His righteous lives by faith.

Preview of the Wrath of the Lamb

Sixth seal.

And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and

hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

Revelation 6:12-17

I believe the sixth seal is the Lord's response to the 5th seal. The 1st to 4th seals grant the evil plans and schemes of the enemy to arise. The intentional and sinister plans of the 4 riders are manifested on the earth. The 5th seal is the response of the obedience of the saints. Their obedience is proven by their suffering caused by the evil plans manifested in the former seals. The sixth seal is the response of the Sovereign Lord, holy and true. The preview of the wrath of the Lamb. Great earthquakes, the black sun, the blood moon, stars falling to the earth, the sky rolling up, and the destruction of every mountain and island. These kinds of disasters cannot be planned or engineered by the evil power of man nor spiritual entity; only the Sovereign Lord, holy and real, only he can do it!

The disasters in Revelation are not meant to destroy the church, but to destroy the adversary, just as the disasters in Exodus were meant to destroy Egypt and Pharaoh, Israel's enemy.

No one, not even kings, mighty ones, generals, the technologically advanced, or the powerful, can hide from the face of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.

*Therefore hear the word of the Lord, you scoffers, who rule this people in Jerusalem! Because you have said, "We have **made a covenant with death, and with Sheol** we have an agreement, when the overwhelming whip passes through it will not come to us, for we have made lies our refuge, and in falsehood we have taken shelter"; therefore thus says the Lord God, "Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation: Whoever believes will not be in haste." And I will make justice the line, and righteousness the plumb line; and hail will sweep away the refuge of lies, and waters will overwhelm the shelter." Then your covenant with death will be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol will not stand; when overwhelming scourge passes through, you will be beaten down by it.*

Isaiah 28:14-18

In this passage, Prophet Isaiah warns the leaders of Jerusalem who rejoiced over their alliance with Egypt for protection from Assyria. But when Isaiah talks about the alliance with Egypt, he expressed this alliance as 'a covenant with death, and with Sheol'. The word 'Sheol' can be translated in Greek as

'Hades'. Death and Hades are released in 4th seal. Who are they who make covenants with death and Hades (Sheol)? These people are referred to as 'scoffers' in Isaiah 28:14, who are the leaders of Jerusalem. Let's look at Psalm 1:1.

*Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of **scoffers**;*

Psalm 1:1

Scoffers are those who walk in the counsel of the wicked, making covenants with the wicked and follows the way of sinners. They ultimately seek the seat of power, exalting themselves above all others, and mock others in pride and self-confidence (2 Thessalonians 2:4). It begins with accepting the counsel of the wicked and rejecting the counsel of God.

But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptised of him(John the Baptist).

Luke 7:30 kjv

The leaders of Jerusalem during the time of Jesus took heed to the counsel of the wicked, rejecting the counsel of God, and in doing so, killed our Messiah. They failed to accept the message of repentance from John the Baptist. For having refused to repent and return to the Lord, who is the Truth, they were given over to delusion and deception. They were given the counsel of the wicked.

*The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they **refused to love the truth** and so be saved. Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12

Who are they who make covenants with Hades and Death?

They are those who reject the counsel of God, rejecting Jesus as the one and only Savior and Christ. Instead, they are deceived into accepting the counsel of the wicked: the false promise of the world, the wine of Babylon, the protection of Egypt. They will accept the antichrist as the savior to all the

problems of this world.

And Jesus answered them, "See that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray.

Matthew 24:4,5

In the same way that the leaders of Jerusalem established an alliance with death and Sheol (Hades), the leaders of this world will make an alliance with Death and Hades in these last days. In the eyes of man, this would appear as the perfect solution.

The Lord says regarding the ones who make alliance with Death and Hades in Revelation 6:15-17

Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, calling to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"

Revelation 6:15-17

Who can stand in the way of the wrath of the Lamb? The vengeance of the Lamb will be unleashed on that day. No one can hide from his wrath. Nothing will save them from the wrath of the Lamb.

Who can stand in the way of the Lamb's wrath?

Only those who are 'sealed' with the seal of the living God!

Chapter 7

In chapter 7, there are two groups of people are introduced. And they are so important for releasing of the will of God, which was revealed by the prophecy of Jesus Christ.

The ones who can stand before the wrath of the Lamb - the 144,000 of Israel Sealed

Through the fifth seal, the obedience of the saints, the blood of the martyrs, being faithful unto death, cried out to God for vindication. "How long?" And the answer was "until the number of your fellow servants and your brothers should be complete, who are to be killed as you yourselves had been.". The time of prophecy is determined by the obedience of the faithful witnesses. A certain number of fellow servants and the brothers of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne (Revelation 6:9) shall be killed, and only then will the vengeance of the Lord come upon the earth.

When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. They cried out with a loud voice, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.

Revelation 6:9-11

These fellow servants and the brothers of the fifth seal martyrs who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne signifies the 'revealing of the sons of God for which the creation waits with eager longing.' This is the completion of the representation of the fullness of Christ.

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing

with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.

Romans 8:18,19

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

Romans 8:28,29

I believe the sealing of the 144,000 faithful witnesses is part of the process of revealing the sons of God. The revealing of the sons of God will be prepared by the 144,000 sealed with the seal of the living God. They will be the faithful witnesses who will embrace the fellowship of the Lord's suffering and be faithful unto death.

The whole process of the prophecy of Jesus will be led to the place where the sons of God would be revealed.

Until the servants of our God who are sealed on their foreheads, are revealed, the earth and sea will remain untouched. Only when the servants of God are revealed can the next steps of the prophecy proceed, which is the harming of the earth and sea.

After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, that no wind might blow on earth or sea or against any tree. Then I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads."

Revelation 7:1-3

In Revelation chapter 8, the first 4 trumpets release the events to follow, the four winds of the earth, which in the meantime are being held back by the four angels.

The four winds of the earth are intended to harm the earth, the sea, and the

trees. These winds are being held back by the angels until the servants of God are completely sealed on their foreheads.

There are people mentioned in Ezekiel chapter 9, whose foreheads are also marked. They sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed in Jerusalem. It was only after marking them on their foreheads that the judgment of the Lord began in the city. They are the ones who refuse to partake in the abomination of Babylon but rather sigh and groan over the great abominations that are to come upon the earth.

And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation, and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

Revelation 13:5-8

When the whole world unites under the power of the mouth of the dragon, they will celebrate the success of the 'will of man', following the counsel of the wicked. However, the blessed ones who don't walk in the counsel of the wicked(Psalms 1:1), who mourn(Matthew 5:4) and hunger and thirst for righteousness(Matthew 5:6), will sigh and mourn over all the abominations that are committed in it(Ezekiel 9:4) and they will not be ruled over by the power of this world. No government will have dominion over them. Their king will be the Lord Jesus Christ. They are the ones who will be marked with the seal of the living God, remaining obedient to the government of God even unto death.

144,000 faithful servants - The government of God

And I heard the number of the sealed, 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel

Revelation 7:4

The number of those sealed are 144,000; 12,000 from each of the 12 tribes of Israel. Twelve times twelve thousand makes 144,000. It is clear this number is based on the number 12. Number 12 signifies 'the government of God' on the earth. Jacob had 12 sons, who will go on to become the fathers of the 12 tribes of Israel. God established the nation that reflects the reign of God on earth with 12 tribes.

You shall take two onyx stones, and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel, six of their names on the one stone, and the names of the remaining six on the other stone, in the order of their birth. As a jeweler engraves signets, so shall you engrave the two stones with the names of the sons of Israel. You shall enclose them in settings of gold filigree. And you shall set the two stones on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, as stones of remembrance for the sons of Israel. And Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD on his two shoulders for remembrance.

Exodus 28:9-12

Two onyx were placed on the shoulders of the priest, which carried the 12 names of Israel, the nation of God on the earth. And in Isaiah 9 it writes,

*For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and **the government shall be upon his shoulder,**
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.*

Isaiah 9:6,7

To us a child was born, and that child was the son who represented our Heavenly Father perfectly. Because Jesus was a child when he came, the son

was made a priest.

*as he says also in another place,
"You are a priest forever,
after the order of Melchizedek."*

In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 5:6-10

God, seeking to represent His government on the earth through the 12 tribes of Israel, placed His government on the shoulders of the child, the Son. The greatest embodiment of the government of God was demonstrated by the Son of God who came down to the earth. No power was able to stop him from obeying the Father and no earthly government was able to take dominion over the life of Jesus, because he was under the government of God in heaven. He was the kingdom of God on the earth. All of creation has been waiting for the righteous rule of the righteous King to end its sufferings caused by unrighteousness. The revelation of the government of God is thus the wonderful good news. And Jesus announced that good news as he began his earthly mission.

From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Matthew 4:17

And the kingdom (or government) of God that Jesus announced was neither visible or political in nature. That kingdom that came with Jesus Christ was intended to establish the kingdom of God in us first!

Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, "The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you."

Luke 17:20,21

The government of God is to be established in our hearts first, so that it can be expressed by our obedience, the obedience of the sons of God led by the Holy Spirit.

God's will was established on the earth as it is in heaven through the Son of God, the faithful witness. Even death was unable to put an end to God's governance and reign in the life of Jesus. The Cross is the ultimate expression of the government of God, the kingdom of God. What is the kingdom gospel? No power on the earth is able to stop this kingdom, the government of God, even death can't stop this kingdom. Be faithful unto death! Jesus, being the faithful witness to the kingdom of God, was faithful unto death, and by doing so, death was unable to stop Him. And we are called to this beautiful obedience as faithful witnesses.

This is why we are unable to perceive the kingdom of God if we are not born of the Spirit. The ones who are led and who live by the Holy Spirit are the ones who represent the kingdom of God.

Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

John 3:3-8

Life born of the Spirit can be compared to wind, it is unpredictable. The principles of this world are not applied to a Spirit-led life, and it is not under its control. They live, not by sight, but by faith. They are not ruled by the earth, but by heaven. The government of God is expressed by a Spirit led life and it can only be represented by the leading of the Spirit. Therefore, as it is through them that the righteous reign of God will be released on earth, those

who are led by the Holy Spirit are the sons of God for whom all creation is waiting.

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

Romans 8:14

For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.

Romans 8:19

They adhere to the law of the Spirit of life which is of the kingdom of God rather than the law of sin and death, which is of the world. They are the sons of God who abide in Christ Jesus and who walk in the Spirit, and not according to the flesh.

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit). For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

Romans 8:1,2

Those who are under the government of God can represent the government of God on the earth. So the leadership who has the authority appointed by God to represent His reign on the earth are the stewards of the Lord on the earth.

Adam was created to be the representative of God on the earth. He was created as the image of God and called to rule over the earth so that reign of God could be expanded. But he chose the counsel of the wicked, the Satan. If he had chosen the counsel of God from the Wonderful Counselor, he could have been the beautiful representative of the reign of God on the earth, as a son of God. But unfortunately he chose to take the counsel of the wicked. And the reign of Satan was released on the earth. So the creation came under groaning under the unrighteous reign. That's why whole creation is waiting for the revealing of the sons of God.

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing

for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.

Romans 8:18-22

When we are led by the Holy Spirit, in other words, governed by God, nothing can separate us from the love of God. Because his love was proven eternal, can't be defeated or controlled by the power of death, nothing can separate us from his eternal love. And this absolute government of God and his love will be proved by suffering in our lives. Our great Shepherd leads us to the valley of the shadow of death, in order to prepare us to fight the kingdom of satan. He leads us through the valley of the shadow of death to the table prepared before us in the presence of our enemy.

*So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided **we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.***

Romans 8:12-17

Seal of the Lord for the faithful servants

Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal

John 6:27

Our Lord Jesus was the one on whom God the Father has set his seal. And

he is the one who gave to us the food that endures to eternal life. The ones on whom God the Father has set his seal are the ones who give the food that endures to eternal life.

“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions.

Matthew 24:45-47

Jesus himself was the one who gave us the true food that endures to eternal life. And he is calling the faithful servants to give his household their food at the proper time. And they are the people who will have the seal of the Lord. The Apostolic leadership that will appear in the last days who will lead the body of Christ to the fullness of Christ.

*And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 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.*

Ephesians 4:11-16

We are about to see this new kind of leadership, actually intended from the beginning as the sons of God for whom all the creation have been waiting! The true firstlings. The ones who equip the body of Christ to the measure of the nature of the fullness of Christ.

Again, we can see here the revealing of the sons of God is the necessity for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and in order to see the revealing of the sons of God, the apostolic leadership is required to equip the body of Christ to

the fullness of Christ. This apostolic leadership is the stewardship for the faithful servants who give the food in right time that endures to eternal life. These servants who give the food to the household of God in right time are the 144,000 who are sealed with the seal of God.

Adam was called to rule over the earth as a faithful steward, but he failed by accepting the counsel of the wicked. Cain was firstborn, but he was not able to keep that firstborn right. Esau was firstborn, but the birthright went to Jacob. Reuben was born as a first son, but first born right went down to Joseph and Judah. 12 tribes of Israel was called to represent the righteous reign of God on the earth, but finally their leaders rejected the counsel of God for them.

but the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.

Luke 7:30

When they rejected our Lord Jesus as the Messiah, in other words, when they rejected their calling to bring the reign of God to the Gentiles, God needed to raise up the new stewardship, the 12 apostles. So the calling to be faithful witnesses moved from 12 tribes of Israel to 12 apostles.

Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Luke 12:32

Many are called, but few are chosen. 12 tribes of Israel are called to be the priest nation among all nations, but they rejected the the calling, so the being chosen went to others.

And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. Again he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast."' But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm,

another to his business, while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.' And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.

"But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. And he said to him, Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

Matthew 22:1-14

Those who are called will be chosen when they respond to the calling. When they reject the calling, not accepting the word which is sent to them, they calling will be removed from them.

"Hear another parable. There was a master of a house who planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a winepress in it and built a tower and leased it to tenants, and went into another country. When the season for fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to get his fruit. And the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first. And they did the same to them. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.' And they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons."

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures:

*"The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
this was the Lord's doing,
and it is marvelous in our eyes'?"*

Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits.

Matthew 21:33-43

Rejecting the Son of God caused Israel to be disqualified as his servants and co heirs of the Son of God. Our Father God gave one more opportunity by sending his own Son to Israel, but they rejected him. So God had to give the stewardship to others who will give him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus told them, "Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits."

Jews in the time of Jesus, specially the leadership of Israel acted like they are 'entitled' as the sons of Abraham. John the Baptist warned the Jews who thought they are entitled.

He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

Luke 3:7-9

Basically John warned the assumed 'entitled' Jews, their calling of leadership among the nations foreshadowed by Abraham can be transferred to others, unless they repent. And one more opportunity was given to them by intercession of Jesus.

And he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. And he said to the vinedresser, 'Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?' And he answered him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

Luke 13:6-9

But finally Jesus had to curse the fig tree that had full of leaves, but no fruit. Jesus was looking for the fruit, not beautiful green leaves. Green leaves look good, but what was expected by the Lord was fruit.

And seeing a fig tree by the wayside, he went to it and found nothing on it but only leaves. And he said to it, "May no fruit ever come from you again!" And the fig tree withered at once.

Matthew 21:19

Hypocrisy can't produce fruits. Jesus warned the leaders of Israel in Matthew 23rd whole chapter regarding the hypocrisy that looks beautiful outside, but full of death inside. Finally the transfer of the leadership happened from 12 tribes of Israel to 12 apostles.

But it also means the stewardship of the 12 apostles can be taken away from the 12 disciples. Let's look at the conversation between Peter and Jesus in Matthew 19.

*Then Peter said in reply, "See, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?" Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on **twelve thrones**, judging **the twelve tribes of Israel**. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life. **But many who are first will be last, and the last first.***

Matthew 19:27-30

The twelve who left everything and followed Jesus, who chose Jesus as the only way, whose king, the governing power is only Jesus, nothing else, will sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Yes, it is very clear that the leadership who released the government of God on the earth was transferred from 12 tribes of Israel to 12 apostles in the first century. But Jesus also warned Peter, 'many who are first will be last, and the last first.'. Before Jesus comes, the shifting of the leadership will happen again. I believe the transfer of the leadership will be to the 144,000 sealed.

*“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, **to give them their food at the proper time?** Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. But if that wicked servant says to himself, ‘My master is delayed,’ and begins to beat his fellow servants and eats and drinks with drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know and will cut him in pieces and **put him with the hypocrites.** In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Matthew 24:45-51

The transferring of the leadership from the wicked servants to the faithful servants is about to happen. As mentioned before, who are the sealed? The one who give the food that endures to eternal life. And they are the servants who produce the fruit, not only beautiful leaves. The wicked servants will be put with the hypocrites, in other words, the wicked servants will be considered as the hypocrites.

Even Jesus rebuked the church in Ephesus to repent to the first love, otherwise he would remove its lampstand from its place (Revelation 2:4,5)

The 144,000 faithful servants are not ‘entitled’, but ‘sealed’ by God. We are called, but it doesn’t mean that we are entitled. Many are called, but few are chosen or SEALED by God.

We need to understand that we are not indispensable. It sounds harsh, but not really.

Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry in order somehow to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them. For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead? If the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, so is the whole lump, and if the root is holy, so are the branches.

*But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you. Then you will say, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. **So do not become proud, but fear.***

*For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. **Otherwise you too will be cut off.** And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again. For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree.*

Romans 11:13-24

When we are trapped in 'entitlement mentality', the pride and hypocrisy will lead us to the deception. Israel was not indispensable, then we are also not indispensable.

The apostolic leadership who carries the apostolic message, the food that endures to the eternal life, the word which is 'sent', are the 144,000 faithful servants who will equip the body of Christ to the fullness of Christ and represent the government of God. And they are sealed, not entitled.

Twelve tribes of Israel

According to the natural order of the birth the order of the 12 tribes of Israel is as following.

Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulun, Issachar, Dan, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh) and Benjamin. (Genesis 49:1-27)

But the order and the detail of names of the list written in the 7th chapter of Revelation is different.

*12,000 from the tribe of Judah were sealed,
12,000 from the tribe of Reuben,
12,000 from the tribe of Gad,
12,000 from the tribe of Asher,
12,000 from the tribe of Naphtali,*

*12,000 from the tribe of Manasseh,
12,000 from the tribe of Simeon,
12,000 from the tribe of Levi,
12,000 from the tribe of Issachar,
12,000 from the tribe of Zebulun,
12,000 from the tribe of Joseph,
12,000 from the tribe of Benjamin were sealed.*

Revelation 7:5-8

I can't claim to understand fully the reason of the inconsistency of the list here. But I want to mention the lessons I learned through the differences of these lists. I believe this list of the names do not carry the literal meaning, but representing 12 tribes of Israel spiritually.

For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

Romans 2:28,29

I believe the history of the 12 tribes has important lessons to learn. Throughout the history of Israel, the roles of the tribes changed.

Reuben was born as the first son, but the birthright didn't stay with him. There is the reason why the birthright, firstborn responsibility was moved to other tribes. Reuben's immoral relationship with his step mother cost his birthright. As Esau have lost the birthright for a single meal (Hebrews 12:16), Reuben also have lost his birthright because of the his adultery with his step mother.

The warning of Jesus to Peter, 'first will be last, and last first', is very important lesson we all need to learn. In the story of 12 tribes of Israel, we can learn this lesson in various perspectives. The faithful servants are not entitled, but sealed. The 144,000 are not entitled, but sealed.

Joseph (double portion)

There are so many things to discuss regarding the calling of Joseph, but simply I just want to point out that Joseph is the one of the most important prophetic picture of the suffering Messiah. In a way, Joseph also learned the obedience through suffering and became an author of salvation. Through his suffering, he attained the authority and power to save Israel not only surviving in an international famine, but also prospering under the protection of the most powerful kingdom at that time. Joseph was not a first son naturally, but through suffering he became a heir who carries the birthright which was able to save whole family in a terrible international famine.

and if children, then heirs — heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

Romans 8:17

And the birthright of 'double portion' went down to Joseph. So first son's two sons will be considered sons of the father of the first son.

but he shall acknowledge the firstborn, the son of the unloved, by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he is the firstfruits of his strength. The right of the firstborn is his.

Deuteronomy 21:17

And now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are. And the children that you fathered after them shall be yours. They shall be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance.

Genesis 48:4,5

That's why normally in the list of 12 tribes doesn't include Joseph's name, but Ephraim and Manasseh, the names of Joseph's two sons. So when the land of Canaan was divided according to 12 tribes of Israel also, it was divided according to the names of 12 tribes, not including Joseph, but Ephraim and Manasseh.

But in Revelation 7, there is no Ephraim, but Joseph and Manasseh. It should be whether only Joseph's name representing 2 tribes of his sons,

Ephraim and Manasseh, or only Ephraim and Manasseh's names, not Joseph's. So that's why we can't read this part considering its meaning is literal, but we need to read this part seeking the specific message. Regarding Ephraim, we will discuss later.

Levi (priesthood)

And the Levi's name was not in the list when the land was divided, because sons of Levi didn't have inheritance, but serving the 12 tribes as priests among them. In that sense, tribe of Levi also carried the authority of first son as priests among 12 tribes (Numbers 3:40-51)

And you shall take the Levites for me—I am the LORD—instead of all the firstborn among the people of Israel, and the cattle of the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the cattle of the people of Israel.”

Numbers 3:41

When we talk about Levi, we also need to mention Simeon. Levi and Simeon were cursed because of their violent action against the Hivites after Dinah, their sister and the daughter of Jacob, were raped by Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite.

*“Simeon and Levi are brothers;
weapons of violence are their swords.
Let my soul come not into their council;
O my glory, be not joined to their company.
For in their anger they killed men,
and in their willfulness they hamstringed oxen.
Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce,
and their wrath, for it is cruel!
I will divide them in Jacob
and scatter them in Israel.*

Genesis 49:5-7

As a curse for Simeon and Levi, the two tribes would be divided and scattered among Israel. But later for the tribe of Levi, this curse became a blessing for them when they stood in the side of the Lord after the first idolatry of Israel as a nation when Moses were on the top of the mountain Sinai with the Lord receiving the law of God for the Israel.

And when Moses saw that the people had broken loose (for Aaron had let them break loose, to the derision of their enemies), then Moses stood in the gate of the camp and said, "Who is on the LORD'S side? Come to me." And all the sons of Levi gathered around him. And he said to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'Put your sword on your side each of you, and go to and fro from gate to gate throughout the camp, and each of you kill his brother and his companion and his neighbor.'" And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And that day about three thousand men of the people fell. And Moses said, "Today you have been ordained for the service of the LORD, each one at the cost of his son and of his brother, so that he might bestow a blessing upon you this day."

Exodus 32:25-29

This event has a very significant meaning. Because through this event the tribe of Levi became the priest tribe of Israel. The reason of the curse for the tribe of Levi was the brutal action of killing, but the reason of the blessing for them was also an action of killing. The first one which resulted the curse was killing people of other nation, but the second one which resulted the blessing was killing people of their own nation, own brothers and families.

Levi's first brutal action with Simeon caused them to be scattered among Israel, but the tribe of Levi's second brutal action changed their being scattered from curse to blessing. They became the priest tribe of Israel because of the brutal execution of their own brothers and sisters.

In order to understand this mystery, we need to understand the position of the priest. It is between God and his people. Levites' first action as the priest tribe was this execution in the book of Exodus. Actually this action stopped the judgement of God upon the Israelites. If they didn't kill themselves, God had to do according to the Law given to Moses.

The one who don't take the responsibility can't admit they deserve death. Only those who take responsibility can repent! Repentance is the clear

expression and acknowledgment that 'I am responsible. I deserve death!' Only for those who are ready for this repentance, the Cross can be revealed. The brutal execution on the Cross was the ultimate intercession of our Great Priest.

There is another event which includes the brutal killing or judgement became the very important act of intercession that saved the whole tribes of Israel. Psalms 106 says,

*Then they yoked themselves to the Baal of Peor,
and ate sacrifices offered to the dead;
they provoked the LORD to anger with their deeds,
and a plague broke out among them.
Then Phinehas stood up and **intervened**,
and the plague was stayed.
And that was counted to him as righteousness
from generation to generation forever.*

Psalms 106:28-31

The event described in Psalms 106:28-31 is originally written in Numbers 25th Chapter. The background of the story is what happened between Balaam and Balak, the king of Moab. Balak the king of Moab hired Balaam to curse Israel, but Balaam was not able to curse the people of God who is under the law of God, instead he only blessed the Israelites. But right after the departure of Balaam, Israel participated idol worship and the wrath of God was upon the Israel. According to Revelation 2:14, Israel's idol worship in Numbers chapter 25 is because of the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality. After Balaam left Balak, Israelites began to whore with the daughters of Moab.

The adulterous idol worship at Peor caused the wrath of God upon the Israelites. And the intercession of Phinehas stopped the wrath of God upon Israelites. What was the the action of intercession of Phinehas? It was also brutal killing of a couple that were in a adultery.

And behold, one of the people of Israel came and brought a Midianite woman to

his family, in the sight of Moses and in the sight of the whole congregation of the people of Israel, while they were weeping in the entrance of the tent of meeting. When Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose and left the congregation and took a spear in his hand and went after the man of Israel into the chamber and pierced both of them, the man of Israel and the woman through her belly. Thus the plague on the people of Israel was stopped. Nevertheless, those who died by the plague were twenty-four thousand.

And the LORD said to Moses, "Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, has turned back my wrath from the people of Israel, in that he was jealous with my jealousy among them, so that I did not consume the people of Israel in my jealousy. Therefore say, Behold, I give to him my covenant of peace, and it shall be to him and to his descendants after him the covenant of a perpetual priesthood, because he was jealous for his God and made atonement for the people of Israel."

Numbers 25:6-13

Pinehas the son of Eleazar turned back the wrath of God from the people of Israel with his intercession. Intercession is not defending those for whom the intercessor intercede and blaming others, rather true intercession admits the guilt and takes the responsibility of those for whom the intercessor intercedes for. True intercession includes executing the judgement. If you don't admit the guilt and repent, God has to involve in the judgement which is devastating. But if you admit the guilt and repent and allow the intercessors to intervene, then God's atonement will be given. If there were no intercession of sons of Levi or Phinehas, severe judgement of God would have been released. Second brutal action of Levi was not directed to other nations, but directed their own nation. Same applies to Phinehas.

*Justice is turned back,
and righteousness stands far away;
for truth has stumbled in the public squares,
and uprightness cannot enter.
Truth is lacking,
and he who departs from evil makes himself a prey.
The LORD saw it, and it displeased him*

*that there was no justice.
He saw that there was no man,
and wondered **that there was no one to intercede**;
then his own arm brought him salvation,
and his righteousness upheld him.
He put on righteousness as a breastplate,
and a helmet of salvation on his head;
he put on garments of vengeance for clothing,
and wrapped himself in zeal as a cloak.
According to their deeds, so will he repay,
wrath to his adversaries, repayment to his enemies;
to the coastlands he will render repayment.*

Isaiah 59:14-18

The scripture above beautifully speaks about the true intercessor. God sees the world without righteousness, justice and truth. And he longs to see someone who intercede in this world. Otherwise he needs to execute the judgement by himself. The intercessor whom God is looking for is the one who wears righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on his head, garments of vengeance for clothing and wrapped himself in zeal as a cloak. If there is none, he had to bring the vengeance by himself. God found the sons of Levi and Phinehas as intercessors and priests who intercede (punishing his own) so that God can stop his punishment.

Our ultimate intercessor is our Lord Jesus Christ who took all our sins and our guilt upon himself. He willingly carried the burden to the Cross. He let the judgment of God upon himself. He was found by God as the intercessor, the first born who carries the responsibility.

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

John 1:29

Our true intercessor and high priest Jesus Christ leads us to the true repentance so that we can attain the salvation. As the brutal execution of sons of Levi and Phinehas was the salvation for the Israelites, the brutal execution

on the Cross, the death of our intercessor Jesus Christ, became the salvation for the world. When we fall upon the rock first by repentance and united with Jesus on the Cross, the brutal judgement of my sin, the rock will not fall upon us later in the judgement day. When we allow the double edge sword to penetrate my heart and expose in the light first, when Jesus comes with double edge sword from his mouth, we will not be killed by that double edge sword. The work of the priest is so crucial for the salvation.

Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits. And the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him."

Matthew 21:43,44

Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Hebrews 4:11-13

*Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. **From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron.** He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.*

Revelation 19:11-16

The calling of Levites is the shadow of our own calling. Their story is actually for our benefit to learn of our calling.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

1Peter 2:9

Omitted two tribes, Ephraim and Dan

Dan

Dan's position in 12 tribes is unique. As the fifth son of Jacob, first son from Bilhah, Rachel's servant. First 4 sons were from Leah, the first wife of Jacob and 5th son, which was not from Leah, but from Rachel's servant, was Dan. It looks like the tribe of Dan was quite powerful tribe in Israel. If we see the numbers of the warriors of the tribes of Israel, Dan was the second biggest tribe after Judah.

Of the people of Judah, their generations, by their clans, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, every man able to go to war: those listed of the tribe of Judah were 74,600.

Numbers 1:26,27

Of the people of Dan, their generations, by their clans, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, every man able to go to war: those listed of the tribe of Dan were 62,700.

Numbers 1:38,39

The allocated land for Dan was most southern part of Northern Israel bordering with the land of Manasseh, Ephraim, Benjamin and Judah and just over the land of Philistine (Joshua 19:40-46). In order for the Philistine to confront Israel, they had to confront Dan first. Dan was in the front line. So we can see the great conflict against Palestine in the story of Samson who belongs to the tribe of Dan. I believe it was the calling for the tribe of Dan that is the second strongest tribe among the Israelites. The prophecy for Dan from Jacob

before he dies is as following.

*“Dan shall judge his people
as one of the tribes of Israel.
Dan shall be a serpent in the way,
a viper by the path,
that bites the horse’s heels
so that his rider falls backward.
I wait for your salvation, O LORD.*

Genesis 49:16-18

In Jacob’s prophecy for Dan, Dan was described as a serpent in the way, a viper by the path, that bites the horses heels so that his rider falls backward. It sounds fit the reason for the location allocated to Dan. The location of the tribe of Dan was on the way to Israel for Philistine to come and attack. I believe Dan is called to defend Israel from the Philistine of south. Strategic placement of the tribe of Dan tells importance of the calling of the tribe of Dan. In long lasting conflict between Israel and Philistine, Dan was supposed to defend and fight against the enemy of Israel. And Dan was called to be in the forefront.

But unfortunately the tribe of Dan abandoned the portion that God allocated them and went up to the north.

When the territory of the people of Dan was lost to them, the people of Dan went up and fought against Leshem, and after capturing it and striking it with the sword they took possession of it and settled in it, calling Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their ancestor. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the people of Dan, according to their clans—these cities with their villages.

Joshua 19:47,48

Somehow the tribe of Dan has lost the originally allocated territory and they moved up to the north. They abandoned the place where God gave to them. We don’t know the detail, but it was clear that they moved out from the place God gave to them. Their calling was to stay in that strategic place, but they didn’t chose to stay there. Yes, it is written ‘the territory of the people of

Dan was lost to them'. But what does it mean?

The Amorites pressed the people of Dan back into the hill country, for they did not allow them to come down to the plain. The Amorites persisted in dwelling in Mount Heres, in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim, but the hand of the house of Joseph rested heavily on them, and they became subject to forced labor.

Judges 1:34,35

Amorites didn't allow the people of Dan to come down to the plain. And they persisted in dwelling in the land given to Israel. Actually Dan should have pushed them out or should have defeated the Amorites in faith, because it is already given to them. By faith they should have taken the land which was given for them. When we are not enduring in faith and not staying in the place where the Lord allocated us, then our enemy will 'persist' to stay there. The enemy in us need to be cast out first. When we don't drive them out, they will drive us out from our promised land.

Disappointment, bitterness, or even not believing and not valuing his calling and the promised land allocated by the Lord can drive us out of the place we supposed to be. As Esau had lost his birthright, Dan also has lost the calling. And he left the promised land.

As we read in Joshua 19:47,48, the tribe of Dan failed to stay in the land allocated (promised) to them and went up to the north, despite the land was not 'promised or allocated' to them, they went and took the land which was not for them. We can read that story in detail in Judges chapter 18 and 19. In that story the tribe of Dan took one Levite and made him a priest for their tribe and attacked Laish, a people quiet and unsuspecting. There they lived the life of adulterous idol worship. The house of God which is the tabernacle of Moses was at Shiloh, but Micah's carved image that he made was with the tribe of Dan.

As they left their promised land, they also entered to the adulterous idolatry. Eventually the tribe of Dan disappear in the history of Israel.

And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the

judgment of the great day — just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

Jude 1:6,7

This scripture talks about the fallen angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling. They didn't stay where God allocated them to be in, and they came down to the earth where to humans allocated. And the result of that rebellion, the blood line of the woman was contaminated. (Genesis 6:1-8)

Once we leave the will of God, the calling of the Lord, we move to the place of idolatry and abomination. When Dan left their allocated and promised place, how they could get their legitimacy to stay in the north. They had to make a story or myth which can legitimise their position. And the idol and the priest were very important to justify their own 'will', not God's will. The attempt to justify our desire lead us to idolatry.

Dan disappeared in the history of Israel. Even they were strong tribe in Israel and called to defend the Israel from the long standing enemy of Israel, but they refused to fight, rather they went up to the place where they are not supposed to be and wiped out a peaceful people, not the enemy of Israel and began despicable idolatry in the promised land. So they disappeared. This all started with refusing the will of God in their lives. They despised the calling of God, as Esau sold his birthright with a bowl of soup.

Ephraim

Ephraim was the second son of Joseph, but carried the birthright instead of Manasseh. Jacob blessed Ephraim as a first son.

When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him, and he took his father's hand to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. And Joseph said to his father, "Not this way, my father; since this one is the firstborn, put your right hand on his head." But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great. Nevertheless, his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his offspring shall

*become a multitude of nations." So he blessed them that day, saying,
"By you Israel will pronounce blessings, saying,
God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh.'"
Thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh.*

Genesis 48:17-20

In the process of taking the promised land, Ephraim played a leadership role with Judah. Joshua is from the tribe of Ephraim and Caleb is from the tribe of Judah. Let's compare the attitude of Ephraim and that of Judah represented by Caleb during the time of taking the 'Promised' land.

Caleb (Judah)

So now give me this hill country of which the LORD spoke on that day, for you heard on that day how the Anakim were there, with great fortified cities. It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall drive them out just as the LORD said."

Then Joshua blessed him, and he gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh for an inheritance. Therefore Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly followed the LORD, the God of Israel. Now the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath-arba. (Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim.) And the land had rest from war.

Joshua 14:12-15

Ephraim (and Manasseh)

Then the people of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying, "Why have you given me but one lot and one portion as an inheritance, although I am a numerous people, since all along the LORD has blessed me?" And Joshua said to them, "If you are a numerous people, go up by yourselves to the forest, and there clear ground for yourselves in the land of the Perizzites and the Rephaim, since the hill country of Ephraim is too narrow for you." The people of Joseph said, "The hill country is not enough for us. Yet all the Canaanites who dwell in the plain have chariots of iron, both those in Beth-shean and its villages and those in the Valley of Jezreel." Then Joshua said to the house of Joseph, to Ephraim and Manasseh, "You are a numerous people and have great power. You shall not have one allotment only, but the hill country shall be yours, for though it is a forest, you shall clear it and possess it to its farthest borders. For you shall drive out the Canaanites, though they have chariots of iron, and though they are

strong.”

Joshua 17:14-18

Judah represented by Caleb were ready to take the land, according to the promise of God, they were ready to fight. Even when all the spies rejected to go and fight after spying the land, Caleb was the one who were ready to go and fight believing the promise of God many years before. His faith didn't go deem even after many years. He was ready to fight, ready to take the promise. And he knew that that promise is not entitled to them, but they need to fight and get it by faith. It is possible to go and take because it is promised. To chose to fight and get it is the portion of those who have promise. The ones who really don't believe, they are not ready to fight. Their unbelief is hidden behind 'entitlement mentality'. Caleb believed the promise of God, therefore he was ready to fight and get the land.

Unlike Caleb, Ephraim 'demanded' the land entitled to the birthright possessed tribe that is 'entitled' double portions. They were not ready to fight and take, but they demanded. When they were challenged to go and take the land, they give an excuse that the enemy is too strong. Yes, we can see that the tribe of Ephraim didn't believe the promise of God. The excuse, the power of the enemy was more real than the promise of God for them. The ones who don't believe the promise of God tend to demand with entitlement mentality, but are not willing to take the promise of God. So the unbelief hides behind the entitled attitude or pride.

Later after the victory of Gideon against Midianites, Ephraim challenged Gideon why they didn't call them to join the battle.

Then the men of Ephraim said to him, “What is this that you have done to us, not to call us when you went to fight against Midian?” And they accused him fiercely. And he said to them, “What have I done now in comparison with you? Is not the gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim better than the grape harvest of Abiezer? God has given into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb. What have I been able to do in comparison with you?” Then their anger against him subsided when he said this.

Judges 8:1-3

Ephraim could go and fight together even they were not invited if they really wanted to fight. Gideon just achieved an amazing victory by the power of God. Ephraim supposed to show respect and appreciation to Gideon, but the people of Ephraim again ‘demanded’ Gideon’s acknowledgment. Gideon’s response was gracious and humble. He, as from the tribe of Manasseh, acknowledged the tribe of Ephraim is greater than the tribe of Manasseh.

But few chapters later after Jephthah’s victory against Ammonites, again the tribe of Ephraim came to Jephthah and challenged him.

The men of Ephraim were called to arms, and they crossed to Zaphon and said to Jephthah, “Why did you cross over to fight against the Ammonites and did not call us to go with you? We will burn your house over you with fire.”

Judges 12:1

They didn’t come and join the fight with Jephthah, but after the battle they came and complained against Jephthah not to acknowledging themselves. Where were the tribe of Ephraim, when there were battle against Ammonites? In this case with Jephthah, Jephthah didn’t tolerate the arrogant attitude of the tribe of Ephraim. Jephthah’s response was not so gracious like Gideon’s.

And Jephthah said to them, “I and my people had a great dispute with the Ammonites, and when I called you, you did not save me from their hand. And when I saw that you would not save me, I took my life in my hand and crossed over against the Ammonites, and the LORD gave them into my hand. Why then have you come up to me this day to fight against me?” Then Jephthah gathered all the men of Gilead and fought with Ephraim. And the men of Gilead struck Ephraim, because they said, “You are fugitives of Ephraim, you Gileadites, in the midst of Ephraim and Manasseh.”

Judges 12:2-4

The attitude of the tribe of Ephraim was arrogant and demanding. Cowardly they didn’t join the battle, but afterward they came they claimed their tribe is greater than others, even greater than the tribe who fought and brought victory to the Isreal.

*The Ephraimites, armed with the bow,
turned back on the day of battle.
They did not keep God's covenant,
but refused to walk according to his law.
They forgot his works
and the wonders that he had shown them.*

Psalms 78:9-11

People of Ephraim were armed and strong, but they didn't fight, they hid from the battle cowardly. They hid their cowardliness and unbelief behind hypocrisy and entitlement mentality. They demanded because they thought 'they were chosen to be first born'. They considered themselves 'entitled' as the tribe that carries the birthright of Israel.

*He rejected the tent of Joseph;
he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim,
but he chose the tribe of Judah,
Mount Zion, which he loves.*

Psalms 78:67,68

Finally Ephraim was rejected as the tribe that carries the birthright, but that right transferred to Judah. Even in Revelation 7, their name was removed from the list of the 12 tribes of Israel.

Judah (Kingship)

Judah was the forth son of Jacob, but his blood line became the blood line of the Messiah. Why did the leadership of the twelve tribes come to the tribe of Judah?

Reuben's adultery with his step mother disqualified him as the first born son. Simeon and Levi were the next candidates for the birthright, but they have lost their possibility to carry the birthright because of their cruel action against Hivites.

Now let's look at the story of Judah.

When Joseph visited brothers while they were pasturing their father's flock near Shechem, out of jealousy they plotted against Joseph and threw him into one of the pits (Genesis 37:12-20). And Judah suggested other brothers to sell Joseph to Ishmaelites who were on the way to Egypt in order to save Joseph. And brothers listened to him.

Then they sat down to eat. And looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing gum, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. Then Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother, our own flesh." And his brothers listened to him. Then Midianite traders passed by. And they drew Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. They took Joseph to Egypt.

Genesis 37:25-28

And the moment that Joseph was been sold, there was no Reuben. Reuben didn't keep the place of authority when he as a first born son was most needed, but Judah chose to act in the place of authority and took the blame. Reuben was not there when it happened whatever reason he had, and later on his action was indirectly blaming the other brothers, especially Judah. Reuben didn't take the blame, but Judah did. I think Judah was trying to save Joseph in his way, but Reuben's reaction was clearly making Judah look guilty.

When Reuben returned to the pit and saw that Joseph was not in the pit, he tore his clothes and returned to his brothers and said, "The boy is gone, and I, where shall I go?"

Genesis 37:29

And the brothers had to lie to their father that Joseph was killed by wild animal. I think for Judah the guilt he was carrying was too big. He was taking the all the blame. Reuben was not really taking the responsibility and Judah took the responsibility. So Judah couldn't stay with his family. He left his brothers and parents.

It happened at that time that Judah went down from his brothers and turned aside to a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah.

Genesis 38:1

Judah left the promised land and the family and went to a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah. Probably Judah was not able to bear to be with his family, because of his guilt, he took all the blame and he couldn't bear the guilt. He left his family and wanted to start new life away from his family. But he couldn't be away from God's covenant and his intervention. His discipline was bitter and harsh, but it was the Love of God. His tragic family story in Adullam really shows that he can't get out from this guilt until he faces it. He lost his gentile wife and his two sons. And he got twin sons from his daughter in law (Genesis 38:2-30).

The story from the chapter 42 of Genesis shows Judah went back to his family. After the bitter experience of his family, probably he received the discipline of the Lord and repented to the covenant of God. And he positioned himself in his family before the drought started.

When sons of Jacob went to Egypt to get some food in the drought, finally they met Joseph, of course the brothers didn't recognise him, but Joseph did. Joseph took Simeon as a hostage and condition of releasing Simeon was to bring Benjamin, the younger brother of Joseph.

To the father who was unwilling to send Benjamin due to fear of losing him as he had lost Joseph, Reuben offered his sons' lives as the security for sending Benjamin, but Jacob refused the proposal of Reuben. Reuben couldn't make it happen or what he said, he really didn't mean it. It was quite similar attitude he showed in the incident of selling of Joseph, but Judah was the one who was able to persuade Jacob to bring Benjamin by offering Judah himself's life as the security for Benjamin's return.

And Judah said to Israel his father, "Send the boy with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, both we and you and also our little ones. I will be a pledge of his safety. From my hand you shall require him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever. If we had not delayed, we would now have returned twice."

Genesis 43:8-10

Even though he had a bitter failed experience when he took the responsibility, again he took the responsibility for his family. If there is no repentance and restoration out of that experience, it would be not possible for someone again to take the responsibility like Judah did. I believe he really took the responsibility of loosing Joseph and took the blame. At first he avoided the family but he took the discipline of the Lord and repented and took the responsibility to save the whole family.

Before Joseph revealed his identity, tested the brothers accusing Benjamin with robbery, Judah was the one who took the place of Benjamin. Judah was the one who took the responsibility again (Genesis 44:1-34).

We can find an interesting parallel in the story of David, running away from Saul fled to Gath and from Gath he went to Adulam. There gathered everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, everyone who was bitter in soul, gathered to him. He became commander over them (1Samuel 22:1,2). But with the word of the prophet Gad, David moved back into the land of Judah. With the word of God, David came back to the land of Judah, where the will of God for him was. Even David was a fugitive in Israel, he and his people were the ones who defeated the enemy of Israel, the Philistines, and saved Keilah. He took the responsibility to save Isreal.

Now they told David, "Behold, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah and are robbing the threshing floors." Therefore David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I go and attack these Philistines?" And the LORD said to David, "Go and attack the Philistines and save Keilah." But David's men said to him, "Behold, we are afraid here in Judah; how much more then if we go to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?" Then David inquired of the LORD again. And the LORD answered him, "Arise, go down to Keilah, for I will give the Philistines into your hand." And David and his men went to Keilah and fought with the Philistines and brought away their livestock and struck them with a great blow. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah.

1Samuel 23:1-5

Judah took the responsibility and authority by taking all the blame which

includes 'repentance'. Repentance lead us to authority! The one who can repent is the one who can carry authority. Who is willing to repent? The one who take the responsibility. If we don't want to take the responsibility, we will blame others.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah, took the blame and went up to the Cross. The Lord Jesus represents the Father God perfectly, our repentance is bringing us back to the original plan for us, 'His Image'. He created us according to his image and he called us to be like him.

Reuben lost his birthright due to immortality and lust. He cowardly avoided his responsibility and gave excuse, blaming others subtil way.

Simeon and Levi lost the opportunity to take the birthright because of their violent action out of their anger. They execute the justice with their own hand. Anger is not the character of the King, meekness is (Matthew 5:5). But when the tribe of Levi executed the justice upon his own people, the tribe of Levi became the priest tribe. When we deny ourselves and take our cross, take the responsibility, we become the intercessor, who bring the salvation. So the curse, being scattered among the brothers became blessing of the Lord to the tribe of Levi. The tribe of Levi had to scattered among the brothers as priests tribe, not as a curse, but as a blessing. The curse of the tribe of Levi turned to the blessing.

The tribe of Dan left their promised and allocated land and they sought their own land. When we leave the calling of the Lord and the place where God placed us, we excuse ourselves with other 'legitimate' story and that leads us to idolatry as the tribe of Dan made. So the tribe of Dan left the covenant of God and the name of tribe of Dan had to be removed.

The tribe of Ephraim which supposed to carry the birthright of Israel refused to fight even they were strong enough to fight. Their unbelief was hidden behind the entitlement mentality. They considered themselves entitled for the bigger land, but they didn't ready to take the land with faith. Fist became last, in this case even their name was omitted in the list of 12 tribes.

Judah took the responsibility and blame, even he had a choice to be bitter and reject the responsibility, but with repentance he came back to his place of his calling and became the ancestor of the Messiah.

Elim: 12 fountains and 70 palm trees

In Luke chapter 9, Jesus sent out 12 disciples and in Luke chapter 10, Jesus sent out 70 disciples. 12 represents Israel, and 70 represents the nations. Israel which consists of 12 tribes was called to release the government of God on the earth. This blessed reign of the Lord meant to be released to the Gentile nations through Israel. Original plan of God for Israel(12) is to bless the nations(70).

After Israelites came out from Egypt, they crossed the Red Sea. They came out of Egypt and crossed the Red Sea and going on to the purpose of God. But right after that they reached the place name Mara, the place of bitter water. That bitter water became sweet and drinkable after an appointed tree by the God was thrown into the water.

Then Moses made Israel set out from the Red Sea, and they went into the wilderness of Shur. They went three days in the wilderness and found no water. When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter; therefore it was named Marah. And the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" And he cried to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a log(tree), and he threw it into the water, and the water became sweet.

There the LORD made for them a statute and a rule, and there he tested them, saying, "If you will diligently listen to the voice of the LORD your God, and do that which is right in his eyes, and give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, your healer." Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees, and they encamped there by the water.

Exodus 15:22-27

God did marvellous work of salvation for Israel in Egypt by the blood of the lamb and through the Red Sea, baptised, no turning back. And they had to face Mara, the bitter water. And that bitter undrinkable water was able to be changed to sweet and drinkable water only through the appointed tree (log), the Cross. Only the the Cross can change our bitter water to sweet water. If the bitterness is not dealt with, we can not go forward to our calling, Elim.

12 fountains and 70 palm trees. 70 palm trees get water from 12 fountains. 12 represents Israel, and 70 represents the nations. Nations supposed to be blessed through Israel. That was the calling of Abraham.

Through the Tower of Babel, the rebellion of the world against God became so clear. All nations rejected the Lord, God, but afterward God called Abraham and he responded to his calling.

*Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and **in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.**"*

Genesis 12:1-3

All nations rejected the Lord God, but Abraham said 'yes' to the calling of the Lord, so Israel became the possession of the Lord, while other nations rejected God, so God had to disown them.

*When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance,
when he divided mankind,
he fixed the borders of the peoples
according to the number of the sons of God.
**But the LORD'S portion is his people,
Jacob his allotted heritage.***

Deuteronomy 32:8,9

Yes, all the nations rejected the Lord God, but through Abraham's descendant God wanted to bring other nations back to him. He wanted to bless other nations also through Abraham. So God called Israel as the 12 fountains to give the living water to the nations as the 70 palm trees.

God's heart is not only for Israel, but through Israel also to the nations. That's why Israel is the first born of God. As the first son they were expected to be faithful in stewardship. When they failed to be faithful in their stewardship to the nations, their stewardship transferred to 12 apostles.

12 fountains were there to water 70 palm trees. Abraham was called to be the blessings for the all families of the earth. So as the reign of the Lord supposed to extend to the end of the world beginning in the garden of Eden. The temple of the Lord was supposed to be the house of ALL nations, not only the nice religious institution for Israel itself, but when the temple of God became a den of robbers misusing the Gentile's court as the market place to raise some funds for 'their privileged' worship system, Jesus had to drive the merchant out, and eventually he had to curse the fig tree, which represent Israel and had no fruit, but only the leaves (Mark 11:12-26). The lamp stand was moved from 12 tribes to 12 apostles. Jerusalem was destroyed and Israel as a nation ceased to exist.

Even Israel was not faithful, but God was faithful. He was faithful to his promises to bless those who bless the descendant of Abraham, and to curse those who dishonour the descendant of Abraham. And the plan to bless all the families of the earth has been going on from the beginning.

"When you draw near to a city to fight against it, offer terms of peace to it. And if it responds to you peaceably and it opens to you, then all the people who are found in it shall do forced labor for you and shall serve you. But if it makes no peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it.

Deuteronomy 20:10-12

This instruction of the Lord to Moses, when Israel, the government of God, attacked the gentile nations in the promised Land in order to bring the righteous reign over the land, that they needed to offer terms of peace first sounds similar what Jesus commanded to the disciples in Matthew 10,

And proclaim as you go, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay.

Matthew 10:7,8

And whatever town or village you enter, find out who is worthy in it and stay

there until you depart. As you enter the house, greet it. And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it, but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town. Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.

Matthew 10:11-15

Heralds who are sent before the war that the righteous king engages are like the apostles who the Lord sends to proclaim the kingdom of God. And the ones who receives the kingdom gospel, they are the ones who are worthy to receive peace of the Lord. Those who decides to surrender to the kingdom, they will come into the kingdom. And our Lord Jesus will be their king.

Throughout the history of Israel, there are some wonderful example of the people who are worthy to receive peace. The ones who chose to surrender to the government of God. They were accepted as a part of Israel, the government of God on the earth. The blessings of the Lord spread to the Gentiles. Even they began to carry the 'birthright' of Israel. Some of them even without herald of Israel responded to call of God to the nations. In a sense already in the old testament, they took the kingdom violently.

From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force.

Matthew 11:12

Caleb the son of Jephnunneh the Kenizzites was clearly not Israelites. Kenizzites were mentioned in the list of the tribes which occupied the promised land to Abraham in Genesis 15:19.

On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites."

Genesis 15:18-21

But the list of the tribes in promised land in Joshua 3:10 doesn't have Kenizztes.

And Joshua said, "Here is how you shall know that the living God is among you and that he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, and the Jebusites.

Joshua 3:10

Of course there might be another reason for it, but we can speculate that Kenizzites joined the Israelites before Joshua lead the Israel to take the land God promised to them. When they joined Israel, we don't know, but maybe they saw how God was faithful with Israel in Egypt or even before, they were convinced that God of Israel is the true God and they joined Israel. And not only surviving, but carrying the authority, Caleb lived in the calling of God with faith leading the Israel, when all tribes wavered with unbelief he was the only one with Joshua stuck into the Living God who keeps his promises.

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."

Numbers 14:6-9

Even many years later Caleb was quite old around 85 years old, still he was ready to fight and take the promised land in faith.

And now, behold, the LORD has kept me alive, just as he said, these forty-five years since the time that the LORD spoke this word to Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness. And now, behold, I am this day eighty-five years old. I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming. So now give me this hill country of which the LORD spoke on that day, for you heard on that day how the

Anakim were there, with great fortified cities. It may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall drive them out just as the LORD said."

Then Joshua blessed him, and he gave Hebron to Caleb the son of Jephunneh for an inheritance. Therefore Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholly followed the LORD, the God of Israel. Now the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath-arba. (Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim.) And the land had rest from war.

Joshua 14:10-15

Clearly the strong leadership in taking the promised land was on Joshua and Caleb. And Caleb was the leader of the tribe of Judah. The second Judge after Joshua was Othniel, the cousin of Caleb as a Kenizzite. Caleb is a beautiful example of God's intention to the nations. And Caleb is not an odd exception in the Bible.

Rahab chose to take refuge from Israel and abandon the loyalty to Jerico and nations of Canaan. Rehab made decision to follow God of Israel. And he became an ancestor of Messiah.

Gibeonites also chose to be among Israel, even their position would be anything but servants, cutters of wood and drawers water for the house of God (Joshua 9:23). And they were faithful in their position, later on they took major role in restoration of the temple after Jewish people came back from Babylonian captivity. While leading the Jews back to the promised land, Ezra couldn't find any Levites, but temple servants were mobilised and play very important role in restoring Israel. I believe that 'temple servants' are the Gibeonites. This so valuable place were taken by these Gentile who surrendered to be servants among the Israelites (Ezra 8:15-20). We need to remember what Jesus our Lord said, 'But many who are first will be last, and the last first.'

Ruth became a wife of a Israelite who left the promised land in difficult time, but she chose to be with her mother in law after her husband died, and followed her mother in law and her God, Yahweh, God of Israel. Not only she lived among Israel, she became the great grand mother of David, who is the foreshadow of the Messiah.

Who are the true Israel? Who are the true 12 fountains which bless 70 palm

trees, the nations with the living water?

For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

Romans 2:28,29

One hundred forty four thousand sealed ones are the true Israel who will bless the nations and prepare the body of Christ to the fullness of Christ.

A Great Multitude from Every Nation

The 144,000 of Israel sealed are on the earth in Revelation chapter 7, but the next group of people mentioned in same chapter is in front of the throne of God in heaven.

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

Revelation 7:9-12

Theses people from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages are before the throne of God and before the throne of the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands singing the song of salvation, worshiping the author of salvation! Their praise and worship is so

powerful that it moved all angels to worship our God and the Lamb. Their song is out of their relationship with the Lord. It looks like their lives really testified the glory and wisdom and power of the Lord and that the Lord is worthy to be praised and be thanked and be blessed, Hallelujah! Who are they? One of the 24 elders asked John, but eventually the elder answers to the question, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?"

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?" I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

*"Therefore they are before the throne of God,
and serve him day and night in his temple;
and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence.
They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore;
the sun shall not strike them,
nor any scorching heat.
For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd,
and he will guide them to springs of living water,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."*

Revelation 7:13-17

They are clothed in white robes and they are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. I believe they are the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne under the altar when Jesus opened the fifth seal, John saw. I call them the fifth seal Martyrs. There they cried out for the vindication of God and got the promise of the vindication after the martyrdom of their fellow servants. And with that assurance they were given their white robes. They are the ones who come out of the great tribulation being faithful unto death. No more suffering for them, unlike the 144,000 of Israel sealed. The great multitude from every nation already finished their race and the 144,000 are not yet. The Lamb became their shepherd from the earth and continues to be their shepherd. They shall not want! The Lamb was the shepherd when they went through the valley of

shadow of death, and even in heaven will continue to be their shepherd.

In chapter 14, the place where the 144,000 are different, but in chapter 7, there are on the earth ready to face one more battle which were anticipated for long time.

I will discuss more about this in chapter 12, but I just want to mention briefly the connection with chapter 12. In chapter 12 of Revelation, we can see 'a man child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron' (v5) and 'the rest of the woman's offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus' (v17). I believe the man child who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron is the fifth seal Martyrs and the rest of the woman's offspring are the 144,000 of Israel sealed.

As soon as the man child was born with birth pang, he will be caught up to God and to his throne. The dragon waits for the man child to devour it, but the dragon can't devour it. Why the dragon can't devour it, because the man child is led by the Holy Spirit. The man child will be led by the Holy Spirit and faithful unto death. When you are faithful unto death, the enemy can't touch you any more. Jesus taught us when he warned us regarding hypocrisy.

"I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him! Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows.

Luke 12:4-7

Man can't touch us when we go through the death. The enemy has no power when we are ready to die. So being faithful unto death make impossible for the dragon to devour us. The fifth seal Martyrs are the ones who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. So the dragon can't devour them.

And later the dragon will go off to make war on the rest of the woman's offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus (Revelation 12:17). So as I mentioned above, the rest of the

woman's offspring are the 144,000 of Israel sealed and they are the ones who will fight against the dragon.

Chapter 8

Preparation for the Seven trumpets; Seventh seal

When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.

Revelation 8:1,2

Opening the seventh seal caused silence in heaven for about half an hour. It didn't say silence on the earth, but in heaven. What does the silence in heaven mean? In heaven there were splendid and glorious worship from the angels and the multitude from every nations, but now there was silence, what does it mean? Whole universe holds its breath in silence and waits for the impending judgement of God.

Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD, for he has roused himself from his holy dwelling.

Zachariah 2:13

The seven angels who stand before God were given seven trumpets which will be released soon. And again in order for the judgement of God, vindication of God to be released, another 'much incense with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar' has to be offered before the throne.

And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer, and he was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne, and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel. Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth, and there were peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.

Revelation 8:3-5

The prayer of the saints, crying for the vindication fervently sounded to the golden altar.

When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. They cried out with a loud voice, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

Revelation 6:9,10

And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

Luke 18:7,8

Like the much incense in Revelation chapter 5, the much incense in chapter 8 also is the prayer of the saints. But in this time, the prayers of the saints is more connected with the vindication of the Lord. The silence in heaven also implies the impending judgement of God.

Among the 7 seals, first 4 seals being broken means the permission 'come' to the evil plans of the wicked ones. The fifth seal is the obedience until to death of the saints as the response to the first four evil plan released. And the sixth seal is the preview of the Wrath of the Lamb as the response of the Lord to the crying out from the fifth seal martyrs.

And out of the seven trumpets 4 trumpets are the severe vindication of the Lamb upon the evil ones on the earth. Yet still this process would carry the characteristics of discipline to the mankind calling for repentance.

The prayer of those who are thirsty and hungry for the righteousness.

Filling the censer with fire from the altar

*And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer, and he was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne, and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel. **Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar** and threw it on the earth, and there were peals of thunder, rumblings,*

flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.

Revelation 8:3-5

Unlike the much incense in chapter 5, in chapter 8, the much incense will be mixed with the fire and thrown into the earth. The fire from the altar, the consuming fire will be mixed with the much incense.

The much incense given to the Lamb in chapter 5 was the smoke burnt by the consuming fire from the altar and it burns only the exact ingredients gathered according to the instruction of the Lord. If the gathered ingredients are not exact according to the instruction of the Lord, it can't be qualified to be burnt. The obedient to the word of God only deserves being burnt by consuming fire on the golden altar.

But in chapter 8 to release the 7 trumpets, the fire from the altar will be mixed with the incense and it will be thrown on the earth. The 7 trumpets will shake the earth with the consuming fire. The vindication of the Lord will be released with this much incense on the earth. This time the consuming fire will shake the earth too. The shaking starts in the church, God's house first; he will purify the body of Christ first. The church will learn the obedience through suffering and the fifth seal would represent the part of the fullness of Christ. And after that the 7 trumpets will be prepared and will be released by the incense mixed with the consuming fire to show the judgement of God on the earth. But I believe still the 7 trumpets will give opportunities for the people on the earth to repent. Shaking is the grace of God to show the souls of the earth what is the unshakable thing, the Kingdom of God.

At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens." This phrase, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.

Hebrews 12:26-29

When the obedience of the church completed, it will be ready to punish every disobedience on the earth.

For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete.

2 Corinthians 10:3-6

Our obedience will prepare the judgement of God on the earth. The 7 trumpets will be released by the obedience of the faithful witnesses. And this 7 trumpets will shake the heavens and the earth.

The first 4 trumpets indicates the great shaking of the heaven and falling of the stars.

First four trumpets - Great destruction of the earth and the sea (Revelation 8:7-12)

I do believe the completion of sealing of the 144,000 faithful servants of God will activate the judgement of God which will unfold in next 4 trumpets. As ten plagues of God punished the evil reign of the Egypt which took hold of Israel under the slavery, the 4 trumpets are to be released on the earth to shake the power of the evil ones on the earth which tries to unite the whole world under the counsel of the wicked.

First trumpet - one third of the earth and one third of trees was burned up and all green grass was burned up when hail and fire, mixed with blood thrown upon the earth.

Second trumpet - something like a great mountain, burning with fire, was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. A third of living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

Third trumpet - A great star, Wormwood, fell from heaven, blazing like a torch, fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water, polluting

(making bitter) the drinking water, so causing death of many people.

Forth trumpet - One third of sun, moon and stars are struck and destroyed, resulting one third of day and night overcome by darkness.

Through the first four seals broken, persecutions and tribulations upon the church are to be released. Through the suffering learn the faithful witnesses the obedience. So the manifestation of the fullness of Christ finally occurs as the faithful witnesses reveal themselves as the sons of God for whom the whole creation has been waiting. The martyrs of the fifth seal are the first part of the completions of the revealing of the sons of God long been waited for. But response to their cry for the vindication shows there would be one more group of people who will die for the Lord as faithful witnesses representing the fullness of Christ. Through the faithful testimony of the fifth seal martyrs, the 144,000 of Isreal sealed will be prepared. Until they are prepared, the four trumpets as the judgements of God against the establishment of the evil plan which was accomplished by the 4 seals, are not to be blown yet. But when the sealing of the 144,000 are completed, the prayer for the vindication of the 5 seal martyrs will release the first 4 trumpets signalled (or activated) by throwing of the censor in which the smoke of the incense (the prayer of the saints) and fire from the altar (consuming fire).

These four trumpets will cause massive destruction of the earth, trees and the sea. Not only will it cause the death of a third of all living creatures in the sea and many people, it will also even disrupt the heavens, causing severe darkness on the earth.

The events of the second and third trumpet speak about massive objects, described as a mountain and a great star, being thrown from the heavens and falling on the sea and the rivers and the springs of water: polluting the drinking water. The fire rain from the first trumpet and the massive objects from the sky (second and third trumpets) sound like an event related with a comet or a meteor clash. The fourth trumpet sounds like the covering of the sky resulted by volcanic eruption caused by the great impact from the comet.

After 4 trumpets, there will be three more 'woes' which will be released by

next three trumpets. And the verse 13 of chapter 8 says, these trumpets will be woes for those who 'dwell' on the earth. These last three trumpets are 'woes' for those who 'dwell' on the earth, not for those who 'dwell' in the Lord.

Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.

1 Peter 2:11

We are not supposed to be 'dwellers' on the earth, but sojourner whose dwelling place is not the earth, but the heaven. They are dwelling in the house of the Lord forever.

*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
forever.*

Psalms 23: 6

Where is our dwelling place? If we are not dwelling in the house of the Lord, but on the earth, we will be in trouble when the 3 last trumpets are sounded, but if we are in the house of the Lord, the blowing of the 3 trumpets would be the great salvation to those who are dwelling in the house of the Lord.

The dwellers of this world can't follow the Great Shepherd. If we are settled, how we can follow him wherever he leads us.

*Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. **It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes.** These have been redeemed from mankind as firstfruits for God and the Lamb, and in their mouth no lie*

was found, for they are blameless.

Revelation 14:1-5

Chapter 9

Chapter 9 contains the account of blowing the two trumpets, which release the angels that were bounded before because of their transgression.

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment;

2 Peter 2:4

And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day

Jude 6

5th Trumpet - Releasing Abaddon (Apollyon)

And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star fallen from heaven to earth, and he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit. He opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and from the shaft rose smoke like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke from the shaft. Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth. They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any green plant or any tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. They were allowed to torment them for five months, but not to kill them, and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings someone. And in those days people will seek death and will not find it. They will long to die, but death will flee from them.

In appearance the locusts were like horses prepared for battle: on their heads were what looked like crowns of gold; their faces were like human faces, their hair like women's hair, and their teeth like lions' teeth; they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle. They have tails and stings like scorpions, and their power to hurt people for five months is in their tails. They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he is called Apollyon.

Revelation 9:1-11

A star fallen from heaven to earth

This fallen star is an angel who rebelled against God. The angels who didn't stay in their position, finally they will be not allowed in the heavenly places.

*"How you are fallen from heaven,
O Day Star, son of Dawn!
How you are cut down to the ground,
you who laid the nations low!
You said in your heart,
I will ascend to heaven;
above the stars of God
I will set my throne on high;
I will sit on the mount of assembly
in the far reaches of the north;
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will make myself like the Most High.'
But you are brought down to Sheol,
to the far reaches of the pit.*

Isaiah 14:12-15

And their defeats and fallings are caused by the obedience of the sons of man. Through the work of the apostles who were sent by Jesus, the satan was fallen from the heaven.

And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

Luke 10:18

It was right after 70 disciples came back from the apostolic sending of the Lord to the places he intended to go. Through the work of the ones who are sent by the Lord, the satan had to fall. As Jesus was sent by the Father God as the Lamb, he also sent his disciples as lambs in the midst of wolves. Jesus

himself came as 'the sent One'.

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

Genesis 49:10 (KJV)

Clearly the 'Shiloh' here indicates the Messiah. I believe the right translation of this word, 'Shiloh' is 'the one who is sent'. The Messiah, our Christ the Lord is the one who was sent by God. The one who is sent is representing the one who sends. Only the representation of the Father himself can defeat the satan. Jesus came to destroy the work of the satan.

Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

1 John 3:8

Appearing of the Son of God is to destroy the works of the the devil. And the revealing of the sons of God also to destroy the works of the devil, so that the creation itself would be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

Romans 8:18-21

Appearing of the Son of God, the representation of God, which is 'the sent One' poses the threat to satan. The revealing of the sons of God must cause the confrontation with the devil. What the devil afraid of is not my goodness, but

His goodness. Not goodness of man, but goodness of God. When we represent ourselves, the devil laughs, but when we represent our God as sons of God, the devil trembles and falls. The faithful witnesses who testify the Lord, but not themselves, who confess, 'not my will, but your will be done' and 'not I, but Christ lives' cause the greatest danger for the devil and the rebellious angels. They will be judged and fallen by these faithful witnesses' obedience by the power of the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.

And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!"

Revelation 12:10-12

In chapter 12, we will look at this event in detailed manner and we will understand how the obedience of the faithful witnesses powered by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony was able to defeat the dragon and cast the dragon out of the heaven. They don't love their lives even unto death. They are faithful unto death. The perfection of their faithfulness is 'death'. With that faithfulness they are able to confront the power of death. Only through this we can see the revealing of 'the will of God'. "Not my will, but your will be done" This truth will explain why Jesus told his disciples as follows;

*And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that **your names are written in heaven.**"*

Luke 10:18-20

There will be two kind of books before the white throne of the Lord before new heaven and earth come, before the new Jerusalem comes down. The names will be written on the pages of the book of life, but the deeds of the people whose names are not on the book of life will be written on the books. Books contain all the deeds of the people of the earth and another book which is the book of life contains the names of the faithful ones. In other words, the books (plural) contain the deeds and another book (singular) contains the names.

Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20:11-15

Even their names are not on the book of life, people can do a lot of deeds, 'the works of God'. They could cast out demons and do amazing things in the name of the Lord. Yes, their deeds can be written in the books, while their names are not on the pages of the book of life. Eventual victory is not through the deeds of the books, but through the name written in the book of life. Many people will claim the good deeds even in the name of the Lord.

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

Matthew 7:21-23

The Lord warns us not to rejoice in what we have done, but rejoice that our

names are written in heaven in the book of life. The ones whose names are written on the book of life have no boast on what they have done, because they only have the obedience according to the will of God which are only representation of the Lord's will. They represent themselves not, but the Lord. Not their will, but the will of the Father. That's why in the book of life there are only names who represent, testify and witness the Lord. They are claiming not their righteousness, but righteousness of God. And they are the ones who will not compromise and worship the beast.

and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

Revelation 13:8

The work of the devil has been challenged and will be challenged by the ones who are sent, the Apostles. They are not boasting what they do, but their names are written in the book of life. The ones whose names are written in the book of life make satan fall!

The key to the shaft of the bottomless pit (Not the key to the bottomless pit)

In Revelation 9:1, to the star fallen from heaven to earth the key to *the shaft* of the bottomless pit was given. But in Revelation 20:1, an angel coming down from heaven (not fallen from heaven) was holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. These two verses look similar, but the implication of these two verses are quite different.

First of all, in Revelation 9:1, the angel was the fallen one. It doesn't sound voluntarily coming down or being sent or commissioned. The angel was fallen and he was angry because he lost his place in the heavenly realm.

... for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.

Revelation 12:10b

On the contrary, the angel in Revelation 20:1 is the one who comes down to the earth to do the work of the Lord. He was commissioned and sent to execute the command of the Lord, which is to arrest the dragon and bind and lock him up in the bottomless pit. And this dragon is the ancient serpent, devil and satan. The fallen star. The fallen one. The one who was thrown down.

The fallen star in Revelation 9:1 was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit. He was not given the key to the bottomless pit, but the key to *the shaft* of the bottomless pit. And the key in Revelation 20:1 was to lock up, but the key in Revelation 9:1 is to release.

The key to the shaft of the bottomless pit in Revelation 9:1 is to release, but the key to bottomless pit in Revelation 20:1 is to lock up. In order to release the evil and chaos on the earth, the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit was given to the fallen angel, the dragon. What is the shaft? It sounds the shaft is the way or connection channel to the bottomless pit. This shaft is the way from the bottomless pit to the earth. When this shaft is open, then the things which were bound in bottomless pit will be released on the earth.

So what is the shaft of the bottomless pit? What is the channel and the door that can release the evil from the bottomless pit? The channel of releasing the hell (and the heaven) on the earth is the heart of the man. Without the heart of man, which is the shaft of the bottomless pit, the fallen angel, satan can't release the Abaddon and the chaos on the earth.

Because the authority of the earth was given to man.

The heavens are the LORD's heavens, but the earth he has given to the children of man.

Psalms 115:16

As I mentioned in chapter 5, the authority for the earth was given to man right after the creation of man in order to express the government of God on the earth through the stewardship of man, but when man disobeyed, the authority was used to release the will of satan on the earth.

Whether the heaven is to be released on the earth or the hell is to be released on the earth, it depends on our hearts. When our hearts are given to the Lord, through our hearts His kingdom can be released on the earth. In

that case our hearts can be the gates of heaven, which release the kingdom of God. The gate of eternity will be lifted up by the sons of God who are on the mountain of God seeking the face of God with clean hands and pure hearts, so that the king of Glory can come in. (Psalm 24) God put eternity in our heart.

He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

Ecclesiastes 3:11

The gate of eternity is in the heart of man. At least, whether it is the gate of Heaven or the gate of hell, the opening of the both gates are depends on the heart of man.

The shaft of the bottomless pit might refer to an external portal rather than the hearts of men, but even so, I believe the hearts of men are the main factor for the opening of that shaft of the bottomless pit.

In Revelation chapter 13, to a beast rising out of the sea, a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words is given and the beast is allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. With that mouth of dragon, he will deceive and unite the hearts of men with flatteries and false accusations. Authority will be given to the beast over every tribe and people and language and nation, and all who dwell on earth will worship it, and everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain. (Revelation 13:7,8)

It sounds to me, the beast will have ability to persuade the majority who dwell on the earth and unite for its agenda. Edward Bernays call it 'crystallising public opinion' and this is not other than 'propaganda'. Nimrod was able to unite the world with communication by 'crystallising public opinion' and he stood against God. And he tried to build a tower which reach to the heaven. So he tried to build a tower which can reach to the heaven and in order to do that he used the 'power of communication' in other word, 'power of speaking' to get the public opinion. What is the public opinion? That is the hearts of men! God confused the language in order to stop the project of Nimrod to reach to the heaven.

And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass,

*as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, **whose top may reach unto heaven**; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.*

Genesis 11:1-4

What does it mean 'may reach unto heaven' in this scripture? Same expression is appeared in Genesis 28 when Jacob had a dream on the way to Laban, his uncle.

*And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it **reached to heaven**: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.*

Genesis 28:12

In his dream he saw a ladder and the top of it reached to heaven and the angels of God ascending and descending on it. So it really shows that the ladder reached to the portal which opens the heaven. It was the will of the Lord through the life of Jacob, the Lord wanted to open the gate of heaven so that the heaven's government, his will and his blessing to be released on the earth. The expression 'reach to heaven' really means the opening the gate of heaven, so that the influence and power of the heaven can flow into our world.

In Jacob's case 'ladder being reached to heaven' was the invitation of God's grace toward Jacob. Invitation to Jacob to be the channel of blessing of heaven on the earth. But in the Nimrod's case, this was his pursue to reach unto heaven, so that he can open the gate to 'heaven' which doesn't represent the heaven of our God, but maybe different dimension which supernatural aid for him can come in. And I do believe this is the gate of hell.

So Nimrod tried to open the shaft of the bottomless pit without being given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit. But his attempt was stopped by God's intervention which is confusing the language. In Revelation 9:1, the fallen star, Lucifer was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit and in Revelation 13:5, the beast was given the mouth of dragon to unite the world to stand against God, perfecting the project of Nimrod, stealing the hearts of

men with the mouth which utter blasphemes against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, crystallising public opinion, persuading the hearts of men. In Nimrod's time, the project of opening the shaft of bottomless pit was stopped by God, but in this last days, the key to the shaft of bottomless pit will be given to the fallen Lucifer, so that the project of men uniting the world and stand against God and releasing the power of Abaddon will be completed.

The fall of satan, that is called as the old serpent and the dragon, is caused by the obedience of the remnant of God, the sent ones, by the ones whose names are written in the book of life. And the release of Abaddon from the bottomless pit is caused by the transgression of the people on the earth. The shaft of the bottomless pit is (or very much connected and influenced by) the hearts of the people who dwell on the earth, possessed by the mouth of dragon. The earth is the ultimate battle ground, the dragon will be thrown down to and Abaddon and chaos will be released to. Both evil entities will be thrown down to and released to the earth. Because on the earth they will be judged by the obedience of the faithful witnesses.

'Darkened with the smoke from the shaft'

He opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and from the shaft rose smoke like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke from the shaft.

Revelation 9:2

In Revelation 8:12, after 4th trumpet was blown, natural world was darkened due to the disasters and the darkness covers one third of the earth, but it seems the darkness described in Revelation 9:2 has different implication. It is the darkness which covers the people. The darkness in Revelation 8:12 covers the earth, and the darkness in Revelation 9:2 covers the people.

*Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.*

*For behold, darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will be seen upon you.*

Isaiah 60:1,2

When the revealing of the sons of God comes, when the remnants of God arises and shines, then the star, the dragon will be fallen, thrown down to the earth.

Sealing of the 144,000 will activate the 4 trumpets, the falling of the natural star resulting disaster on the earth, as the 10 plagues released by Moses destroyed the great empire, Egypt, will destroy the infrastructure of the Babylon. Same time, this appearing of sons of God which is the birth of the man child in Revelation 12 will result the falling of the star. The Lucifer will be thrown down from the heaven. He will lose the place in heaven, but will be given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit. Opening of the shaft of the bottomless pit will cause the darkness over the people's hearts. The great deception. The hearts will be darkened, possessed by the lying tongue of the dragon. As we discussed, the mouth which possess the power to persuade and lure will crystallise the public opinion. The people's hearts will be darkened by the smoke from the shaft. Actually the key for the deception is from the hearts of the men.

*An evildoer listens to wicked lips,
and a liar gives ear to a mischievous tongue.*

Proverbs 17:4

The reason why we are deceived is the evilness of our heart. It is not the craftiness of the liar and the power of deception, but it is because of the wickedness of our heart. The sun and the air will be darkened with the smoke from the shaft. The cause of the deep darkness is the hearts of men. Darkened with the smoke from the hearts of men.

How has dictatorship been working so well in the history of men? How the hearts of the men can be so united under the lies of the evil leaders? It is because the hearts of men want the lies. Because the hearts of men choose the

lies from the mouth of dragon and listen to wicked lips. Our hearts are the pathway to the Abaddon, the shaft of the bottomless pit.

So that's why to have a clean and repentant heart is the condition for freedom from deception when the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit is given to the fallen dragon, in another words, when the mouth of the dragon is in full power and authority.

Deception and great delusion will be released when hearts of men refuse to love the truth.

The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12

When the lies of our own hearts are not confronted, then the lies of the dictators, the deceptions and propaganda for the manipulations will not be confronted. Because the 'Hitlers' in people's hearts were not confronted, when Hitler came to power, his evil intent were not able to be confronted. The rebellion and transgression in our hearts is the path way and way prepared for the man of lawlessness, the son of destruction which is the antichrist who rebels against God.

From the smoke came locusts on the earth - out of uncertainty rising of uniformity, chaos disguised

Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth. They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any green plant or any tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.

Revelation 9:3,4

The confusion caused by deception and the deep darkness covered over the people prepares the way for the oppressive uniformity which comes from

the absolute dictatorship.

The rebellious hearts of men which caused the deep darkness and the great deception over people are easily lured by the flattery lips to the deceptive promises appealing to the desire of the flesh and covetousness in the hearts of men, that lead the total rebellion against all kind of authorities and even basic moral values by portraying them as the bondage and oppression of the oppressors or by “the enemy of the open society” (Karl Popper).

*Why do the nations rage
and the peoples plot in vain?
The kings of the earth set themselves,
and the rulers take counsel together,
against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying,
“Let us burst their bonds apart
and cast away their cords from us.”*

Psalm 2:1-3

The rebellious deception portray God and the Lord Jesus Christ as oppressive authority which needs to be rebelled against for the liberation of mankind. So God and his people are considered as the enemy of the open society that is free from the oppressive bondage of the regressive traditional, conservative oppressors. The deception introduces itself as inclusive and all encompassing vision of new open society, by attacking the moral values and the faith in God as the exclusive and oppressive bondage. Ironically under this seemingly well intended project of man, the whole world has been united into ‘uniformity’, not ‘unity’ which allows true diversity. Well, this project of man speaks ‘diversity’ and freedom, but actually it doesn’t support the freedom of speech and the true faith in our God. It can’t tolerate the people who stand against its demand for ‘solidarity’ towards its grand global plan of sustainability without God. The spirit of independence from God which introduced in the garden of Eden to Eve by satan has been ripen throughout the history of mankind. Through this project of man arises the cruel uniformity disguised power of chaos devouring and destroying everything on its way until nothing is left! I believe this is the picture of the locusts covering the earth. The army of locusts swarms through the land and eat up everything

green, total destruction. But in this case the destruction is not for the nature, but for the people on the earth.

In the first 4 trumpets destruction was for the nature on the earth including green plants and trees, but from 5th trumpet harming attack is towards the people who are under the reign of the dragon.

The power of the scorpion of the earth - the sting of death

Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth. They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any green plant or any tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. They were allowed to torment them for five months, but not to kill them, and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings someone. And in those days people will seek death and will not find it. They will long to die, but death will flee from them.

Revelation 9:3-6

The locusts which come from smoke with uniformity disguised chaos have power of the scorpion of the earth. But this destructive power is not for the nature of the earth, but for the ones who dwell on the earth. Those who dwell on the earth are the ones who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. Right after the 4 trumpets, John heard the voice as follows.

Then I looked, and I heard an eagle crying with a loud voice as it flew directly overhead, "Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, at the blasts of the other trumpets that the three angels are about to blow!"

Revelation 8:13

So, first 4 trumpets were directed to the physical world, probably by the meteor (the great star), but next 3 trumpets are directed to people who dwell on the earth. First 4 trumpets are signifying what will happen more in outer world, but next 3 trumpets are signifying more what will happen to the souls of this world who dwell on the earth.

But the power of scorpions of the earth has no power over the ones who

have the seal of God on their forehead. Because they are witnesses who are faithful unto death. They are the ones who will follow the Lamb wherever He leads even to the Cross! They are not dwelling on the earth, but they are exiles and sojourners of this world. Their home is not on the earth, but the heaven. They are living in the house of the Lord forever! For them, the power of scorpions of the earth has no impact.

What is the power of scorpions of the earth?

“O death, where is your victory?

O death, where is your sting?”

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:55, 56

The sting of scorpion is the sting of death! More precisely, the sting of the fear of death. The locust swarm carries the uniformity which is disguised form of chaos intimidates the ones who dwell on the earth with the fear of death, the sting of death, the power of scorpion.

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

Hebrews 2:14, 15

While unity (with our God and children of God) is accomplished by love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, uniformity is accomplished by the fear of death. The Fear of God leads us to the wisdom and beautiful, inseparable and uniting love which leads us to the union with our God and Jesus Christ, but the fear of death leads us to the manipulative uniformity of ultimate dictatorship of the antichrist.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all the day long;

we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:35-39

The ones whose hearts are possessed by the love of God can't be intimidated by the fear of death. The sting of death has no power over the sons of God who are led by the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:14). For those who are ready to be slaughtered as sheep for the Lord, because they know that nothing even death can't separate them from the love of Christ, then the power of scorpions, the sting of death can't touch them. Ironically, destructive power of death only can work to those who pay allegiance to the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil. The power of death can not protect you, but it will torture you with the power of death.

*Then your covenant with death will be annulled,
and your agreement with Sheol will not stand;
when the overwhelming scourge passes through,
you will be beaten down by it.*

Isaiah 28:18

If you confront the death by being faithful to the Lord unto death, you will live, but if you submit and pay allegiance to the power of death because of the fear of death, you will be trampled by the power of death.

And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it.

Mark 8:34, 35

Uniformity initiated by the power of death will torture the people dwelling on the earth. But actually that is the result and fruit of people's own darkened

heart with rebellion, and rejection to love the truth, darkened by our own deception and being unwilling to repent, being not ready to confront our own darkness in our heart. And this leads to cowardice not to confront, but compromise, make alliance and solidarity to the rebellious grand plan to unite the world against God.

Allowed to torment them for five months, but not to kill them - foolish illusion caused by rebellion exposed

They were allowed to torment them for five months, but not to kill them, and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings someone.

Revelation 9:5

This evil ones are given the power to torment, but the power was 'given and allowed', so they have only limited power and even they have the power of death, but they are not allowed to kill the people. Eventually the beast will be allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority will be given it over every tribe and people and language and nation (Revelation 13:7,8). In chapter 9, these evil ones will have power to torment the people dwelling on the earth, but not to kill, but later on, the beast will be allowed to kill the sealed faithful witnesses. Two witnesses also will be killed by the beast from the bottomless pit. And this beast is Abaddon.

The death of the witnesses is not the punishment or judgement for the witnesses. The death of the witnesses is the proof for the judgment for the evil ones. It is the completion of the testimony. The completion of the gospel is the death of the witnesses. The death of the saints is precious in God's eyes.

And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!"

Revelation 14:13

But the death of the unrighteous is not a joy for the Lord. He is waiting for the souls to repent.

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

2 Peter 3:9

He is longing to see the repentance of man. When he comes back, he needs to be a righteous judge. As he promised when he comes, he needs to give righteous verdict. Those who didn't repent will have righteous verdict which is eternal condemnation, when he comes back. The time souls have on the earth is the opportunity to repent.

The death of the saints who testifies our God who loves the enemy, whose love is greater than death, will reveal the manifold wisdom of God which was hidden for ages in God to the whole universe (Ephesians 3:9,10). We will discuss this issue in chapter 10. But the death of the ones who didn't repent dwelling on the earth is the greatest tragedy for the Lord. Because His desire is to see everyone on the earth come to the truth and saved.

When the people realise that their alliance to the power of death doesn't save them; when they realise that their allegiance to the power of the earth betrays them and that the foolish illusion caused by rebellion exposed, despair and hopelessness will overwhelm them.

*They set a net for my steps;
my soul was bowed down.
They dug a pit in my way,
but they have fallen into it themselves. Selah*

Psalms 57:6

We don't understand many times the suffering of the innocent and it looks like the unrighteous grand plan of man uniting the world standing against God prosper.

*For I was envious of the arrogant
when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.*

Psalms 73:3

The power of Babylon looks invincible. But it is not! Seemingly invincible

power of the Babylon will be destroyed in a single hour.

*They all stand far off, in fear of her torment, and say,
"Alas! Alas! You great city,
You mighty city, Babylon!
For in a single hour your judgement has come."*

Revelation 18:10

When they realised that the power they allied to for their own safety and prosperity can't deliver what they have desired while keeping their ego and not repenting, rather than repentance, despair and bitterness can creep into their hearts. When Judas refused repentance, he sought to die, after betrayal His Master, Lord Jesus Christ. Even to the end, the Lord gave Judas opportunity to repent.

Judas was not able to confront his darkness in his heart and by the smoke from his heart darkened his discernment. Great deception led him to make alliance to those who killed the Lord Jesus Christ. But when that alliance abandoned him, his unrepentant heart was led by disappointment, guilt and bitterness. Finally he sought the death.

Interestingly as while the power of scorpion, the sting of death is allowed to torment the ones who do not have the seal of God, yet not to kill them, in Job's story, satan was allowed to took his all the property and children, later even his health, but was not allowed to kill him. Job didn't seek to die, because he didn't fall into bitterness. He still worship the Lord his God. Job's wife said to him.

Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die."

Job 2:9

Because Job had a beautiful and strong alliance with God the Lord, even in an extreme suffering, his faithfulness was not in vain and his faithfulness was able to testify God's goodness. But disappointment and bitterness overwhelms Judas and he sought to die. And that same temptation of bitterness which leads to the death, was spoken by Job's wife. But the alliance

with the Lord was not broken in Job's life. Yet when the alliance with the accuser, the satan who has power of fear death, is at work in ones life, confronting the betrayal of the covenant, he will desire to die. "Curse God and die." Even when you are in suffering and persecution, but if you trust the Lord, your suffering will be a way to reveal and testify the great love which overcome the darkness leading into the kingdom of God. And it will be an expression of the victory of His Kingdom.

I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

John 16:33

But when people are in suffering and pain, and also they are in bitterness because of the situation, finding no meaning in the suffering, it is worse than death, it is evil beyond the death, hell. That's why they seek to die in despair and hopelessness. They seek to die in order to try to get out of the darkness beyond meaningless hell. Only one way to come out of this meaningless chaos is being exposed by the light and coming to God, repentance. In His grace, God will not allow them to die for 5 months, so that they will have another opportunity to repent. So that they can desire the life of Cross, seeking not 'my will', but 'His will'; so that they can attain freedom from the tyranny of 'my will' which devours everything until nothing is left and freedom into the union with the Father God and His Son Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit who leads to the true obedience to 'His will' testified by the death of 'myself', but the life of 'Jesus Christ' in them, representing the righteous government of God that frees us from all kind of dictatorship in our life.

Everyone will die, but which death are we going to choose? Death in despair, disappointment and bitterness in rebellious hardened heart without repentance, saying, 'Curse God and die', or death in faithfulness as a result of obedience in the hope which does not put us to shame (Romans 5:5) by choosing not 'my will', but 'His will' in true freedom to represent the eternal love of God on the earth as faithful witnesses, saying, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.'.

When the foolish illusion giving false hope in the grand plan of the dragon caused by rebellion exposed, the ones who are under this deception will have

one of the last opportunity to repent. Are we going to listen to Him?

In appearance the locusts were like horses prepared for battle: on their heads were what looked like crowns of gold; their faces were like human faces, their hair like women's hair, and their teeth like lions' teeth; they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle. They have tails and stings like scorpions, and their power to hurt people for five months is in their tails.

Revelation 9:7-10

The appearance of the locusts described in Revelation 9:7-10 symbolises the characteristic of torment inflicting by the evil spirits released from bottomless pit unlocked by the hearts of men as daring, deceptive, seductive, intimidating and self imposing aggression.

1. 'like horses prepared for battle' - ready to fight or eager to fight, daring.
2. 'on their heads were what looked like crowns of gold' - attractive, looks promising for success, wealth and glorious in this world.
3. 'their faces were like human faces' - looks like for human, not as a image of God, but as a rebelling image against God, encouraging to be 'human' by rejecting 'God's oppression'.
4. 'their hair like women's hair' - seducing, but aggressive behind. Feminine, but conquering. Inviting to possess.
5. 'their teeth like lions' - aggressive and imposing. Dominating.
6. 'they had breastplates like breastplates of iron' - irony defending. Not allowing offending. Very sensitive to be offended. This is not the breastplates of righteousness. Those who wears the breastplate of righteousness will not defensive, not justify themselves or prove themselves, but witness the righteousness of God.
7. 'the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle' - mobilising the intimidating power of majority, attempting to silence the truthful lonely voices of courage.
8. 'They have tails and stings like scorpions, and their power to hurt people for five months is in their tails.' - as we discussed earlier, stings like scorpions are the stings of death. The fear of death makes slaves everyone under its power.

The appearance of the locusts described here is to reveal and expose the foolish illusion of proud men's alliance to the enemy of God caused by rebellion. God give the people who dwell on the earth the opportunity to repent in this 5 months of torment caused by the very ones they allied to, so that they can come back to the one true God.

Abaddon, king over the locusts, the angel of bottomless pit - mystery of chaos revealed

They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he is called Apollyon.

Revelation 9:11

The locusts that were given the power like the power of scorpions of the earth have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, Abaddon, and in Greek Apollyon.

Uniformity which is disguised chaos leads everything to total destruction as the army of locusts does. Abaddon (Apollyon) is the ultimate manifestation of this chaos. Man of lawlessness will lead the world into the cruel uniformity by rebellious persuading dictatorship to unite the world against God.

*Why do the nations rage
and the peoples plot in vain?
The kings of the earth set themselves,
and the rulers take counsel together,
against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying,
"Let us burst their bonds apart
and cast away their cords from us."*

Psalms 2:1-3

This attempt of 'emancipation from divine oppression' requires 'uniformity' which demands solidarity from the people on the earth. And this

will lead whole world to destruction, because this greedy uniformity can't stop until all the differences and diversities would be destroyed. And then eventually that uniformity that devoured everything will be destroyed.

Abaddon, which is Apollyon in Greek often is translated as 'Destruction'. So Thessalian 2:3,4 reads as follows,

Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.

Thessalonians 2:3,4

Before the day of the Lord comes, first the rebellion needs to come. The cruel uniformity represented as the attack of locusts which demands solidarity into the rebellion against God needs to come first and then the Abaddon, the son of destruction will come. But the son of destruction is introduced in Thessalonians 2:3 as the man of lawlessness first. So because he is the man of lawlessness, he becomes the son of destruction.

What kind of state is the state of lawlessness? A state of 'out of law'. When something is not in order, we call this state as 'out of order'. The man of lawlessness is the one who doesn't stay where it belongs. When someone transgresses, that is the state of 'transgression' or 'lawlessness'. The angels who left their proper dwelling, in other words, the angels who transgressed, they were kept in gloomy darkness, the bottomless pit.

And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day

Jude 6

I believe between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2, there was the rebellion of satan. Transgression (not staying in his proper dwelling place with pride) of satan cause the chaos in Genesis 1:2. God created heavens and earth, but he didn't create chaotic confusion and darkness over the face of the deep. So it is clear something happened between these 2 verses which is the first angelic

rebellion. That's why the process of creation was the reversing the rebellion. That's why the completion of the creation which reverse the work of satan and his chaos is the fullness of Christ being manifested in us through our obedience. The chaos caused by the rebellion had to be reversed. So God spoke into the darkness, "Let there be light!" All the transgression and lawlessness had to be exposed to reverse the chaos. All the situation which is not in proper position had to be revealed.

Timothy 4:1,2 reads,

I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

Timothy 4:1,2

What is preaching the word? Reprove, rebuke, and exhort. Preaching the word is part of the process of creation, reversing the rebellion.

1. Reprove: 'Let there be light' exposing the darkness. **Conviction.**
2. Rebuke: 'Go back to your designated place' Separate the light from the darkness, the day from the night, the land from the water. From all mixed confusion to well organised (separated, designated) order. **Repentance.**
3. Exhort: 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over..!' Represent, reign and function under the authority and boundary given by God. **Obedience** - foundation of the government of God and its expansion.

If things are not in their places and mixed altogether without distinction, we call this chaos. When water doesn't stay in its place and transgresses the boundary, the flood starts. The great flood in Genesis chapter 6 was the chaos resulted by the lawlessness and transgression of men.

*He set the earth on its foundations,
so that it should never be moved.
You covered it with the deep as with a garment;
the waters stood above the mountains.*

*At your rebuke they fled;
at the sound of your thunder they took to flight.
The mountains rose, the valleys sank down
to the place that you appointed for them.
You set a boundary that they may not pass,
so that they might not again cover the earth.*

Psalm 104:5-9

This Psalm portrayed the story of Creation in the beginning. The water stood above the mountains, but at God's rebuke they fled to the place that God appointed for them.

And God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:9,10

The state of the earth and the water undivided, mixed is the chaos. The state of "The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep" (Genesis 1:2) had to be dealt with the power of Holy Spirit, that's why the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters, the waters of chaos (Genesis 1:2), the waters transgressed over the boundary and got into the place of the land. And at the rebuke of the Lord, the waters went back to their place, so that they might not again cover the earth. But in the time of transgression and lawlessness, in the time of Noah, it happened again, the great Flood, the Chaos.

So, why does transgression occur? Why the man of lawlessness cross the boundary, and not stay in the place that God appointed for him and cause the chaos?

*Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied,
and never satisfied are the eyes of man.*

Proverbs 27:20

The leech has two daughters:

*Give and Give.
Three things are never satisfied;
four never say, "Enough":
Sheol, the barren womb,
the land never satisfied with water,
and the fire that never says, "Enough."*

Proverbs 30:15,16

Insatiable desire makes Abaddon unable to stay in his appointed place. He crossed the boundary and rebel against God. Devouring greed causes the chaos which can be represented as Sheol which is bottomless pit. Bottomless pit has no bottom, so by definition, bottomless pit is the symbol of insatiable desire which devours everything and still says, 'not enough' until nothing is left other than 'I' the Self. Ultimate expression of the uniformity (locusts) of absolute dictatorship of antichrist. It is the opposite spirit of 'deny yourself', 'carry your cross', and 'not my will, but your will be done'. The spirit of Abaddon says, 'affirm yourself', 'establish yourself' and 'carry through your will'.

So Sheol become bottomless pit because of Abaddon who is never satisfied with insatiable desire that can't be stopped until Abaddon alone is left.

Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.

2 Thessalonians 2:3,4

This man of lawlessness, the son of destruction opposes and exalts himself against everything and everyone. He exalts himself above everything and takes his seat on the throne of scoffers until no one and nothing left above him. Because everything he posses will be destroyed and displaced from its appointed place, he will be the king of chaos, the king of the bottomless pit. Image of the bottomless pit is similar to the image of the blackhole.

Proverbs 27:20 says, not only Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied, but also the eyes of man are never satisfied. When we live according to the desire

of the eyes, we will carry the spirit of Abaddon. If we carry the spirit of Abaddon, when Abaddon is released on the earth, we will follow him. Eve was lured by the insatiable desire of eyes and transgressed. Her eyes became a bottomless pit carried away by the spirit of Abaddon. That was the beginning of the representation of the project of Abaddon through men on the earth.

*So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was **a delight to the eyes**, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.*

Genesis 3:6

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

1 John 2:15-17

After Eden, we were following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience, transgression and lawlessness. And we were all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desire of the flesh, which rooted in the insatiable desire of eyes of Abaddon. Therefore we were the children of wrath, the sons of Apollyon, like the rest of mankind (Ephesians 2:1-3).

Only one way out from the slavery under the insatiable desire of the flesh is by the power of the Holy Spirit activated by the Cross of Jesus to get into the leading of the Holy Spirit.

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Galatians 5:16-17

We were the children of wrath, sons of destruction, Apollyon, but in Christ

Jesus it became possible not to walk account to the flesh, the insatiable desire of eye of Abaddon, instead to walk according to the Spirit. All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God, not sons of destruction, the slaves under the dictatorship of Abaddon.

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

Romans 8:14

6th trumpet - Releasing the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates

Out of 3 woes, first woe was released by the 5th trumpet blown. Two more woes should be released as 6th and 7th trumpets. And the 9th chapter describes 5th and 6th trumpets.

The first woe has passed; behold, two woes are still to come.

Revelation 9:12

Now the 6th trumpet.

Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God, saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour, the day, the month, and the year, were released to kill a third of mankind. The number of mounted troops was twice ten thousand times ten thousand; I heard their number. And this is how I saw the horses in my vision and those who rode them: they wore breastplates the color of fire and of sapphire and of sulfur, and the heads of the horses were like lions' heads, and fire and smoke and sulfur came out of their mouths. By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed, by the fire and smoke and sulfur coming out of their mouths. For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails, for their tails are like serpents with heads, and by means of them they wound.

The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk, nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

Revelation 9:13-21

A Voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God

The power of the obedience of the faithful witnesses who are coming out of the great tribulation in the 5th seal in Revelation chapter 6, continues in the 6th trumpet in Chapter 9. Their fervent and enduring prayers crying out for the justice are legitimated by the obedience represented by the witnesses who were faithful unto death. When the obedience of the witnesses completed by their death, the prayers for the vengeance will be activated. In Revelation chapter 8, when 7th seal is broken, the prayer of the faithful witnesses which is much incense is the main thing that will be mixed with the fire from the altar, and the censer which contains both much incense (prayers of the saints) and the fire from the altar will be thrown down to the earth. So the obedience of the saints is the key for breaking of the 5th and 6th seals (Revelation 6:9-17) and same time it is the key for the breaking of the 7th seal also, because that prayer legitimising vengeance as the much incense is completed to be mixed with the fire from the altar. (Revelation 8:3-5)

Now when 6th trumpet was blown, again A VOICE from the four horns of the golden altar before God, where the prayers of the faithful witnesses were given to. And I believe that 'A VOICE' is deeply connected the prayers and cries for justice of the faithful witnesses. That One Voice is coming from the 4 horns of the golden altar. The voice is not divided or multiple different voices. The voice is coming from 4 horns, but is One Voice. The 4 Gospels in the New Testament represent One Word, Jesus Christ our Lord. The prayers of the faithful witnesses are perfectly representing the will of the Lord. Their prayers are expressed as 'not my will, but your will be done'. The prayers are coming

from the 4 corners of the earth, but representing only one will, the will of the Lord. The righteousness of God, not the righteousness of men. From that perfect union through the obedience of the saints, comes the one voice of righteous verdict.

The release of the 4 angels bound at the great river Euphrates

Restraining and releasing the evil - dynamic of the judgment

The release of the 4 angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates is the judgement for those angels.

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment;

2 Peter 2:4

The fallen angels are committed to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept UNTIL the judgment. So when they are released, they will be released for the judgment. Until the judgment, they will be bound and for the judgment, they will be released. That One Voice from the 4 horns of the golden altar will release the bound angels at the great river Euphrates for the judgment. For that judgment their transgression will be allowed so that the project of men, the great rebellion, would be completed. So the mystery of lawlessness has been working already, but it will fully revealed with its full capacity so that it would be judged in its fullness. The revealing of sons of God is the precondition of the appearing of the man of lawlessness. And by the appearing of the man of lawless and the achievement of the evil project of men will make the fullness of Christ visible through the faithfulness of the witnesses unto death caused by the persecution and tribulation from the man of lawlessness and his power.

We don't know exactly when the four angels were bound at the great river

Euphrates. But we know according to the book of Jude and 2 Peter, they were captured and chained because of their sin and transgression (2Peter 2:4). They refused to stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling (Jude 6). The judgement of God restrains the evil, but for the judgement the evil need to be released.

The great river Euphrates - A House of Shinar

And why the great rive Euphrates? The river Euphrates is the river where the great first kingdoms started in history. Great achievement of men were possible because of this great river. And Shinar where Nimrod built his kingdom and the Tower of Babel is located in the estuaries of the Tigris and Euphrates river. So the river Euphrates has been the life line of the kingdoms of men, not only Babylon, but kingdoms afterwards also.

The project of men led by Nimrod in Genesis 11 was restrained by the judgement of God and was not able to be succeeded in full capacity, because the people of the earth was not ready to face such a evil. If the Lord let the evil to be manifested in full maturity then, there would be no one on the earth to be saved; no one would be refuse the power of the dictatorship of the evil one, which would lead to total condemnation of the mankind.

The evil was restrained through the flood of Noah as a judgement of God and the judgement of God over the project of men in Babel restrained the evil again so that this evil can't lure the people on the earth to the total uniformity for destruction, until the sons of God who would be faithful unto death, who would not be reigned by anything else than the government of God would appear! By the mercy and love towards us, God sent sub judgements to restrain the evil, until the faithful ones in fullness of Christ to be revealed, so that finally the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ can stand against the fullness of the evil which were not allowed so far because of our immaturity. When the unshakable kingdom is established, the shaking which can shake everything else can come, so that the unshakable kingdom will remain.

See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven. At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens." This phrase, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.

Hebrews 12:25-29

Ultimate judgement will be released when the government of God, unshakable kingdom fully established and tested, so that the final restraining or destruction of the evil would happen in the lake of fire. We can understand this 6th trumpet is very important process towards this ultimate judgement which will restrain the evil ones for good. If God release this ultimate judgement when we are not ready for this, we will be part under this ultimate judgement in the lake of fire.

The four angels which will be released in 6th trumpet were bound at the great river Euphrates, Shinar. As the evil that lured Israel to the destruction was restrained in the house of Shinar.

Again I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, a flying scroll! And he said to me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see a flying scroll. Its length is twenty cubits, and its width ten cubits." Then he said to me, "This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole land. For everyone who steals shall be cleaned out according to what is on one side, and everyone who swears falsely shall be cleaned out according to what is on the other side. I will send it out, declares the LORD of hosts, and it shall enter the house of the thief, and the house of him who swears falsely by my name. And it shall remain in his house and consume it, both timber and stones."

Then the angel who talked with me came forward and said to me, "Lift your eyes and see what this is that is going out." And I said, "What is it?" He said, "This is the basket that is going out." And he said, "This is their iniquity in all the land." And behold, the leaden cover was lifted, and there was a woman sitting in the basket! And he said, "This is Wickedness." And he thrust her back into the basket, and thrust

down the leaden weight on its opening.

Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, two women coming forward! The wind was in their wings. They had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and heaven. Then I said to the angel who talked with me, "Where are they taking the basket?" He said to me, "To the land of Shinar, to build a house for it. And when this is prepared, they will set the basket down there on its base."

Zechariah 5:1-11

The judgement of God on the land of Israel executed by the flying scroll cleaned out according to the both side of the scroll like double edged sword restrained the wickedness back to the land of Shinar. God brought the judgement upon disobedient children of Israel to remove the Babylon in the land of Israel. God called Abraham out from Babylon into Canaan, so that His people would be holy and separated from the Babylon. But when the Babylon crept into the land of Israel, he had to clean it up with the judgement of God. That is the picture of the flying scroll cut the evil from both sides. And then wickedness portrayed as a woman is restrained in the basket to a house in the land of Shinar. Without the judgment, restraining is not possible. Without judgement, righteous and impartial God cannot restrain the evil.

*And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.*

Matthew 6:13

The judgement released to our Lord Jesus Christ upon the Cross restrained the evil from us, but the judgement was released because of the obedience of the Lord, 'not my will, but your will be done'. His faithful witness released the evil so that the evil can be restrained through the judgment unleashed upon the Cross. And eventually the Lord want us to be faithful witness whose faithful testimony may release the evil for the ultimate judgement in the right time. The ones who are faithful to the Lord are hungry for the righteousness and are looking forward to see the righteous King to come and bring the vindication of the Lord. When there is the One Voice from the 4 horns, the 4 angels that were bound and restrained at the great river Euphrates, the land of Shinar, will be released in the appointed hour, the day, the month, and the

year, will kill a third of mankind.

The Lord didn't pray that God takes us out of the world, but that God keeps us from the evil one (John 17:15). He gave us the freedom from the slavery of sin. We are free from the evil and sin of this world, when we are free from the dictatorship of the fear of death; when the death can't reign over me, because we are under the absolute power of the government of God. When the unshakable kingdom is ready, then shaking is to come to shake and to destroy everything that is not under the unshakable kingdom.

The time of restraining the evil will be finished soon. According to our readiness with one voice from the 4 horns of the golden altar, the fallen angels who will cause the death of one third of the people on the earth will be released from the house of Shinar, where the project of men started. Are we ready?

Army of 200 million - death of one third of men on the earth

The release of the 4 angels seems like the background in spiritual realm of the attack on the humanity of the army of 200 million in physical realm. It will cause a great disaster, one third of humanity will be killed. Unlike the locust army, this army will cause the actual death of the population.

Repent!

The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk, nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

Revelation 9:20,21

In the midst of the disasters and judgment, God's heart is still longing to see the repentance of the people, so that he can bring the people under His wings. If He is not expecting the repentance of the people, why the word of God says, 'they didn't repent'. If they repent, God would receive them.

Repentance is the power of opening the gate of heaven. People might ask what is the reason of the death of that specific people, the one third of the population of the earth. Are they more evil than others?

There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered them, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

Luke 13:1-5

We need to listen to the answer of Jesus to this difficult questions. People might think the people who are killed by these plagues, because they were more evil than others. But we can learn totally different truth from Jesus. He said, "NO", and He continued, "but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

The right question is not 'why those one third are killed?'. The right question is 'why am I still alive?' I am still alive so that I can repent and saved. This opportunity I didn't earn, but given by grace.

1. The Lord is calling us to repent of the works of our hands. The works of our hands are the works which are independent from God to sustain ourselves without God. These works are not connected with the source of life.

*for my people have committed two evils:
they have forsaken me,
the fountain of living waters,
and hewed out cisterns for themselves,
broken cisterns that can hold no water.*

Jeremiah 2:13

The human effort disconnected from God is like broken cistern which cannot hold water. Much effort to avoid the judgment of God was expressed

in the construction of the Tower of Babel. The effort to defy the judgement of God refuses the repentance. The pursuit of the completion of the will of man proclaiming the independence of mankind denies the power and grace of the Lord who sustains us with His word.

Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,

Hebrews 6:1

What is the repentance from dead works? The works which are not from the living God, but from the human effort to be independent from God. These works are like broken cistern. And the works are the works written on the books for the judgement.

And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done.

Revelation 20:12

2. The Lord is calling us to repent from worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk. After His people forsaken the Lord as the fountain of living waters, He had to disown them. We are called to be His possession, but if we reject to be the possession of the Lord, He cannot force us to be possessed by him. He has to disown us.

After the Tower of Babel, when the world was divided, He had to disown the mankind and to let them under other gods.

*When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance,
when he divided mankind,
he fixed the borders of the peoples
according to the number of the sons of God.*

Deuteronomy 32:8

He cannot claim us back to His possession, until we come back to him.

While all the nations were disowned by God, because of the rejection of the mankind against God in the land of Shinar and at the Tower of Babel under the rule of the great tyrant Nimrod, Israel, the descendants of Abraham were claimed by God to be God's portion, because Abraham's 'yes' to God's calling to be His possession.

Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Genesis 12:1-3

God called Abraham out of the land of Shinar, the land of idol worship. God called Abraham out from Babylon, the land of Rebellion. From the works of men's own hands, Abraham was called out to Repentance to the Living God of Creation!

*When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance,
when he divided mankind,
he fixed the borders of the peoples
according to the number of the sons of God.
But the LORD'S portion is his people,
Jacob his allotted heritage.*

Deuteronomy 32:8,9

That's why while all the nations were disowned by God and subjugated to the demon and idols, The descendants of Abraham were claimed as God's possession.

If we don't repent from the works of our own hands, we will be in the slavery under the works of our own hands, idols. When the Israelites made a king, they had to come under the tyranny of the king they made. When the people tried to free themselves from the reign of God, they committed themselves to the dictatorship of the cruel gods. In order for the Hebrews to come out of the tyranny of Pharaoh of Egypt, they had come to the

government of the true Creator and God.

*Their idols are silver and gold,
the work of human hands.
They have mouths, but do not speak;
eyes, but do not see.
They have ears, but do not hear;
noses, but do not smell.
They have hands, but do not feel;
feet, but do not walk;
and they do not make a sound in their throat.
Those who make them become like them;
so do all who trust in them.*

Psalms 115:4-8

The idols are the work of human hands. And men need to repent from the work of their hands. Otherwise they will be like the idols. Those who make idols become like them, idols which have mouths, but do not speak; eyes, but do not see. They have ears, but do not hear; nose, but do not smell. Without repentance from the works of their hand, idol making and worshipping, they will have no ability to speak, see, hear, smell, feel and walk like the idols they made and worship. They will have no ear to hear and no eyes to see. If there is no ear to hear, then you cannot repent.

Without repentance, the will of God, the desire of God cannot be represented through us, only through repentance the will of God can be witnessed through us. Without repentance, the desire of satan will be executed through men. The desire of satan is to 'murder'!

Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

John 8:43,44

3. The Lord is calling us to repent from our murders. Jesus said in Matthew 5 in the sermon on the mountain.

"You have heard that it was said to those of old, You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire. So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

Matthew 5:21-26

The Lord identified the anger against our brothers in our heart and insults towards our brothers with the murder. Murder is coming from our hearts. Man judges from outside, but God judges inside of men.

And he said, "What comes out of a person is what defiles him. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."

Mark 7:20-23

Devil himself is a murderer from the beginning and through his children the murder has been executed. Cain did kill Abel according to the father, devil's desire.

*You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer **from the beginning**, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*

John 8:44

The ones who are not free from sin, do not know the freedom which comes from the truth. Obedience is not possible for those who are not free from sin.

The ones who love their enemies and pray for those persecute them will be called 'sons of God'. Sons of God will be persecuted and sons of devil will persecute and murder. Sons are of their father. And their will is to do their father's desires. Sons of God represent God, and sons of devil represent devil. Sons of God love their enemies, pray for those how persecute them and sons of devil persecute and kill the righteous sons of God.

"You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Matthew 5:43-48

The 8th blessing out of 8 blessings in Matthew chapter 5 is following,

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Matthew 5:10-12

And the 8th woe out of 8 woes in Matthew chapter 23 is following,

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the monuments of the righteous, saying, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.' Thus you witness against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers. You serpents, you

*brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell? Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will **kill** and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town, so that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from **the blood of righteous Abel** to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. Truly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.*

Matthew 23:29-36

4. The Lord is calling us to repent from sorceries.

5. The Lord is calling us to repent from our sexual immorality.

6. The Lord is calling us to repent from our thefts.

Preparation for the 7th trumpet - joining the fellowship of His suffering

Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head, and his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire. He had a little scroll open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the land, and called out with a loud voice, like a lion roaring. When he called out, the seven thunders sounded. And when the seven thunders had sounded, I was about to write, but I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up what the seven thunders have said, and do not write it down." And the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven and swore by him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and what is in it, the earth and what is in it, and the sea and what is in it, that there would be no more delay, but that in the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God would be fulfilled, just as he announced to his servants the prophets.

Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me again, saying, "Go, take the scroll that is open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land." So I went to the angel and told him to give me the little scroll. And he said to

me, "Take and eat it; it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey." And I took the little scroll from the hand of the angel and ate it. It was sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it my stomach was made bitter. And I was told, "You must again prophesy about many peoples and nations and languages and kings."

Revelation 10:1-11

In the day the last trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God would be fulfilled. But the details of the mystery are sealed in this chapter. Rather than reading the scroll, the scroll should be eaten by the witnesses, before to proclaim. In order to see the mystery of God, witnesses who eat the scroll are needed, rather than to intellectually understand the content of the scroll. So the obedience will bring the revelation. Revelation without obedience is not possible. Even the mystery of the Cross was hidden until the completion of the obedience of the Lord on the Cross.

Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

1 Corinthians 2:6-8

The revealing of the mystery of God on the Cross was possible because of the obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ as a faithful witness. Likewise the mystery of God which will be revealed in 7th trumpet will be possible because of the obedience of 144,000 sealed faithful witnesses of the Lord.

Mighty angel and a little opened scroll

John saw another mighty angel and this angel was different from other angels, clearly more powerful and mighty. And the description of this angel is very much like Jesus himself in Revelation chapter 1. And as the rainbow

surrounded the throne of God in Revelation 4:3, the angel was with a rainbow over his head. The promise of the Lord is always accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit, the Seven Spirit of God on the earth. His face was like the sun (Revelation 1:16) radiating the light of revelation, even he was wrapped in a cloud, yes the cloud that our intellect can't penetrate. In the darkness caused by the cloud dwells the Lord, when He invades to our world. And his legs like pillars of fire.

*The people stood far off, while Moses drew near to the **thick darkness** where God was.*

Exodus 20:21

When He spoke on the mountain Sinai, He spoke out of the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a loud voice.

*"These words the LORD **spoke** to all your assembly at the mountain out of the **midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness**, with a loud voice; and he added no more. And he wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me. And as soon as you heard **the voice out of the midst of the darkness**, while the mountain was burning with **fire**, you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes, and your elders. And you said, 'Behold, the LORD our God has shown us his glory and greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire. This day we have seen God speak with man, and man still live. Now therefore why should we die? For **this great fire will consume us**. If we hear the voice of the LORD our God any more, we shall die. For who is there of all flesh, that has heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of fire as we have, and has still lived? Go near and hear all that the LORD our God will say, and speak to us all that the LORD our God will speak to you, and we will hear and do it.'*

Deuteronomy 5:22-27

1. wrapped in a cloud - when the Lord come down to us, He is wrapped in a cloud, veiled and hidden from our intellect and knowledge of our soul. In order to approach him, we need to go into the thick darkness. We can't confine Him and His mystery in our understanding. We can't conquer him intellectually. We can define Him, because He is infinite. He is 'I am who I

am'. This angel might not be the Lord himself, but a representative of Him.

2. with a rainbow over his head - the promise of the Lord will be actualised on the earth through the Holy Spirit which is the 7 Spirit of God. That's why only when we are lead by the Holy Spirit, only by faith, not by intellectual understanding.

3. his face was like the sun - darkening our natural sight through the cloud, as Paul was blinded by the light from the face of the Lord, but the light that leads us to revelation radiate upon us.

4. his legs like pillars of fire - legs are the contact points to the earth. When God invades the earth, he becomes the consuming fire. It will not tolerate unrighteousness, transgression and everything which is not from the Lord. He is like a refiner's fire. He will purify the sone of Levi (Malachi 3:2,3).

The Israelites in the wilderness was led by the pillar of cloud in the day and the pillar of fire in the night.

And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people.

Exodus 13:21,22

By day the Lord led them into the darkness(the pillar of cloud), by night He led His people into the light(the pillar of fire). To be led by the Holy Spirit is like entering into the darkness of unknown (thick darkness caused by the cloud) in our soul, but trusting in the Lord in His promise, and in the darkness of our soul He as the consuming fire and the light in the darkness leads us to the 'consuming' us which is the end of ourselves uniting us into the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross leading us to be the agents of revealing of the mystery of God.

This mighty angel might not be the Lord himself, but definitely clear representation of the Lord for preparation for the 7th trumpet blowing, by preparing the faithful witnesses' last testimony.

And he had a little scroll open in his hand. Whether this scroll indicates the

same scroll as chapter 5 which had 7 seals or not, because the Lamb has broken its seals, the scroll is open, ready to be revealed. The Lamb who was slain is the only one who is worthy to break the seal to release the will of God on the earth. The scroll in chapter 5 was handed over from the throne to the Lord who was among the 24 elders and in chapter 6, it began to be broken and spoken 'come' by seraphim to release the horse and horsemen. We need to understand that opening the scroll by breaking the seals doesn't mean the completion of the fulfilment of the will of the Lord on the earth.

And he set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the land. The impact of this little scroll encompasses all nations both 'Israel' and 'Gentiles'.

Seven thunders; No more delay - Hastening the day of the Lord

The mighty angel who had a little scroll setting his feet on the sea and on the land called out with a loud voice, like a lion roaring, when he did, the seven thunders sounded. But when John wanted to write the seven thunders, a voice from heaven, stopped him writing down, but told him to seal up. So the mystery of the seven thunders will be sealed up until the seven trumpet, but once the seven thunders sounded, yet there will be no delay declared the mighty angel.

A loud voice, like a lion roaring, sounded as the seven thunders. The sound of the victory of the lion of Judah will thundering before the revealing of the mystery of God in the seventh trumpet. As the voice of angel thundered before Jesus went up to the Cross in John 12.

*Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. So these came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. And Jesus answered them, "**The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.** Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.*

"Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven: "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not mine. Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die.

John 12:20-33

It was just before the Crucifixion of Jesus and after miracle of resurrection of Lazarus and afterwards right after Jesus entered Jerusalem on the donkey when even some Greeks came to see Jesus. At that point Jesus declared, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified". There will be no delay. The hour has come! And He made it clear that the glorification of the Son of Man is by His death like a grain of wheat falling into the earth. Like the prayer in Gethsemane, He surrender to the will of the Father. "Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father glorify your name." (John 12:27,28a) When the faithful witness, Jesus our Lord, was ready, the voice sounded as thunder came from heaven. "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." Through the testimony of Jesus as a faithful witness, the mystery of God was revealed. No one saw God, the Jesus the only begotten Son showed the Father on the earth. Through this perfect representation of God himself, we are able to see the Heavenly Father. So faithful witness' obedience brought the revelation of God and it glorified His Name. The completion of the revelation which came from the obedience unto death glorified God's Name.

The voice from heaven sounded as thunders before the revealing of the mystery of God through the Cross of Jesus Christ. The mystery was still hidden, but declared that 'there will be no delay!'

Likewise there will be a voice like lion roaring, sounding seven thunders before the 7th trumpet which will reveal and fulfil the mystery of God through the obedience unto death of the faithful witnesses. When the faithful witnesses learn the prayer of the Lord in Gethsemane, "not my will, but your will be done", then the seven thunders will sound and the revelation of the

mystery of God will come. There will be no more delay! Our readiness will hastening the day of the Lord.

Take and eat the scroll - Prophecy!

The scroll was open, but rather than read, John was told to take and eat. So that the word becomes flesh in order to be expressed as obedience. The Lord Jesus said, "As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me." (John 6:57). He indicated that He fed on the Father and spoke to us to feed on Him, so that we live because of Him. Jesus was sent by the Father and he fed on the Father. And He also said,

Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.

John 4:34

So obedience to the will of God was the food for the Lord Jesus. He fed on the Father by obeying the will of the Father. And He learned obedience through what he suffered (Hebrews 5:8).

When we receive the word of God, it is sweet in our mouth, but it is bitter in our stomach. So we only can learn obedience through suffering.

As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.

Matthew 13:20,21

Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,

2 Timothy 3:12

How can we live a godly life? It is by obeying the word of God. When we

obey the word of God then we will be persecuted. That's why the Lord said, by receiving the word of God, we receive with joy, but there will be a time when tribulation and persecution would come, on account of the word. Sweet in the mouth, but bitter in the stomach. Those who learned the obedience through suffering can prophesy about many peoples and nations and languages and kings.

Before we are able to preach the gospel to the end of the earth, before we see the completion of the preaching the gospel, we need to take and eat the scroll which is sweet in our mouth, but bitter in our stomach. The gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world and then persecution and tribulation will come? No. First, tribulation, persecution, betrayal, rejection, lawlessness, great rebellion against God, and increase of the lawlessness will come first, so suffering for the righteous will come first. And we have to endure to the end. We have to eat the scroll to experience bitter taste in our life, the suffering so that we can proclaim the gospel of the kingdom throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

"Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

Matthew 24:9-14

Suffering we will go through on this earth will be a great opportunity to testify the love which overcome the death.

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. To them God chose to make known how

great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

Colossians 1:24-28

Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Philippinas 3:8-11

‘Mighty angel’ appears three times in Revelation and two cases deal with ‘scroll’. One was sealed with 7 seals in chapter 5 and the other was opened in chapter 10.

The two witnesses and the 7th trumpet

A measuring rod and the two witnesses

Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told, “Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there, but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months. And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth.”

Revelation 11:1-3

What does the measuring rod measure?

1. The temple of God - the most important characteristic of the temple is the presence of God. If there is no God in the temple, we can't say that is the temple. The temple of God is the house of God, where God dwells in it. The measure of how much I decrease is the measure of how much the Lord increase in me, the temple of God. Christ in me is to live, to die is to gain to me.

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Philippians 2:21

In John chapter 2, when Jesus cleared the temple, a very important conversation occurred between Jesus and Jews there.

The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. And he told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade." His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."

So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" But he was speaking about the temple of his body. When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

John 2:13-22

How much corruption existed in the temple was not the measure that decided the destruction of the temple, but the zeal of the faithful witness, Jesus, for the house of God was the measure that decided the consumption and destruction of His body, which was the real temple. Wickedness and corruption was not the cause of the death of Jesus, but Jesus's zeal for the house of God was the reason for the death of Jesus. And only through the

destruction of His body the mystery and the ultimate sign of God, the resurrection was able to be revealed. That measure is the measure that we are called to reach as the body of Christ, which is the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

*And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 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.*

Ephesians 4:11-16

2. The altar - the altar is the actual place where the sacrifices are offered. Then why the sacrifices are to be offered? What is the purpose of the sacrifice? The two altars in the tabernacle of Moses, which are the burnt offering altar and the golden altar of incense, both altars are existing to bring people near to the Lord, eventually to the presence of God, to be united with God.

In order to conduct the burnt offerings, the priest has to kill the sacrifice which is identified with the one who give the sacrifice. And on the altar every part needs to be divided and exposed before God. The double edged sword held by the priest is the only way to expose and divide the soul from the spirit.

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.

Romans 12:1-2

Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account. Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 4:11-16

Through the power of the Cross of Jesus Christ, the ultimate burnt offering for us, by being united with Him, we are able to come into the presence of God. Because of that foundation of the ultimate sacrifice, we can be united with Him on this altar of burnt offering, so that our darkness can be exposed and burnt. On this altar the self which belongs to flesh and soul will be burnt, so that the life of Jesus, the spirit can be remaining. Not I, but Jesus is to live! According to the measure I decrease, Christ increases in me.

On the golden altar, the incense which is made exactly according to the law and instruction of the Lord, is to be burnt as the acceptable fragrance to the Lord. Being burnt by the consuming fire is the completion of the obedience. If the incense is not made according to exact instruction of the Lord, it is not worthy to be burnt. As, if a sacrifice lamb is with spot or blemish, it can't be offered as a sacrifice, to be offered and burnt incense has to be exactly according to the instructions of the Lord. Thus the completion of the obedience is 'being exposed, separated and burnt'. The completion of the obedience of the faithful servants is death and destruction of self. Not my will, but His will be done! The fullness of Christ is to be manifested through death of the faithful witnesses.

If the 'much incense' is not given, the seals can't be opened and, if the 'much incense' is not given, the trumpets can't be blown. That's why the measurement of the altar is crucial.

3. Those who worship there - Through those who worship the Lord, He will be praised and He will be shown and represented to the universe. The secret of the eternal love will be shown and be worshipped. His glory and power will be visible through the true worshippers.

And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Ephesians 1:9-11

Measuring is only for the temple and the altar and those who worship there, not for the outside of temple. Outer appearance of the church is not the matter of measuring. Numbers and external influence and outer beauty and power is nothing to do with the measure of the Lord for the fullness of time. Furthermore the evil in this world is not the matter of final measure. Some say, the measure of the time is whether the antichrist is present or not, but apostle John said in the first century, "Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour." (1John 2:18) Yes, the coming of the antichrist shows that we are in the last days. That is the one of the sign of the last days, but what is conclusive condition of the second coming of Jesus? The fullness of Christ manifested in His people, church! Since John said, 'there is antichrists', 2000 years has passed. But still the final full measure was not completed in the body Christ, the fullness of Christ which will be completed with the death of the faithful witnesses. Men see the outside, but God sees the hearts of the people. Beautiful outer appearance can trick men's eyes, but God is not mocked or tricked with outer beauty. He is not pleased with beautiful leaves, but with the fruits.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.

Matthew 3:7,8

Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Galatians 5:19-24

Two witnesses - Mark of the completion

but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months. And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth."

Revelation 11:2,3

The reason for the holy city being trampled for forty-two months is because the authority may be given to His two witnesses to prophesy for 1,260 days. These two witnesses will be given the authority so that they would have opportunity to witness the testimony of Christ in fullness. This three and a half years time is the second half of the last one week (last 7 years) of 70 weeks (490 years) of Daniel in Daniel chapter 9.

1,260 days for the witnesses to prophesy are the precious days. Each day will be so precious and we need to be ready for this precious time of opportunity. And I believe these two witnesses are the representation of 144,000 faithful witnesses all over the world.

The period of time of 42 months will be given to the nations to trample the holy city with blasphemy, so that the faithful witnesses have the final opportunity to be faithful unto death in each precious day of 1,260 days. These faithful witnesses are like the light which shone into the darkness. They will expose the darkness. Because they are the exposing light in darkness, they will be clothed in sackcloth proclaiming the judgement of God with power and authority. 'Repent! The kingdom of God is at hand!'

Three and a half years - the half of the last one week of the Daniel's 70 weeks

The three and a half years consist of 1,260 precious days of witnessing of the faithful witnesses. And in this three and a half years which is 42 months, the enemy will be allowed to trample the holy city to challenge the faithful witnesses. This is the time when the purpose of God to be finally fulfilled. And that purposes of God for Daniel's 70 weeks are described in Daniel chapter 9.

"Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place.

Daniel 9:24

1. To finish the transgression,
2. To put an end to sin,
3. And to atone for iniquity,
4. To bring in everlasting righteousness,
5. To seal both vision and prophet,
6. And to point a most holy place.

The seventy weeks of Daniel are declared in order for the will of God to be established on the earth. In other words, this 490 years is for the completion of the will of God on the earth. The will of God and the purpose of God for the creation of the earth and the humankind was hindered by the disobedience and fall of the first Adam by falling into the temptation of satan. Later God called Abraham to reverse this earth from the plan of the enemy into the restoration of the plan of God. Abraham is called to be the father of the government of God on the earth, Israel. As we discussed before in chapter 7, Israel is called to be 12 fountains to water with the living water to 70 palm trees which are the nations. But the purpose of God for restoration was not

able to be accomplished because of the disobedience of His people, Israel. 70 years of Babylonian captivity signifies the rebellion of Israel, detailed by Jeremiah and Ezekiel, finally understood by Daniel.

The seventy weeks of Daniel, which is 490 years to come, is revealed right after Daniel's intense repentance because of the understanding of the 70 years that must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem.

In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, by descent a Mede, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans— in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years that, according to the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.

Daniel 9:1,2

Jeremiah prophesied 70 years of captivity as following,

You have neither listened nor inclined your ears to hear, although the LORD persistently sent to you all his servants the prophets, saying, Turn now, every one of you, from his evil way and evil deeds, and dwell upon the land that the LORD has given to you and your fathers from of old and forever. Do not go after other gods to serve and worship them, or provoke me to anger with the work of your hands. Then I will do you no harm.' Yet you have not listened to me, declares the LORD, that you might provoke me to anger with the work of your hands to your own harm.

"Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: Because you have not obeyed my words, behold, I will send for all the tribes of the north, declares the LORD, and for Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and against all these surrounding nations. I will devote them to destruction, and make them a horror, a hissing, and an everlasting desolation. Moreover, I will banish from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the grinding of the millstones and the light of the lamp. This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. Then after seventy years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, declares the LORD, making the land an everlasting

waste. I will bring upon that land all the words that I have uttered against it, everything written in this book, which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations. For many nations and great kings shall make slaves even of them, and I will recompense them according to their deeds and the work of their hands."

Jeremiah 25:4-14

The reason of the 70 years of the captivity was Israel's unwillingness to repent and to obey. And Ezekiel delivered the message of the Lord by showing prophetic action regarding 430 years of the rebellion of Israel (390 years) and Judah (40 years).

"Then lie on your left side, and place the punishment of the house of Israel upon it. For the number of the days that you lie on it, you shall bear their punishment. For I assign to you a number of days, 390 days, equal to the number of the years of their punishment. So long shall you bear the punishment of the house of Israel. And when you have completed these, you shall lie down a second time, but on your right side, and bear the punishment of the house of Judah. Forty days I assign you, a day for each year. And you shall set your face toward the siege of Jerusalem, with your arm bared, and you shall prophesy against the city. And behold, I will place cords upon you, so that you cannot turn from one side to the other, till you have completed the days of your siege.

Ezekiel 4:4-8

In this 430 years of the disobedience of Israel and Judah, there were 70 Sabbath years. So the 70 years of Babylonia captivity time signifies the 430 years of disobedience of people of God.

When Daniel understood the meaning of the discipline of the Lord, why his nation had to be in captivity under Babylon and Mede-Persia for so long time, he turned his face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. His action was a true repentance to the Lord.

Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the LORD my God and made confession, saying, "O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and

steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules. We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us open shame, as at this day, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, those who are near and those who are far away, in all the lands to which you have driven them, because of the treachery that they have committed against you. To us, O LORD, belongs open shame, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against you. To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against him and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God by walking in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your voice. And the curse and oath that are written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against him. He has confirmed his words, which he spoke against us and against our rulers who ruled us, by bringing upon us a great calamity. For under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what has been done against Jerusalem. As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this calamity has come upon us; yet we have not entreated the favor of the LORD our God, turning from our iniquities and gaining insight by your truth. Therefore the LORD has kept ready the calamity and has brought it upon us, for the LORD our God is righteous in all the works that he has done, and we have not obeyed his voice. And now, O Lord our God, who brought your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and have made a name for yourself, as at this day, we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

“O Lord, according to all your righteous acts, let your anger and your wrath turn away from your city Jerusalem, your holy hill, because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and your people have become a byword among all who are around us. Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his pleas for mercy, and for your own sake, O Lord, make your face to shine upon your sanctuary, which is desolate. O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name. For we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness, but because of your great mercy. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not, for your own sake, O my God, because your city and your people are called by your name.”

Daniel 9:3-19

Daniel was the one who God was looking for! He needed this true repentance so that He could release the restoration. This repentance made the revelation of the plan of God's restoration that is to come, not only for Israel, but the whole world. And by the way it was actually from the beginning the will of God, that the plan of the restoration to be for the whole world. Daniel identified himself with the people of Israel who committed sin against God. He didn't point other's sin, but he himself confessed and repented. He didn't distance himself from the ones who committed the sin against God which cause this 70 years of discipline of God.

*While I was speaking and praying, **confessing my sin** and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my plea before the LORD my God for the holy hill of my God, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first, came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice. He made me understand, speaking with me and saying, "O Daniel, I have now come out to give you insight and understanding. At the beginning of your pleas for mercy a word went out, and I have come to tell it to you, for you are greatly loved. Therefore consider the word and understand the vision.*

Daniel 9:20-23

It was a great joy for God to see Daniel who stood in the gap, took the responsibility to repent. And God was looking for this one man. Gabriel said that Daniel was greatly loved by God. What a statement! The repentant Daniel fearing God in humility was greatly loved by God. God never ignores the broken and repent heart.

*The friendship of the LORD is for those who fear him,
and he makes known to them his covenant.*

Psalms 25:14

Fear of the Lord in Daniel led him to repentance by understanding the meaning of the discipline to the people of God including him. And because of the fear of God, the friendship of God, the intimacy with him and the favor of

God was granted to him. Only when we are led to this intimacy, the mystery of God and the real meaning and purpose of His covenant can be known to us. Through the fear of the Lord in Daniel, manifested by the true repentance that the Lord was looking for and waiting for, the favor of God was able to be released to Daniel, so that the mystery of God and the most beautiful covenant of God in its true meaning was able to be revealed to this greatly loved individual, Daniel. That is why right after that prayer of repentance of Daniel, the 70 weeks are decreed about God's people and His holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place. This incredible plan of God for restoration to His original intention that would happen in 70 weeks starting with the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem is so glorious and gracious. It overwhelms hearts of the people of God with gratitude.

Daniel's 70 weeks starts with 'the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem' which is, I believe, the decree of Artaxerxes in Ezra chapter 7; it was in seventh year of Artaxerxes, 457 BC.

*"Know therefore and understand,
That from the going forth of the command
To restore and build Jerusalem
Until Messiah the Prince,
There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks;
The street shall be built again, and the wall,
Even in troublesome times.
"And after the sixty-two weeks
Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself;
And the people of the prince who is to come
Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.
The end of it shall be with a flood,
And till the end of the war desolations are determined.
Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week;
But in the middle of the week
He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.*

*And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate,
Even until the consummation, which is determined,
Is poured out on the desolate."*

Daniel 9:25-27 (NKJV)

From the decree of Artaxerxes in 457 BC, until 408 BC which is 49 years (7 weeks - 7 times 7) later, Jerusalem would be rebuilt. That is the time of Nehemiah. In this period of time even it was troublesome times, the street and the wall was built. And after 434 years (62 weeks - 62 times 7) Messiah would come. What is the year after 434 years from 408 BC (after 483 years from 457 BC)? It is exactly the year AD 27. The year when John the Baptist baptised Jesus Christ!; From the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah to appear, there shall be seven weeks (49 years) and sixty two weeks (434 years), which is 69 weeks (483 years). So last 70th week starts with the appearance of Messiah, the Christ and that was exactly AD 27, when our Lord Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist. 'After (7 weeks and) 62 weeks Messiah will be cut off', it means middle of the 7th week sometime He will be cut off.

In verse 27 of Daniel 9 says, 'Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week'. Who is 'he' in this verse? I believe it is clearly Messiah, the anointed One. In this last one week, 'He shall confirm a covenant with many for one week'. Truly He came to the earth, not to abolish the Law or the Prophets, the covenant of God, but to fulfil them. He came to the earth and He confirmed and strengthened the covenant. He gave us a new covenant, but actually it was to fulfil the covenant of God and to fulfil the will of God which was from the beginning. He never changed His mind and His will for us. So in this last week, in the last seven years finally His will be done on the earth as it is in heaven. I believe the sermon on the mountain in Matthew chapter 5 to 7 really was the backbone of that confirmed covenant, in other words, strengthened covenant.

"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be

called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:17-20

And He said,

“You have heard that it was said to those of old, You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.’ But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, Raca!’ shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, ‘You fool!’ shall be in danger of hell fire.

Matthew 5:21-26

“You have heard that it was said to those of old, You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Matthew 5:27-30

“Furthermore it has been said, Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.

Matthew 5:31,32

“Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.’ But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.

Matthew 5:33-37

“You have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I

tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.

Matthew 5:38-42

“You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Matthew 5:43-48

It is so clear to see that this sermon is the confirmed or strengthened covenant. So when Jesus came to earth as the Anointed One He confirmed the covenant of God with many people. He invited many to the kingdom of God. He invited many including gentiles eventually to the covenant which can lead them to inherit the Kingdom.

This last one week of Daniel is the last 7 years that completes the will of God on the earth. This covenant was accomplished by Jesus Christ on the Cross showing the fulfilment of the covenant He spoke by His obedience. He commanded ‘love your enemy’ but actually He showed the obedience and fulfillment of this word through the Cross. And He cried out, “it is finished!” (John 19:30)

Through His cross, because He became the ultimate sacrifice, He brought an end to sacrifice and offering.

But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal

redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

*Therefore he is **the mediator of a new covenant**, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.*

Hebrews 9:11-15

In the middle of the week, which is after three and a half years after the Anointed One, Messiah appeared in AD 27, after He ministered three and a half years on the earth, He was cut off, because He brought an end to sacrifice and offering through that He became the ultimate and true sacrifice and offering.

As the mediator of a new covenant, He confirmed the covenant and as a faithful witness, he fulfilled the covenant by His obedience and He called us as faithful witnesses to this completion of His will. He called us, "Follow me!".

So in order to see the final completion of the will of God, the second part of the last 7 years, the last three and a half years need to come. Jesus Christ became a faithful witness in the first three and a half years. And He activated the last 7 years and laid the foundation to complete the fulfilment of His will. But the last three and a half years are given to us. We are called to "Follow Him"! We are called to be faithful witnesses in this three and a half years to be matured to the fullness of Christ. In the first part of the last seven years, in the middle of the 7 years by His death, by being faithful unto death and through suffering, He learned the obedience and was made perfect and became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey Him (Hebrews 5:8,9).

In Hebrews chapter 2, we can see the objectives why Jesus Christ came as the son of man on the earth a little while lower than angels.

For it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking. It has been testified somewhere,

*"What is man, that you are mindful of him,
or the son of man, that you care for him?"*

*You made him for a little while lower than the angels;
you have crowned him with glory and honor,
putting everything in subjection under his feet."*

Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

Hebrews 2:5-9

Verse 2 said clearly, it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come! Coheirs of the Lord Jesus Christ are not the angels! The following three points from above verses are very important to understand who are the coheirs of the Lord Jesus Christ and to understand the role of the faithful witnesses in the second three and a half years.

1. God made Jesus for a little while lower than the angels - He came to the earth with flesh as a man.
2. God have crowned Jesus with glory and honor - because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.
3. Putting everything in subjection under his feet. - at present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. So this third objective is yet to come. Because this objective is to be done, not only through Him, but with His coheirs, with His brothers.

For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers, saying,

*"I will tell of your name to my brothers;
in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise."*

Hebrews 2:10-12

In fact, first 2 objectives were achieved in order to reach to this third objective. He became the source of salvation for those who obey Him.

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Hebrews 2:14-18

Jesus Christ became like us, so that we can be like Him. He went through the suffering and death, so that we can be free from the fear of death, in which the enemy had made us slaves. In short, He lived three and a half years as a faithful witness, so that we can live the last three and a half years as faithful witnesses. So that God of peace can put satan under 'our feet'.

The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Romans 16:20

The third objective will be done through our feet. Our feet belong to Jesus, because we are His body. Hallelujah! The Cross of Jesus Christ made possible the last three and a half year, 1,260 days to come by making us His coheirs on the earth. The third objective in Hebrews 2 will be completed through the 'sons of God' who are led by Holy Spirit that all creation is waiting for. They are the ones who will lead the body of Christ to the fullness of Christ. But in order to see the completion of the will of the Lord on the earth through the faithful witnesses represented by two witnesses, the witnesses needed to be prepared. And I do believe the sealing of the servants of God is the process what is happening right now. Our readiness is the key. Who will open the gate of eternity? The ones who go up to the mountain Zion and seek the face of the Lord with clean hands and pure hearts (Psalms 24).

And when the witnesses are ready; ready to obey the word of God as faithful servants faithfully unto death, forty two months of blasphemous

ultimate rebellion will start. Only those faithful servants will be able to witness the Lord in those 42 months, which is 1,260 days for the faithful witnesses. In order to obey the commandment, 'Love your enemy', it is only possible when you have enemies. In those 42 months, the faithful witnesses will have precious opportunity to represent our Lord Jesus Christ, by loving their enemies in every single day of 1,260 days. By this obedience, they will be called as 'sons of their Father in heaven'.

"You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Matthew 5:43-48

The faithful witnesses, 144,000 sealed will enter into this most important time of the history to represent and witness our Lord. And these two witnesses are the part of these faithful witnesses of 144,000 sealed ones of all over the world.

The two witnesses - Moses and Elijah

*These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. And if anyone would harm them, fire pours from their mouth and consumes their foes. If anyone would harm them, this is how he is doomed to be killed. They have the power to shut the sky, that no rain may fall during the days of their prophesying, and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague, as often as they desire. And **when they have finished their testimony**, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit will make war on them*

and conquer them and kill them, and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city that symbolically is called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified.

Revelation 11:4-8

As we discussed in chapter 3 regarding Sardis church, the two olive trees are the two witnesses. Only through crushing of the olives the oil can be produced for the lampstands. Gethsemane was the place where the olive was beaten to produce the pure oil for the lamp (Leviticus 24:1-4). Where my will is crushed, where the cross was proclaimed, the oil can flow to the lampstands. As the ultimate Faithful Witness, Jesus Christ was crushed on the cross, He completed the work of the Faithful Witness. And He calls two witnesses to be faithful witnesses to complete the testimony, which can lead them to be killed by the beast from the bottomless pit.

The Lord called us to be light of the world. But in order to be a light, we need to be burnt. In order to protect the candle, if we cover the candle, then the light will go off. Without reducing the self, a candle cannot produce the light. Without self denial, our identity as a light cannot be manifested in the world.

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 5:14-16

No power will be able to destroy the two witnesses, until they finish their testimony. In order for the church to be invincible, she has to be in absolute obedience. The gates of Hades cannot prevail the church. Sting of death has no power over the faithful witnesses of the Lord who are faithful unto death. Until the death as a completion of witnessing comes, nothing can destroy the faithful servants of God. Even the beast from the bottomless pit cannot destroy the two witnesses, until the Lord allow the beast. Yes, the beast will have authority to conquer the saints on the earth, but that authority also will be given by God. Our Lord as the faithful witness was not consumed by the power of the enemy, but was consumed by His zeal for God’s house (John

2:17).

The descriptions of the miracles of these two witnesses implicate who these witnesses are or at least whom these two witnesses are representing; Elijah and Moses.

The two witnesses 'have the power to shut the sky, that no rain may fall during the days of their prophesying'. Sounds like Elijah in the time of King Ahab confronting the power of Jezebel. And the two witnesses 'have power over the waters to turn them into blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague, as often as they desire'. Sounds like Moses confronting Pharaoh in Egypt.

These two witnesses look like Moses and Elijah, at least they represent these two great old testament prophets who delivered the law of God and the prophecies of God. Jesus did not come to abolish the Law and Prophets, but to fulfil them.

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

Matthew 5:17,18

For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Romans 8:3,4

Before our Lord Jesus Christ came to the earth, it was not possible to see the fulfilment of the law and the prophets, but God was able to make possible the requirement of the law to be fulfilled in us, by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh. Through the Cross the way to live according to the Spirit opened for us! So the righteous requirement of the law is possible to be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

In the first three and a half years of the last seven years of Daniel's 70 weeks (490 years), the Lord Jesus Christ completed His faithful witnessing on the Cross, saying 'it is finished!'. In the second three and a half years of the last seven years of Daniel's 70 weeks (490 years), the faithful witnesses represented by two witnesses will complete their testimony and die like our Lord Jesus Christ where our Lord Jesus died.

These two individuals in old testament have few common factors in their life and ministries. The dead bodies of both of them were not able to be found. The place where they were disappeared was the east side of the river Jordan. I believe these common factors tell us very significant symbolic lessons.

Moses

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

Matthew 5:5

The ones who will inherit the earth to rule and reign are the meek. The meekness is the character of the king who inherits the earth. And Moses were introduced as the meekest person on the earth.

Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married, for he had married a Cushite woman. And they said, "Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also?" And the LORD heard it. Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all people who were on the face of the earth.

Numbers 12:1-3

Moses' authority were attacked by Miriam and Aaron, but Moses didn't fight and defend for the legitimacy of his own authority, instead he trusted the Lord of vindication. The meek are not trying to prove their own righteousness. They are not proving themselves, but witnessing God. They are not representing themselves, but representing the Lord. So that's why only the

meek can inherit the earth, because they are the only ones who can represent the government of God.

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Matthew 11:28-30 kjv

Jesus is meek and humble. Because he is meek, he is worthy to take the possession of the earth. As the parable of four fields in Matthew 13 says, our hearts are the field (same greek word of the earth in Matthew 5:5). So our Lord Jesus is the worthy One who can inherit the earth, my heart! He is worthy of possessing and inheriting my heart! Oh, Lord! Inherit my heart. Possess my heart! You are worthy to be my King of my heart. The ones who are meek will inherit the earth. Our Lord Jesus Christ and His faithful servants who share the fellowship of His suffering, they will inherit the earth to reign.

I will tell of the decree:

*The LORD said to me, "You are my Son;
today I have begotten you.*

*Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,
and the ends of the earth your possession.*

*You shall break them with a rod of iron
and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."*

Psalms 2:7-9

Because Moses was meek, he was called to lead the Israelites into the promised land to inherit the land to reign. Meekness is the condition for the king to inherit the land. But why did Moses was not able to complete the calling which is leading the Israelites into the promised land to inherit?

Now there was no water for the congregation. And they assembled themselves together against Moses and against Aaron. And the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Would that we had perished when our brothers perished before the LORD! Why have you brought the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness, that we should die

here, both we and our cattle? And why have you made us come up out of Egypt to bring us to this evil place? It is no place for grain or figs or vines or pomegranates, and there is no water to drink." Then Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the entrance of the tent of meeting and fell on their faces. And the glory of the LORD appeared to them, and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Take the staff, and assemble the congregation, you and Aaron your brother, and tell the rock before their eyes to yield its water. So you shall bring water out of the rock for them and give drink to the congregation and their cattle." And Moses took the staff from before the LORD, as he commanded him.

Moses Strikes the Rock

Then Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock, and he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels: shall we bring water for you out of this rock?" And Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock with his staff twice, and water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their livestock. And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe in me, to uphold me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them." These are the waters of Meribah, where the people of Israel quarreled with the LORD, and through them he showed himself holy.

Numbers 20:2-13

In Numbers chapter 12, when Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses, he didn't defend himself. He showed the meekness in that case, but in Numbers chapter 20, when the people of Israel were against Moses and Aaron, it was different. At first Moses and Aaron went to the presence of God and got instruction to 'tell' the rock, but he stroke the Rock. According to 1 Corinthians 10:4, the Rock was Christ that followed the Israelites in the wilderness. So symbolically Moses stroke Christ! When Moses had lost the meekness, he stroke Christ!

"The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat,

Matthew 23:2

The scribes and Pharisees who sat on Moses' seat without meekness stroke the Rock, our Lord Jesus Christ. The ones who lose the meekness cannot inherit the earth. They are not worthy of reign on the earth with the Lord.

Only the meek can represent the righteousness of God. If we are not meek, we will express our own righteousness, only the meek can show the righteousness of God. Because they will not defend themselves, but trust God who vindicate. Then only through the endurance testimony of the meek, God's righteousness can be represented. Our own righteousness kills the Lord.

I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you.

John 8:37

The meekness allows the word of God to destroy my opinions and my will. Not my righteousness, but His righteousness shall be represented, in order to inherit the earth.

Justice(Righteousness), and only justice(righteousness), you shall follow, that you may live and inherit the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

Deuteronomy 16:20

When Peter tried to defend his own righteousness (protecting Jesus from the Cross), not to **follow** God's righteousness (justice of God, the Cross), he became the enemy of the Cross. Meekness is not to express and defend our own righteousness, but to represent God's righteousness. What we need is not our righteousness, but God's righteousness.

For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:20

To Moses and Aaron who had lost meekness; who couldn't represent God's righteousness, God said,

*And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you **did not believe in me, to uphold me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel**, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them."*

While Moses expressed his anger and righteousness, he was not able to witness the holiness of God. He failed to be a faithful witness of God. The Lord said, 'you did not believe in me!'. So Moses as a witness, he could not complete his calling to uphold God's holiness. That's why he was not able to enter the promised land and had to disappear in the east of the river Jordan. And his tomb is not known to anybody. Somehow his death was not completed, because his witness was not completed. That's why he was not able to come into the rest. Only the ones who rests from his own works can enter God's rest. The meek is the one who rest from his own works can enter the land of God's rest, the promised land.

So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.

Hebrews 4:9,10

The dead who die in the Lord are the blessed ones, because they may rest from their labors. Only the meek who rest from their own labors, therefore represent the work of God, can die in the Lord.

And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!"

Revelation 14:13

Elijah

When the whole Israel was drunken by the deception of Jezebel stained by the Baal and Aserah worshipping, Elijah was the prophet and the faithful witness of our Lord God to testify that the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob is the only true God among all other gods, calling for repentance. He shut the sky, that no rain may fall during the days of his prophesying. He was called to confront the power of deceptive power of Jezebel, so that Israel may be awaken to the true living God, by testifying Him with absolute obedience

to the Lord.

Yet, after his great victory on Mount Carmel, when he faced the threat from Jezebel, who was supposed to be confronted and executed by Elijah himself, he was afraid greatly and discouraged to the point to desire death (1King19:4).

He was called to be faithful witness in such a dark time, very intimidating environment for the remnants of God. God spoke to the intimidated and discouraged prophet, not in the great wind and earthquake, nor in the fire, but in the sound of a low whisper. Yes, we can be intimidated and overwhelmed by the great wind and earthquake like events, but as a faithful witness we need to be able to listen to him in the sound of a low whisper. Nothing should govern us as faithful witnesses, but the word of God, even spoken in the sound of a low whisper.

There he came to a cave and lodged in it. And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He said, "I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away." And he said, "Go out and stand on the mount before the LORD." And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper. And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He said, "I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away." And the LORD said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus. And when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. And Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint to be king over Israel, and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint to be prophet in your place. And the one who escapes from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu put to death, and the one who escapes from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha put to death. Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed

him."

1Kings 19:9-18

If we are overwhelmed by the circumstances like the great wind and earthquake even threatening fire, fear and disappointment can take us over. Then the fear of death will govern us. Jesus came to deliver all of us those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery (Hebrews 2:15). The freedom lead us to the government of God where only the word of God govern us, not anything else. The ones who are free through the truth, the word of God, can obey until the end. Only those who can listen to the word of God which even comes in the form of sound of a low whisper can be free from the intimidating sound of great wind, earthquake, even fire.

Elijah was called to confront Jezebel and to bring the Israelites back from the adulterous prostituting hearts to the repentant and faithful hearts towards the only true God of Israel. But through the threat of Jezebel, who actually was supposed to be defeated by Elijah himself, Elijah got into the trap of fear and discouragement. And he began to be self-centered with self pity and bitterness towards people of Israel who were not faithful to the Lord. Clearly he was offended by this situation. To him, the Lord spoke, "what are you doing here, Elijah?". And Elijah began to defend himself. He said, he was the only one who didn't forsake God's covenant. He couldn't see any other hope in the situation. He failed to be faithful in the word of God which was spoken by the Lord, overwhelmed by the things happened even after the victory of Mount Carmel. Even after testifying what happened on the Mount Carmel, the people were not so determined to come back to the Lord with whole heart, and the threat of Jezebel even intensified towards specifically to Elijah himself. Elijah must have expected much better outcome after the power confrontation on the Mount Carmel. But actually the will of God was not exactly according to the expectation of Elijah.

When Elijah allowed the disappointment and self pity creep into his heart, he came to the point to defy the calling of the Lord. Basically what he said, "I am the only one who left and now I also will be eliminated by Jezebel, better for me to stop doing this. Even I don't want to live any more."

What was the response of the Lord God? "Okay, then I will not use you any more. I will use Hazeel, after he became a king of Syria, he is the one who

will kill king Ahab, and I will use Jehu, who will be a king of Israel and afterward he will kill Jezebel whom you supposed to kill, and I will use Elisha as a prophet for Israel instead of you. They will do my work, not you, as you wished. You said, you are the only one left who serve me with whole heart, but no, I have seven thousand more in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him. You are not the only one. And you want to die, but you are not worthy to die, because you didn't finish your testimony!"

If Elijah was ready to go on to be faithful unto death, God didn't need to raise some political leaders to confront the power of Jezebel. The completion of the testimony of the faithful witness is the death. So Elijah was not able to complete his calling and was not worthy to die for the completion of the testimony.

We can see the pattern here. Before Messiah comes, Elijah should come. Elijah is the one who prepare the way of the Lord. Death of the witness is the preparing the way of the Lord. The completion of the testimony. John the Baptist came and prepared the Messiah's first coming. Unlike Elijah in old testament, John the Baptist confronted the spirit of Jezebel, manifested by Herodias (Matthew 14:1-12) with his death, so he completed his testimony. That's why he was the greatest in the old testament prophets. Even there was the moment of danger that he was offended by Jesus (Matthew 12).

But total completion of the witness is only possible after the Cross! Only by being united in Jesus Christ on the Cross by faith, the witnesses can be fulfilled in their obedience which is completed faithfully unto death.

For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Romans 8:3,4

Now through the leading of the Holy Spirit, the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us. Through the completion of the obedience of Jesus Christ, to those who obey Jesus Christ as the author of salvation, the fullness

of Christ became possible by the power of the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 5:8,9). Fullness of Christ will be manifested by the 'sons of God' whom the whole creation is waiting for (Romans 8:19). And only those who are led by the Holy Spirit are the sons of God, in whom the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled (Romans 8:14).

Both Moses and Elijah in old testament were not able to complete their testimony. So their dead body and tombs couldn't be found. So their death was not completed in spiritual perspective. And both of them were disappeared in the east of the river Jordan which is outside of the promised land. Spiritually speaking, Moses and Elijah as the two witnesses will come to the east of the river Jordan and enter to the promised land and to the Jerusalem to complete the testimony. And when they finish their testimony, they will be killed by the beast from the bottomless pit.

And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit will make war on them and conquer them and kill them,

Revelation 11:7

The two witnesses are the representation of the 144,000 faithful sealed witnesses who will testify and perfectly represent the Lord Jesus Christ in the fullness of Christ for the 3 and a half years.

Completion of the testimony - death of the witnesses, condition for the resurrection

And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit will make war on them and conquer them and kill them, and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city that symbolically is called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified. For three and a half days some from the peoples and tribes and languages and nations will gaze at their dead bodies and refuse to let them be placed in a tomb, and those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and make merry and exchange presents, because these two prophets had been a torment to those who dwell on the earth. But after the three and a half days a breath of life from

God entered them, and they stood up on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here!" And they went up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies watched them. And at that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

Revelation 11:7-13

The death of the witnesses is necessary for the testimony to be completed, in other words, for the revelation of the mystery of God, the love which surpasses the knowledge finally to be revealed. In order for the commandment 'love your enemy' to be really obeyed, the enemy has to be released. In order for the love which overcomes the death to be finally to be revealed, the death has to be confronted. In order for the resurrection finally to be experienced, going through death is inevitable.

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Romans 5:1-5

and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

Romans 8:17

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the

*tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the **outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.***

1Peter 1:3-9

It is possible to be justified only through faith. We have peace with God only through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access into the grace in which we stand, only by faith. Access into the grace of Jesus Christ which enables us to attain the righteousness of God, can be obtained only by faith. Through this amazing grace of God, we rejoice in the hope of the coming glory of God, but same time the rejoicing in the hope of the coming glory of God has to couple with the willingness to rejoice the present suffering, because the faith which enables us to obtain the access into this grace, can only be proved through endurance and endurance only can be produced through suffering. 'Character' in verse 4 of Romans chapter 5 is 'dokime' in Greek. And this word, 'dokime' means 'test, proving, approved, tried character, a proof etc'. The faith is to go through fire and trial in order to be 'proved' or 'testified'. Until it is proven, the faith cannot be accepted as 'proven' real faith. Only after the testimony is completed, the faith can be proven 'genuine' and true. That's why Paul writes in vers 3 of Romans chapter 5, 'we rejoice in our suffering, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces ***dokime***, which is proof (approved). Only through faith we can enter to the grace of Jesus Christ and that faith only can be a real faith when it go through the suffering which will produce the endurance and the endurance will make our faith 'proved' as a real faith. Peter also wrote, 'in this your rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith - more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire - may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ!' The outcome of the tested faith is the salvation of our souls.

Through the trial and suffering, the faith of the witnesses will be proven and testified. And the **tested genuine of faith** of the witnesses which is

faithful unto death, so suffering and even death cannot stop, it will prove the Love of God that surpasses the power of death and His Goodness, same time this proven and testified faith and testimonies will destroy the false accusation of the enemy and the devil itself.

*And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the **word of their testimony**, for **they loved not their lives even unto death**.”*

Revelation 12:10-11

The reason we rejoice suffering is through suffering endurance will be produced and only through endurance our faith will be proven (dokime). That is why the apostles were rejoicing when they were persecuted by the religious leaders of Israel.

and when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name.

Acts 5:40,41

Yes, suffering is the only way to learn the obedience which is the fruit of the faith. Suffering is the opportunity for the witnesses to complete their testimony. When we face the death, it is the opportunity to be faithful unto death as faithful witnesses. We rejoice in our suffering. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

*“Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. **Rejoice and be glad**, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

Matthew 5:10-12

The beast from the bottomless pit, Abaddon, will be released to kill the two faithful witnesses, when the witnesses become worthy to suffer for the Lord finally. Finally their lives become so blessed to be persecuted, then they will face revile and persecution and all kinds of false evil accusations against them and eventually death.

But the one who endures to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

Matthew 24:13, 14

In 1Peter 1:9, it is written that outcome of our faith is the salvation of our soul. Yes, the outcome of true faith is endurance when suffering comes. The salvation of our souls is the outcome of our faith. Tried, testified and proven (dokime) faith is the true faith that results salvation. That is why the one who endure to the end will be saved! Only those who truly believe will endure to be remain faithful to the word of Jesus Christ in obedience, if faith is not true, there will be giving in to the deceptions and compromises. To endure is to testify! When the gospel of the kingdom is proclaimed throughout the whole world, it should be proclaimed as **a testimony** to all nations. Not only as a nice, persuasive message, but as a testimony, The kingdom gospel has to be testified. Through the endurance of the saints the gospel will be testified (or proclaimed as a testimony) to all nations, then the end will come. The end will come, when this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations. And in Revelation chapter 6 also speaks when the end would come.

When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. They cried out with a loud voice, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.

Revelation 6:9-11

Those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne, cried out with a loud voice and asked when the end, the final judgement would come. The endured ones asked for judgement, which is the salvation for those who cry out for vindication. In fact the judgement is to separate the righteous from the unrighteous. Because they were the endured ones, they were able to ask for the salvation which is judgement. 'The one who endures to the end will be saved.'

Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples came to him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed is the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

Matthew 13:36-43

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind. When it was full, men drew it ashore and sat down and sorted the good into containers but threw away the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 13:47-50

So what was the answer? When will the end come? They were told, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been. In Matthew chapter 24 said, the end will come when the gospel of Kingdom would be proclaimed through the whole world as a testimony to all nations. The completion of the proclamation of the kingdom gospel to the end of the world as a testimony will bring the end. Then what is the completion of the witnessing the gospel of the kingdom? According to the Revelation chapter 6, the completion of the

death of the witnesses is the completion of the witnessing the gospel of the kingdom. In other words, the completion of the evangelism is the completion of the death of the witnesses. The faithful witnesses are faithful unto death. The Lamb that were sent from Father God were faithful unto death. That is why the Lamb was slain. And the Lamb sent us as faithful witnesses and as lambs among the wolves so that we can follow the Lamb wherever the Lamb leads, even to the cross faithfully unto death.

Jesus did not say, "it is finished!", when He fed five thousand people with only two fish and five loaves of barley bread. Or He did not say, "it is finished!", when He healed all sick people. He did not say, "it is finished!", when all the number of the followers increased dramatically. Jesus proclaimed the completion of His testimony, "it is finished!", when He was on the cross! The death was the completion of His testimony.

but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8

God did not show or testify His love through signs and wonders, or through political victory, or through success of the ministry on the earth. God showed and testified His unfailing love through His Only Son's death. Jesus completed His testimony as the faithful witness through His obedience unto death. Only after the completion of the witness and testimony of Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, we are able to obey and follow our true Shepherd Jesus Christ. The faithful witness, our Lord Jesus Christ called us as the faithful witnesses. The Lamb who was sent by God and was slain, sent us as lamb among the wolves.

"Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.

Matthew 10:16

Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The

*voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. **It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes.** These have been redeemed from mankind as firstfruits for God and the Lamb, and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are blameless.*

Revelation 14:1-5

And the completion of the testimony, the death of the witnesses is the condition of the resurrection.

The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

Romans 8:16,17