

# The Journey of Homecoming



Joy Li

“I am so blessed by our spiritual daughter, Joy. She lives and walks out what she speaks and believes. This book marks the key milestones of our global family believers’ journey in coming home to the Father. With her eye on the past and vision for the future, Joy honors past and present generations of fathers and mothers, who walk by the leading of His Presence, in oneness of heart and spirit, for His glory and pleasure. Their legacy provides a safe covering for true sons and daughters who pursue Him in fullhearted and simple devotion, not loving their lives even unto death. Amidst much shaking, His Kingdom emerges. His Story continues to unfold as His Spirit and His Bride say, Come Lord Jesus.”

**David Demian**  
Watchmen for the Nations

“Praise the Lord, the book I have been eagerly awaiting all these years is finally being published! Praise the Lord for anointing pastor Joy to write *The Journey of Homecoming*; there is no one more suitable. My reading of every chapter is accompanied by a surge of emotion; I marvel at God’s abundant wisdom and knowledge, and His comprehensive yet intricate plan. I encourage everyone to possess this book. You can share it chapter by chapter amongst your spiritual family or your own family. Let God’s desired home manifest within every family and church family. Praise the Lord for using pastor Joy to highlight, via her book, the crucial aspects of the ‘home’ God desires. It will greatly bless every church and home. I believe that in the End Times, the Church will undergo a drastic transformation, as we are not an organization or a ministry, but God’s resting place and beautiful home.”

**Grace Chiang**  
Senior pastor  
Forerunner Christian Church, Fremont, CA

“I am honored to be the first to read Joy’s *The Journey of Homecoming*. I was deeply captivated by its precise documentation, honest response, and eloquent writing style. Not only is it deeply moving, it also elicits a sincere personal reflection from the reader. It expresses the aspirations of our family members and sheds light on many of the challenges we faced while embarking on this journey together. Joy’s book very clearly analyzes the source of the Homecoming journey. The key people and events of the past 30-something years, and the inter-member bond and their influence are all documented and explained in detail: the journey begins with the encounter of two strangers in Canada, later reaching the Chinese, Asia, then various nations across the globe, through which we witness God’s faithful guidance, great works, and miraculous grace. What makes this even more valuable is the fact that Joy did not merely write the book from the perspective of an observer, but from one who has experienced it first-hand, applying to herself as a family member the truth endowed upon her. It is without excessive elaboration or intents to conceal. Rather, it contains both tears and laughter, struggles and breakthroughs. May the brothers and sisters who strive to glorify our heavenly home find inspiration and motivation. And may they sincerely express their awe of our wonderous God!”

**Michael Lee**

Senior pastor, Light of City Church, Taiwan

“With refined pen strokes and a daughter’s heart, pastor Joy thoroughly describes how our Heavenly Father steers the homecoming journey with His mighty hand and leads three spiritual fathers she holds dear – Gideon, Papa Demian, and Papa Chuang – to first establish Zion’s spiritual extended family in Canada, then the united family of global Chinese, finally expanding from West to East across over 30 countries to create a family of the heavenly Kingdom. She recounts how they headed towards the Middle East side by side, bringing two spiritual

brothers home and fulfilling our Heavenly Father's will. This supernatural journey was meticulously documented, as every piece of information was invaluable. For family members who wish to understand and share the homecoming journey, I not only strongly recommend this book, but also believe that it is a must-read masterpiece. The publishing of this book coincided with God shaking the heavens and the earth, indicating that signs of the End Times are occurring with unprecedented frequency and intensity. May this book be a soothing remedy for restless, anxious souls. May it also be a map for the lost and a source of hope for all, because only through pain can we gain new life, a new world, and a new Jerusalem!"

**Andrew Ho**  
Kingdom Ministries,  
Hong Kong

"Praise the Lord! I have been blessed to take part in the Homecoming journey since its start. Kudos to Joy for writing this book. She and I went from strangers to confidants and family. Writing this book is not a piece of cake. The Homecoming journey seems familiar yet foreign, crystal clear yet befuddling, because this journey isn't about gatherings and events, but about relationships, specifically our relationship with God and with each other. Joy described a God-centered story for the heart: the stories shared between the hearts of different people and different homes. For those walking with us on this Homecoming journey, this book will surely move you. However, when walking down a familiar path, it's easy for us lose sight of the bigger picture—we come to see forests as trees, mountains as forests. This book shall help us see from a holistic viewpoint! For those who have yet to join the Homecoming journey, if you are willing to patiently perceive and attentively receive, I believe this book will unexpectedly kickstart your participation in this story for

the heart. May this book become a blessing to all people, all churches, and all nations!”

**Nathaniel Chow**

Bread of Life Global Apostolic Network

“As one of the few ‘midwives’ of this book, I saw the whole delivery process and the author’s experience of birth pain. Why does birthing a book bring so much suffering? It is because the author is delivering a ‘giant baby’ of the era. She bears the weight of history and her appointed spiritual position. Although I have read the draft many times, I cry tears of joy as I sense, through the words and phrases, the bursting forth of a clear stream prepared by God for the End Times. God is looking for a resting place on Earth, and there is a group of people who are not concerned with the size or results of their works, but only with listening attentively to the voice of the Holy Spirit, instilling and materializing God’s principles in individuals, churches, and even nations. This is the DNA of ‘Homecoming.’ A vivid depiction, this book describes how, with this DNA, people have experienced spiritual renewals that transformed churches and countries. Canada’s destiny is to heal nations; in this book we see that the clear stream flowing from Canada has reached Asia, Europe, the Americas, and Africa. Under the influence of this clear stream, God is uniting the nations as one body—a glorious bride of Christ. We will all become witnesses and participants in God’s will, one that is ‘put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ’ (Ephesians 1:10). If you have already entered this clear stream, this book will allow you to mentally grasp the source and creation of this DNA, which you will come to possess more deeply. If you have yet to set foot into this clear stream, may this book take you on this remarkable, glorious journey!”

**Nicole Tsai**

IHOPU Forerunner School of Ministry,  
Kansas City, MO

“Pastor Joy’s *The Journey of Homecoming* documents God’s works of the past 20 something years; He is the epitome of grace and unconditional love. In a spiritually barren world, this group of people, bolstered by their faith, took a step forward, sacrificing themselves to declare to the world ‘let us come home!’ From then on, the Chinese have had an eternal home, a place of belonging. From then on, Chinese scattered across the globe have found their long-lost family members. From then on, spiritual parents have arisen and the Chinese, once orphans, have become the apples of our Heavenly Father’s eye. From then on, the door to our End-Time destinies has been opened. May this book become a shofar for the global Chinese, and may we join this Homecoming journey together at the sound of the horn! I strongly recommend this book.”

**Eddie Ma**  
Incubator Ministries, Hong Kong

“In this book, she shares many of her life experiences from her years of partaking in this journey, making it seem especially vivid and touching. This book is an important documentation of the history of contemporary church. God led these people, who seek only to live humbly in the palm of His hand, to narrate a story of love and unity. I often tell my close co-workers that this is a group of people ‘the world doesn’t deserve.’ From my experiences serving the Lord for nearly 50 years—getting baptized at a gathering, growing up in a Baptist church, equipping myself through Christian gatherings, and serving in independent churches—I believe that this book can significantly help brothers and sisters of the traditional church find their way towards the path of unity. May God bless the Church and the global Chinese through this book!”

**Ray Chen**  
Chair Professor, Univ. of Texas at Austin

“I opened the draft up from the middle; after only reading eight pages, tears began streaming down my face—it resonated with my soul... I had once wanted to pass down more, to search far and wide for what pastor Bob had said, but it was to no avail. Today, reading this comprehensive and insightful recount, my wishes have been fulfilled. Dear family members, may this book quench the thirst of your souls and help you trace your roots until you catch a glimpse of something far beyond what the disciples saw during the Transfiguration of Christ—the private chamber where the Father, Son, Holy Spirit, and saints have heart-to-hearts.”

**Fred Hsu**

Senior Pastor, Harvest International Center,  
Somerset, NJ

“Twenty years ago, I met pastor Joy through my good friend of 50 years, pastor Gideon Chiu. At the time, I knew in my spirit that she would be an outstanding team member, and it later came to pass that God lead her into Zion’s team. She possesses the character of a true servant: pure, righteous, humble, and most importantly, sincere. As a new bride who genuinely loves Christ, she exudes warmth, determination, and grace-filled life experiences, feelings, yearnings, and insights. *The Journey of Homecoming* speaks to the depths of my heart. I was pleasantly surprised that Joy could find the time to create this literary masterpiece amidst her hectic ministries. I wouldn’t consider myself a bookworm, yet I have read and reread this book, as each chapter imparts insights that speak to my heart and captivate me. This book reveals many amazing ‘behind the scenes’ anecdotes from the Homecoming journey. With every turn of the page, this journey is also inviting each reader to personally delve into the experience.”

**Daniel Cheung**

Church of Zion, Vancouver, BC

“I read *The Journey of Homecoming* in one sitting—I stayed up all night, my heart swelling with emotion. ‘Homecoming’ is a God-given name; it has become the pursuit of countless people today. ‘Homecoming’ is a gift from God to the Chinese and is the spark of the Holy Spirit in the revival of the Chinese during the End Times. This book not only enables us to gaze at distant mountains, but step foot into the valley, where we can catch a whiff of the wild mountain fragrance. Homecoming Journey is indispensable before the Second Coming of Christ, a journey that voices the aspirations of tens of thousands of vagabonds. This book will be an encouragement to many weary souls; let them once again rekindle their spirits and courageously advance towards God’s kingdom! Inspired by the Holy Spirit, this book will surely be an impetus for the End-Time revival movement, bringing many readers to embark on this Homecoming journey hand in hand!”

**Rongliang Zhang**

Chinese for Christ Church, author of *Apostle Purified by Fire*

“The ‘Homecoming’ gathering triggered a spiritual tsunami in the Chinese circle, drawing many brothers and sisters of the Church into this spiritual tide. Once deemed a diaspora, the Chinese, during the 2019 Hong Kong gathering, proclaimed that no matter where we hail from—Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, Mainland China, or overseas—we not only love one another in Christ, but are united as “one body”! And we strive to share this “oneness” (the blessing of unity) with family members across all nations, bringing it back to Jerusalem together. Thanks to Joy’s thorough recount, this miraculous journey, born in Canada and expanded across the globe, was documented. I whole-heartedly recommend reading this book, as I believe that it will touch, shake, enlighten, and bless you, helping each of us to align our hearts with God. May the glory of God fill the Earth.

**Tony Tseng**

CEO, Good TV, Taiwan

“Joy really does trace the roots of ‘Homecoming.’ Gleaned from a first-hand interview, the background of Pastor Gideon Chiu and his wife in Glad Tidings and the spring rains that swept the world in the middle of the last century indicates that Homecoming was built on a foundation accumulated over generations. It describes the two founding couples of the Church of Zion – their love for each other, the family, and the country, stemming from their childlike obedience to our Heavenly Father! It is very motivating to see the familiar life story of our spiritual parents, their presentation of the journey’s legacy to their heirs, and God’s miraculous works. Thoroughly explaining the ‘esoteric terminology’ of Homecoming, it is a blueprint that closely adheres to the Holy Spirit. It is worth perusing!”

**Lydia Wong**

Ladder Mission, Hong Kong

“While cherishing the draft of pastor Joy’s *The Journey of Homecoming*, my train of thought was rapidly whizzing by. This book presents not only her personal spiritual experience, but how she went from being a pastor of a traditional church to joining the Zion family on their return to the mother’s womb, where she inherited and carried the DNA of the family towards the vision of the heavenly kingdom. The retrospection and documentation of the ‘Homecoming’ journey in the book resembles a marvelous epic in which we catch a glimpse of God’s will for the End-Time era: to find His resting place on earth. The book lists the ten most recent gatherings in Canada and meticulously extracts many valuable spiritual principles, like the three ‘whatever until’ foundational covenants. We see God driving Canada towards its destiny as the God-seeking clear stream begins to flow through all nations. As this book was nearing completion, the world entered a new state of upheaval. God’s horn to shake Heaven and Earth has been sounded! I strongly believe that God is awakening family members around the world to enter into the

new wineskin of the End-Time Church—the New Testament home! As a witness to the journey and the author’s spiritual father, I gladly preface it!”

**Gideon Chiu**  
Senior Pastor  
Church of Zion, Vancouver, BC

“After reading pastor Joy’s *The Journey of Homecoming*, I felt as if I were cradling an invaluable spiritual inheritance. I also experienced a spiritual baptism—a feeling of a gentle yet powerful ray of light suddenly saturating my heart... This book intricately weaves the three strings together, recording the tide-like rush of the birth and development of the “family walking together” and the true footsteps of the chosen generations as they walk alongside God. It also presents the personal spiritual journey of the author and her insights regarding such a monumental historical event, giving us a glimpse of the majestic bottom half of the rainbow! As a component of the Chinese extended family, the author, with a passionate spirit, the perspective of a spiritual child, an intense calling, and a God-fearing heart, chronicled this magnificent unfolding of history. Not only did she painstakingly record real-life, flesh and blood stories, she realizes the countless precious spiritual principles released throughout this journey for us. Like following ancient paths in search of enlightenment, it not only allows us see the ripe fruits of life, but also how zealous our Lord Almighty is—seeking, in the End Times, to restore a loving family, a devoted body of Christ, and a pure, impeccable new bride! Furthermore, what is so moving is the author’s humble spirit, sincere heart and substantial spiritual portion expressed through a natural prose absolutely without pretense—it contains many evaluations and revelations, is both thorough and adds “the cherry on top”, and is like the prompting call of a bugle, yet also like the battle cry of a frontline; she has a father’s heart.”

**Priscilla Zhao**  
Chinese Church leader



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Joy Li

Inscribe Press  
Creativity Unleashed

Hillsboro, OR

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# Preface

MAYBE BECAUSE I'M from Church of Zion in Vancouver, British Columbia, the birthplace of the Homecoming journey, or maybe because my spiritual parents happen to be the fathers of the Homecoming movement, but whatever the reason, people keep asking me along this journey: *What is Homecoming?*

My answer has always been scattered and incomplete. After being asked many times, I also began to be curious. What exactly is Homecoming? This journey has touched nearly forty nations of the world and I have been walking in it for twenty years. I seem to know and don't seem to know! In fact, on April 9, 2009, Pastor David Demian was asked this question when interviewed by the famous Canadian Christian TV station "100 Huntley Street." At that time, the journey was not yet called Homecoming by Asian families. The reporter asked him, "What is 'Watchmen for the Nations'?" and David replied:

"'Watchmen for the Nations' is a group of leaders from different spheres: church, business, education, and government, and they are from different generations. The heart of this group is relational and not based on membership. We are not trying to do something, but we wait on God to hear Him speak. The fathers of our nation received Psalm 72:8—that God will have dominion in Canada, from sea to sea. We don't just want God's visitation or another revival, but we long for God to find His

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dwelling place in Canada, for his glory as well as for our country. So we are walking on a journey step by step, preparing for one day when God will come to visit and He will not leave anymore!"

That journey had not yet expanded outside Canada at that time. Pastor David's sharing carried a local flavor, but his vision to find a dwelling place for God has never changed. Now this journey has gone all over the world and brought great blessings to many nations. When the Lord began to give me the burden to record this journey, I doubted that I had heard correctly—I knew that it was beyond my capacity—until the Lord assured me of this assignment through the prophecy of Pastor Imiel Abadir, who was a well-known prophet from Egypt sent by the Lord to help us. So, with awe and curiosity, I began to interview the spiritual giants around me, who are the spiritual parents that have influenced my life. During this period, I experienced a lot of spiritual battles. I laid down the project several times and then took it up again. Without the full support of my spiritual and biological family, this book would have been impossible. So this book is the product of the family walking together.

Special thanks go to the family who live with me as we live an End-Time lifestyle of sharing everything we have. Thank you for your love and prayer! In order to encourage me to finish the manuscript, you did all the housework as well as covered all my inadequacies. Living with you daily through thick and thin is the most real and precious homecoming experience!

Thanks also go to my spiritual home, Church of Zion in Vancouver, especially the 133 team and the Mandarin family. It is my great honor and joy to be able to walk with you and wait for the Lord's return together in the End Times!

Thank you, Renewal Pastors' Family in Vancouver, especially the pastors in the core team of the daily Awaken the Dawn. I

admire your humility and kingdom hearts. I am very honored to partner with you in leading the bridal warriors in the Vancouver city prayer altar to walk together and become close family, so that the spirit of Homecoming can be implemented in our own city!

Thank you, my good friend Nicole Tsai. You reviewed, proofread, and pushed for the birth of this book during your recuperation. Without your encouragements in various ways, this book might be on the journey forever and not return home!

Thank you, my family and friends: Agnes, Steve, Jenny, Eric, Wendy, Jonathan, Suni, Teresa, Isaaca, Cindy, Deborah, Esther, Ellen, Ann, Helen, Rose, Lulu.... for translating, organizing and typing the manuscript for me. Without your help, I would have quit halfway.

Thank you, Mr. James Huang, General Manager of Elim, and the editorial team for your great help; and thank you Sister Ma Yu Ling for your important advice!

Thank you, the thirty-nine members of my prayer team from Mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Overseas! I won't list all your names here. May our Heavenly Father reward all your hard work. Your prayers are my fueling station!

Thank you, Mama Maureen McKevitt from Canada and Sister Yuli from Taiwan, who have been praying continuously for me over the years. You enable me to fix my eyes on the Lord's grace and overcome my own weaknesses.

I would like to give special thanks to my two Egyptian family members, Sister Hoda and Pastor Imiel, for your roles in the final stage of my book writing. Your prophetic urging was like an Egyptian midwife giving the last push for the book to finally come out.

Thank you, the fathers and mothers in Church of Zion, especially Papa David and Mama Ruth, Papa Gideon and Mama May, Papa Daniel and Mama Lucy, who allowed me to interview them during their busy schedules, and who tirelessly provided various information, details, and photos. Thank you for your encouragements, prayers, and covering along the way. Thank you for bringing me onto this glorious journey. Thank you for trusting me even more than I do myself.

Thank you, sister Jean Long, for allowing me to use your excellent prophetic painting “The Wedding of the Lamb” as the cover of my book. (Please check online for the spiritual meaning of this painting and her other works at <http://midnightcryart.com/inspiration>).

The most amazing thing is that, after five years of writing, the final draft was completed at midnight on March 17, which happened to be Gideon’s birthday. When the final manuscript was sent to the publisher, it was already the early morning of March 18, which happened to be my mother’s birthday. I am especially grateful for the hands of Heavenly Father who enabled me to honor my mother and Gideon with the manuscript of this book as a birthday present for them!

Here is a brief introduction about me: I traveled to the United States from China in 1995 and came to the Lord two years later. In 1998, I moved to Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada to study for a Master of Divinity at Regent College and was ordained at West Point Grey Baptist Church in Vancouver in 2004, when I started church planting and pastoring. I thank the Lord for His grace in eventually bringing me to Church of Zion, the womb of the Homecoming journey. I began walking with the Canadian family in this journey in 2002, and it has completely changed my church, my ministry, and my life.

The stories I have encountered in this journey are so rich that I can only give a glimpse of them. If the Lord permits, I will continue to share them in my next book. I know I am always a little girl of our Heavenly Father; through writing this book, I can stand on the shoulders of spiritual fathers to see a little farther. I can't help but marvel. What a blessing to have a heavenly home as well as an earthly home. What a great joy to walk together in the family!

Joy Li

Vancouver, British Columbia

March 17, 2020



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# Longing for Father





## I Need the Holy Spirit!

TWENTY YEARS AGO, I was excited to attend the Vancouver Chinese Renewal Family meetings. At that time, it was known as the Renewal Fellowship, and I had not been there before. I was a seminary student interning at a Canadian Baptist church, planting a Chinese fellowship. This eighty-year-old church had been sending missionaries to China for many years. As I was a Chinese intern, the senior pastor, Pastor Morrison, and the congregation loved me very much. But at the time, I had not yet experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and while I was serving faithfully, I often felt that something was missing.

When I came to the Renewal Family, I found a group of a dozen pastors who came together not to discuss the ministry, but to worship wholeheartedly. What a difference from the church environment I came from! It was strange to hear family-like greetings to each other, such as: “How are you?”

“Has the Lord said anything to you recently?”

“What’s in your heart?”

I didn’t usually enjoy attending pastors’ fellowships, because the first question everyone asked was always either “How big is your church?” or “What denomination are you?” I heard no such questions that day. People shared life stories, warmly encouraged newcomers, and after worshipping introduced themselves and opened their hearts. I ended up staying among them.

## Homecoming of Heart

In addition to attending the Renewal Family fellowship, I started to attend Spirit-filled meetings in Vancouver. I needed to be filled with the Holy Spirit! Being with this group of Spirit-filled pastors, my spirit began to come alive.

At a charismatic gathering I attended with them, the speaker asked everyone to forget their titles and return to a child-like state. He led us to confess our sins together before the Lord, by raising our hands in response and not looking at others. I raised my hands on almost all of the sins he stated, lest I miss any! That day, the spirit of repentance was upon me like I've never experienced before. Despite already being a pastor, it was as if this was the first time I truly understood the pain that Jesus suffered for me on the cross. I was on the ground wailing, realizing what a helpless sinner I was and how much I needed the power of His blood.

After returning home, I felt much "cleaner" in the spirit. The Holy Spirit reminded me of more things to repent of. So I called my intercessory partner, sister Zhen, and asked her to speak the Lord's forgiveness after hearing my repentance. She proclaimed 1 John 1:9 and said: "God is faithful, and because you have confessed your sins, the Lord Jesus has forgiven you completely!" I jumped up from the ground as if a heavy burden was just lifted off me. How joyful it is to have one's sins forgiven!

Suddenly, the two prodigal sons of Luke 15 appeared in my mind: one was the younger prodigal son who wandered outside; the other was the older son who, though having stayed at home, was nevertheless so bound by religion and self-righteousness that he was not close with his father. Both sons deeply hurt the father's heart, and both needed to come home. The word "homecoming" kept resonating within me, and with more words overflowing,

I wrote the lyrics to this song with the same title, which later had its melody composed by Francy Yeh from Melody of My Heart Ministries and was included in the album, *Homecoming*. The name of the song was given by the Lord, and I am amazed at how He prepared my heart. Years later, when I joined the “Homecoming” journey of family walking together, this word felt so familiar!

### Coming Home

Weary, hungry and starving;  
Clothes tattered and torn,  
Abba Father, I want to go home.  
No friends, no hope, no way out,  
Abba Father, I long... long to go home.

Wasting everything I have;  
Wandering in a distant land,  
Abba Father, do you still want me?  
I grieved you, hurt you and broke your heart,  
Abba Father, do you still want me?

His strong arms reaching out,  
Embracing my broken heart,  
Abba Father, bring me home;  
O kiss my parched lips,  
Abba Father, bring me bring me home.  
Persistently waiting around,  
Waiting for the prodigal's return;  
Abba Father, a broken and contrite heart  
Surely you will not despise.

O take my sacrifice of thanksgiving.  
Abba Father, I will abide with you forever.

### Meeting Gideon

My thirst to know the Holy Spirit grew. One day, I heard from the Renewal Family about a healing conference. As I was told that even depression can be healed, I excitedly reported this good news to Pastor Morrison, inviting him to bring his wife, who was struggling with depression, to the healing conference. He smiled, and said: “No, you can go by yourself.” So I brought brothers and sisters from the Chinese fellowship I was leading.

God’s presence manifested powerfully in the meeting, with many people touched by His love. Some cried, some laughed, some fell to the ground. I was not used to these kinds of physical manifestations and was even somewhat irritated. Why does it have to cause so much commotion? Can’t these people contain themselves a little? Never would I have imagined that I, too, would be lying on the ground in the Holy Spirit; I didn’t even realize when it happened! As I had maintained my good image in front of people, being struck by the Holy Spirit was a very “shameful” incident to me. How could I be so weak? How would others in the fellowship see me? Will they stumble in their faith because of my falling to the ground?

I struggled to sit up, but my whole body was completely soft and weak in the presence of God.

My heart melted at the love of the Lord, and the Holy Spirit Himself healed my heart deeply, releasing the tensions from helplessness and loneliness. I did not know how long I had been suppressing these feelings. I did not care about my image anymore and I wept loudly. Bing, my seminary classmate who brought me to the meeting, saw my distress and brought over his pastor, Gideon Chiu. I didn’t open my eyes, but I felt a powerful

hand laid on my head. Then I heard a strong, firm voice, saying: “The Jesus within you has great authority. Get up!”

His words had such authority that I obeyed immediately—I felt like I was receiving strength in my spirit and got up. I opened my eyes and saw an elderly man with gray hair looking back at me lovingly.

This was the first time I met Gideon. Although we didn’t converse, I sensed that he had great authority. I had often heard about him at Renewal Family, and now I was finally meeting him in person. I just hadn’t imagined it would be in such an embarrassing fashion!

### A Spiritual “Class Struggle”

To my surprise, my “fall” caused a great disturbance. Pastor Morrison received a letter of accusation against me. As much as he loved and covered me as a Chinese theological student, he still wanted me to face this challenge. Despite preparing myself mentally, I was still angry and upset after reading the over ten-page letter. I felt most upset at the fact that the writer chose to write to the senior pastor behind my back, instead of discussing the matter with me face-to-face. Pastor Morrison told me that he wrote back, stating that he trusted my character after years of ministering together. But he also reminded me that, with such a rift, it might be difficult to achieve unity amongst us in the future. He was right; even though I spent much time dealing with the repercussions of this, the church did split in the end.

Later, I found out that during the same time, Gideon was also experiencing a similar issue not too long ago: betrayal from a spiritual son. So when he received a letter about me, he totally understood what I experienced. After he replied to the letter he could just have considered the matter settled. But because he knew about my difficult situation, instead of avoiding it, he

reached out to me and the Chinese fellowship even more. He and his team drove over an hour to visit us. At first, I couldn't understand why they came so far to help us. Once, I couldn't help but ask him, "We are not from your church; why are you willing to spend so much time to help us?" He said it was the Lord who prompted them to walk with us on this difficult road. He said, "I see that you are a vessel of the Kingdom, chosen by God."

I was shocked by his answer because I didn't see how my life related to the Kingdom. But, after hearing this, I respected him more. It turned out that he cared about the Kingdom of God, and not the benefits of his own ministry. Over the next year, he would bring his team every month or two to meet with us and hear the voice of God together. Later, I learned the important spiritual principle of the "critical mass." He recognized that we have the same calling and destiny, and encouraged us that God doesn't look at the number of people to accomplish His will. He is looking for the right people.

## A Ministry Without the Holy Spirit

Because of the incident, Pastor Morrison began to worry about the influence that the Renewal Family was having on me. He told me that it would be better not to attend their meetings for a while.

In obedience to my pastor, I stopped, after barely starting to get involved with the works of the Holy Spirit. Two years went by, and one day, out of the blue, Pastor Morrison asked me, "How is your Renewal Fellowship?"

"Didn't you not want me to go? I haven't gone since," I replied.

"You really haven't gone since?"

"I really haven't gone," I said, but added my honest thoughts. While my ministry seemed decent on the surface, I was exhausted. I needed the connection with and support from the Chinese

pastors, and moreover I needed the Holy Spirit to renew my life.

He finally said, “Well, go! I bless you.” I think he was moved by my sincere obedience, and I was moved by his sincere blessing.

Looking into his loving, understanding, and trusting eyes, I almost broke down in tears in that moment, moved by someone who, despite our differences in theology, cared for my heart and my well-being.

I must say that I truly love my Baptist family very much. They nurtured in me a respect and awe for God’s Word. This is a precious inheritance in my life from the Baptist denomination. I honour the formative role they played in my life. The inheritance from our Heavenly Father is so rich that, as I later entered into revelations from the Holy Spirit, my gratitude only increased for the solid foundation I have built under the wings of the Baptist church, based on the fear of the Lord and a love for His Word.

Once again, Pastor Morrison’s trusting and generous heart opened a new door for me, and he blessed me to explore areas which he himself was not acquainted with. In that moment as I saw his fatherly gaze; it was as if I caught the eyes of the heavenly Father.

As I was nearing graduation from seminary, Pastor Morrison invited me, on behalf of the church, to stay and continue shepherding the Chinese fellowship I had started. As this was like asking a mother to continue caring for the children she gave birth to, I had not considered any other option, so I naturally accepted the offer. I shared with Pastor Morrison, however, that I had one request: I needed to connect and walk with the local Chinese pastors. I suggested inviting Gideon and the other pastors from the Renewal Family to attend my ordination. The more I ministered to believers who came from Mainland China, the more I realized the need for the power of the Holy Spirit in ministries of healing and deliverance. Otherwise, people would

quickly return to their old ways. It was crucial for me to have spiritual guidance and covering as I ministered this way.

So, I arranged a meeting with Pastor Morrison and Gideon. Only then did I find out that all three of us graduated from the same seminary. They both encouraged me and we had a great time chatting. I felt as if two separated family members—the so-called charismatics and evangelicals—sat down together and met frankly with each other, and it was because of a little girl like me! On May 30, 2004, Gideon brought the Renewal Family pastors to my church, and together with the Baptist denomination, they ordained and blessed me. Little did the Baptist Union know that the date they chose for my ordination just happened to be Pentecost, and also my birthday!

Gideon often encouraged me about this “coincidence,” telling me “Remember your Pentecost! Remember that you were chosen by God!” Gradually, I also started to embrace this sign of being chosen by the Father and reminded myself in times of weakness that I need to live in the Holy Spirit.

### The Church lost her Father

The Father gave Pastor Morrison a love for China. He was one of the nicest people I've met, but even the best person is still human. Back then, everything in our church was decided by vote among the deacons. The supernatural good work of God could not be borne solely by man's natural wisdom and faithfulness. Gradually, Pastor Morrison burnt out, and his wife had been suffering from depression and it worsened. He served his people diligently but did not see changes in the lives of his congregation. The Chinese fellowship was his only consolation. Every Easter, Christmas, and Thanksgiving, we would have new people getting baptized. Sometimes, all the newly baptized believers during the year were from the Chinese fellowship. Regardless, I always asked

him to baptize his “Chinese children.” He felt honoured to do so!

He had been waiting for the right time to leave the ministry and had been asking God for a sign of confirmation. To my surprise, his confirmation came from a message I preached during my annual sermon to the joint English-Chinese congregation, titled “Entering into A New Season.” On that day, he announced his resignation to the congregation. Everyone was shocked, and I was even more stunned! This was the outcome I had most dreaded. As much as he wanted to continue being a father, he seemed like a father who had lost his strength and suffocated in this system, powerless to save himself and unable to move forward.

The day he was leaving, he came into my office and gave me a big doll, thanking me for honouring him all these years. I hugged the doll, crying uncontrollably, like a child who had just lost her father.

I also felt as if the church had suddenly lost its father. As a novice pastor, I really needed the guidance and covering of spiritual elders. How can I find a spiritual father? This was the cry in my heart! I continued to pray and ask God to give me another spiritual father.

The Lord heard my prayer. To my surprise, the Lord gave me not only one father, but many fathers and mothers. The first were four spiritual parents who were in a covenant relationship with one another. Together, they had started the Church of Zion, the womb of the Homecoming Journey.

Before sharing more about these spiritual fathers and mothers, let us first discuss the biblical truths regarding such titles.

### Seeing a Father

During these years of walking with the Family Journey, quite a few of my past theological concepts have gone through

revolutionary changes and reforms without me even realizing it. For example, regarding curses: If I became aware of this type of issue, I would pray or fast, striving to “break” the curse, though I often felt that it had not been broken. But in recent years, the Holy Spirit has continued to unravel mysteries, one of which is contained in Malachi 4:5-6. During a Homecoming gathering in Japan, a pastor and his son bravely shared on stage the struggles they have had for many years and they reconciled with each other. The presence of God deeply impacted the entire venue, and I was powerfully moved, shedding tears along with everyone else. I heard the Lord say, “Curses are not broken by ‘cutting.’ When two generations align with each other and love each other, the curse is naturally removed.” This was a sudden realization for me! The alignment of the father and the son, and the love between the two generations are the weapons to remove the curse.

Another concept that needed renewing was my understanding of the role of spiritual parents. Building a family has been an important work of the Holy Spirit during these years. Merely acknowledging family members is not enough, for we must also recognize who the parents of the home are. Otherwise, if everyone is treated as if they are the same generation, we could still be a group of orphans. It takes two generations turning to each other to break curses. The enemy only needs to destroy the relationship between two generations for all other relationships to collapse. In a sense, it’s like a conveyor belt; when one part breaks, the whole belt stops moving.

Therefore, finding true parents is the first step to removing a curse. That’s why the most important task for Gideon and David (who I will introduce later) was not to hold large gatherings, but to find a “critical mass” of people and acknowledge local spiritual fathers and mothers. It doesn’t matter if one explicitly calls them

“father” or not. The point is whether you can truly acknowledge your spiritual parents in your heart.

Many people question calling spiritual parents “Papa” and “Mama.” Only the Holy Spirit can enlighten us, so that God’s Word becomes revelation and not hindrance. Some may point to what Jesus said in Matthew 23:8-11 as a counterargument:

But you are not to be called “Rabbi,” for you have one Teacher, and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth “father,” for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one Instructor, the Messiah. The greatest among you will be your servant.

Verse 9 states “do not call anyone on earth ‘father.’” This has led some to believe that calling spiritual parents “Papa” and “Mama” contradicts Jesus’s teaching. But when we look at the context of this teaching, we clearly see that Jesus was rebuking the Pharisees of that culture, pointing out their issues because they focused on outward rituals and titles. Clearly this verse is not a general statement of truth, otherwise we also cannot call anyone “teacher,” which is what verse ten entails. In fact, “teacher” is one of the five ministry offices: “So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers,” (Ephesians 4:11). In the New Testament, “father” appears 367 times; some verses refer to heavenly Father, some to earthly fathers. So, in our popular language today, if we address people as teacher or father, surely Jesus will not rebuke us!

Clearly the above passage is not a general statement of truth. On the contrary, some important prophets are called “father” multiple times in the Bible. The use of different titles to address people can be found throughout Scripture.

In 1 Kings 19:16-19, God commanded Elijah to take Elisha under his wing as the next prophet, so he threw his cloak around Elisha, but Elisha did not receive Elijah’s anointing then, nor did

he receive it as he resolutely followed Elijah to different places before the older prophet was taken up into heaven. So, when did Elisha receive Elijah's anointing? I observed that, from the first encounter of these two generations of prophets until they were separated by the chariots and horsemen of Israel (2 Kings 2:12), Elisha never called Elijah his father and did not object to other disciples referring to Elijah as his master. (2 Kings 2:3-5). It was not until Elijah reminded Elisha "if you see me when I am taken" that he would receive his anointing (2 Kings 2:10). How could Elisha not "see" Elijah when he was guarding him all this time?

In fact, in this passage, "seeing" is not of the physical eyes, but a seeing in the spirit. God opened Elisha's spiritual eyes to "see" that the prophet he followed was truly a father! Hence the cry, "My father! My father!" Elijah's cloak that was once thrown over him was no longer the same when he picked it up as a son. Only sons can receive inheritance. Elisha finally received Elijah's anointing, with a double portion (2 Kings 2:9).

In the New Testament, the apostle Paul also refers to himself as a "father" multiple times. To the Philippians, he said, "But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel" (Philippians 2:22). And to the Thessalonians: "For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children" (1 Thessalonians 2:11). Paul addresses individuals in a similar fashion:

"To Timothy my true son in the faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord." (1 Timothy 1:2)

"To Titus, my true son in our common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior." (Titus 1:4)

"I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains." (Philemon 1:10)

From the verses above, we see that Paul was a father to many people. He did not “violate” Jesus’ teaching in the Gospel of Matthew, but he truly understood the will of God and saw that the church of God is the family of the living God. In 1 Corinthians 4:14-16, he also emphasized that he should not only be a “master,” but a father, and further encouraged the disciples to “imitate” him (1 Corinthians 4:16).

What is to be imitated? We read in the previous verse, “Even if you had ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel” (1 Corinthians 4:15). Paul was saying to imitate him as a father.

Spiritual fathers and mothers are not just personal titles in a specific sense but could also be more general titles of honour. We can honour people as spiritual fathers and mothers, even if they did not give birth to us directly or have the opportunity to nurture us in faith. We honour them not only for what they have done for us personally, but also for what they have done for this generation.

### Spiritual Fathers and Mothers

Since the beginning of the Homecoming gatherings, the role of spiritual parents has always been crucial and the names of various individuals would be announced publicly. These people are the spiritual covering and protection for the gathering. There is a consensus on who may be spiritual parents:

1. Their faithful service in the church has been affirmed.
2. Their hearts carry more than personal visions and ministries.
3. They are willing to pay any price to see God’s kingdom established.

4. They are usually older adults; but there also have been young leaders, because being a spiritual parent is about God's given grace and the trust and respect gained in the body of Christ, which is not directly linked to age and influence.

The reason David Demian values spiritual covering so much, he admits, is because he learned hard lessons through many years of ministry in Egypt when he was younger. At that time, he had great passion and vision but lacked wisdom, so many times he "hit walls" while running with God's vision, leaving him and those who followed him wounded and confused. He knows deeply that spiritual parents, with their longer years of experience journeying with God, have more wisdom to deal with potential future difficulties and greater understanding of how to nullify the enemy's plans.

David has said: "If younger leaders could learn to walk under the covering of trusted spiritual fathers and mothers, we could avoid a lot of "needless casualties of war" in our pursuits for God. So as I began this new 'journey' in Canada, I was determined not to go it alone. I knew the covering of the fathers and mothers would be even more important in the gatherings, because we were venturing into new territory, trying something we had never done before. On the one hand, we wanted to give the maximum freedom to the Holy Spirit to direct the meetings but at the same time, we needed to ensure that we maintained proper spiritual order."<sup>1</sup>

Although spiritual parents are crucial, this is also the part of Christ's body that the enemy attacks most because spiritual parents also need to go through a maturing process. Especially if the spiritual parents have not experienced the protection of

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1 David Demian, "Kingdom Experiment." <https://watchmen.org/resources>.

true spiritual parents themselves, they can easily cause people to stumble. When I interviewed David about this subject, he first talked about how God can use imperfect vessels, as long as they are willing to let God continually shape and adjust their lives

The alignment of the father and the son, and the love between the two generations are the weapon to remove the curse.

in the process of being used by Him. It is the same with spiritual parents. He used the problems that arose in the Shepherding or Discipleship Movement during the 1970s and 80s as an admonition, emphasizing that only people who are broken and humble will not seek to control

the flock, but will become true parents who are humble and will walk with God together.

### David Demian on the Shepherding Movement

In the Azusa Street Revival and the later charismatic movement, the Holy Spirit was present in His power, but because the human vessels He worked through were imperfect, divisions came. People became tired of running around and hearing people say, “God said this” and “God said that.” In the presence of the Lord, we see more of our nakedness. This is the time when fathers and mothers are most needed to walk with the body to help them come to maturity. However, people tried to manage God’s work through an organizational structure. So, in the early 1970s what came to be called the “Shepherding Movement” emerged, led by some of the most anointed teachers of the time. Their idea was to bring order, so leaders were appointed to oversee people’s conduct. But it was not easy unless the leaders were broken enough, humble enough, and sensitive enough to the Holy Spirit to enable them to be genuine fathers and mothers. Unfortunately,

the movement quickly turned into control. People who wanted to buy a house would consult with their leaders, saying things such as, “I heard the Lord say I should buy a house.”

Leaders would respond, “No, don’t buy this one, buy that.” It became micro-management, instead of leading people to progress in their ability to seek God themselves. Eventually the movement lost its vitality and faded.

We have seen this happen repeatedly since the time of the apostles. The Catholic church has mediators; Orthodox church has mediators; the Charismatic movement had the Shepherding Movement with “shepherds” who acted as mediators for the people. Catholic priests call themselves shepherds and try to help people connect with God. However, they do not help people to listen to God for themselves; they have people come to them to hear what God has to say. This happened with Moses and the Israelites. The people said: “You go and hear God speak. We won’t.” So Moses went and heard God, but the people were not connected with God. Eventually they built the golden calf. This is a common problem.

The tendency to want to control is one of the hardest things to avoid for parents, both natural and spiritual alike. What moved me most about the fathers of the Homecoming team is that they are not controlling! Their free and relaxed attitude has allowed us younger ones to just be ourselves in front of them.

Church of Zion is the womb of the Homecoming Journey. It is not a perfect church, nor are the spiritual parents perfect. But

In the presence of the Lord, we see more of our nakedness. This is the time when fathers and mothers are most needed to walk with the body to help them come to maturity

God chose them and tried them, and in the process gave them hearts of fathers and mothers. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the four “founding members” of the church have, since the beginning, longed to build their church into His home, so that in His home He can find a resting place.

Therefore, we have become accustomed to these titles in our church home. From now on I will refer to them as “Gideon,” “Mama May,” “Papa Daniel,” “Mama Lucy”; as well as the fathers in Zion who joined later, “David,” “Papa Albert,” and “Papa Imiel,” just as we usually call them day to day.

2

## The Womb of Homecoming (I): The Quartet





## Four Founding Veterans of Zion

“EVER SINCE YOU have been married, you never ever had a fight?” I stared at Gideon and May with widened eyes.

“No, opinions can differ, but there’s no need to quarrel, right?” Gideon looked at May tenderly, as he answered my question.

“It’s true; for more than thirty years, we have never seen them fight,” Daniel added. I am used to Daniel always standing behind his good friend, Gideon. But what he said next made my jaw drop!

“Lucy and I have never had a fight either!” He smiled and hugged his beloved wife.

“What! You two as well? You’ve never quarreled?”

“The four of us have been together for fifty-seven years now. We don’t fight!” they said, almost in unison.

I was speechless.

I had just met two couples who have never fought—an almost extinct phenomenon! And not just two couples, but four friends who have never fought with each other. I was caught a little off guard; and fortunate to have heard them say this themselves. Otherwise, who would believe it?

## Early Days

Gideon Chiu and Daniel Cheung were classmates at a Christian high school in Hong Kong starting their second year. Since then, they have been best friends and often played basketball together. May was a transfer student who joined their class two years later. It was said that Gideon originally intended to stay single and serve the Lord, but after May appeared, he let go of his dream of remaining a noble bachelor. A basketball star and a beautiful prom queen fell in love at first sight.

In 1975, God “stirred the eagle’s nest.” He spoke to Gideon clearly to go to Canada. He only applied to one university in Vancouver: Simon Fraser University (SFU), and after his acceptance, he went to Vancouver alone. Gideon and Daniel did not keep much contact after completing their final exams in high school. They were both probably busy falling in love! Gideon heard that Daniel had gone to Canada as well, but he did not know what part of the country.

Later, he learned from Daniel’s father that they were in the same city, attending the same university! He sent a telegram to Daniel but did not receive a reply. It turned out that Daniel had just married his bride, Lucy, and they were on their honeymoon. What is even more interesting is that the day Gideon landed in Vancouver was the same day Daniel and Lucy returned from their honeymoon! Half a year later, May moved to Vancouver to reunite with Gideon. When Heavenly Father reunited the



*Best friends from high school.  
From left: Mama May, Pastor  
Gideon, Pastor Daniel*

brothers in Vancouver, He also gave them each beloved partners, and the two-person walk became a four-person walk!

Daniel and Lucy met and fell in love while working in Hong Kong. Lucy was well-educated, and after graduation was sent by the company she worked for to work in Canada. After working for awhile, she had originally planned to study at McGill University. But when her father passed away suddenly, she had to return from Canada to her home in Hong Kong to take the responsibility for the family upon her shoulders. While Daniel helped with managing her father's funeral, her mother learned that they were dating. She made it clear to Daniel, "Unless you have a college degree, you cannot marry my daughter."

This was not easy for Daniel. He was not an academic, and he had a stable job in the fire department. But, for love's sake, he decided to study abroad. He came to Vancouver and began learning high school English as an adult learner. It had been a humbling experience as an adult student among the youngsters, and he shed many tears during that time.

As Daniel recalled these events now, he was so thankful for the "persecution" from his mother-in-law! Without the high standards she set for marrying her daughter, he would likely have stayed in Hong Kong and become a captain at the fire department, living a comfortable and contented life, and not becoming Gideon's intimate number two man! How could he have known that the difficult days of studying in Vancouver for love not only led to his marrying Lucy, but more importantly, prepared a mother of prayer for the Zion family! How could May have known that her coming to Vancouver and reuniting with her future husband, would one day lead her to become a pastor's wife and the mother of worship at Zion!

The one who wanted to go to university couldn't go; the one who didn't want to study had to get a degree! The stories of how

these four friends came overseas are amazing. Among them, only Gideon knew that he was following God's leadership, but even he did not know that, because of his obedience, God brought his good friend to Vancouver to enter His destiny together with him. Indeed, the path of God is not the path of man: "In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps" (Proverbs 16:9); "Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this" (Psalm 37:5).

I am full of awe in the presence of these four founders of the Church of Zion. Whenever the four of them stand together, I know something will happen. How could there be such couples and friends in the world who never fought with each other? As Gideon often says, God had chosen the four of them to walk together since the beginning of creation. Indeed, thus say the prophets, as we will see.

### The Destined Presbytery

One day in September 1985, Gideon and May attended a presbytery at Glad Tidings Church, in Vancouver. Daniel and Lucy accompanied their good friends, and were prepared to take notes for them, ready with a tape recorder and notebooks. All the pastors and leaders who were planning to be ministered to were required to fast for three days in advance. They sat in a designated area, waiting for the team of prophets to call them to the stage to be prophesied over. When the two couples arrived at the venue, they found that the designated seating area was already full, so Gideon and May sat down in the outer circle. Daniel and Lucy were excited too, because their good friends were going to be prophesied over. They had heard that such services were accurate and powerful. They had come prepared to simply serve their friends, so they had not fasted. They sat at the very back, not expecting at all that the day was a destined day for them too!

Amazingly, neither of the two couples sat in the designated zone, nor were any of them known by the team of prophets beforehand. But at one point, the prophetic team called up Gideon and May, who humbly knelt, waiting to be ministered to. Daniel and Lucy got their tape recorder ready, sitting among the congregation of nearly a thousand people. Suddenly, one of the prophets came over and invited the two of them to come on stage as well, causing them to look at each in disbelief, thinking that the prophet was mistaken! Eventually, the prophets prophesied to all four of them, calling them a “quartet.”

And they have truly walked in this prophecy, beginning with the four-person walk, which later laid the foundation for the Church of Zion, and then the Homecoming Journey. The following is an excerpt from that amazing presbytery service:

I don't know these folks, but I see God has already linked the four of you together in a very, very unique way, and it's not just for a short-term thing, it's a yoking together for a lengthy period of time where the things that were prophesied saying God has especially linked you two men together and you two women together. There is a real peace and it is not because of a cultural thing. It is not something you are hiding. There is a genuine working structure of the peace of God that flows in a horizontal way between the four of you constantly. What one is thinking, the other is speaking. When one is speaking, the other one is thinking. You are going to be called the quartet ministry.

I don't even know where your church is or how big it is, maybe there are only six or six hundred, I don't know. But all I can see out of the giftings and calling of God and the sincerity of your spirit, there is growth coming

and somehow I connect it with the whole West Coast with your people, and it's going to go beyond the West Coast. It is going to go over into some of the native lands that you come from. Because the hand of God is upon you uniquely. For there is a unique blending that God has put within you four people to bring you together. People have said that people in your nation or culture are individualistic, but you are bound together in the call of God. You are going to see God bless, but you are going to see churches raised up directly as a result of your ministry as a team together. Therefore, the Spirit of the Lord speaks to all of you and the Spirit of the Lord says to be bound together, be joined, let there be no division between you. Open your hearts to all that the Lord has for you, for He is making you patterns and out of that pattern there is going to come reproduction of the very life of God.

The destined joining of these four people as a quartet is a testament of God's direct calling and sovereignty. In His divine will, God brought them one by one out of their own families and situations to meet again overseas. God chose them among the Chinese and placed them in Vancouver, the womb for the Homecoming Journey, to begin a journey together with one heart. Through trials and brokenness, together they became a seed that died, was buried in the ground, and bore the fruit of unity. As a matter of fact, Chinese went through many wars and hardships, and we used to be known for our disunity. The joining of their lives in oneness broke the curse of "scattered sands" over the Chinese, opening the way for the Chinese to enter God's destined blessings for the end times.

I am so blessed to be able to walk closely with them. Each

of them has left a deep mark on my life. These years of being a daughter, walking with them and under their cover, are the most enjoyable years I have ever had. As Gideon acknowledged, “the unity among the four of us is rare in today’s culture.” I call them my spiritual parents because I cannot find a more appropriate title.

I have listened to the most harmonious and beautiful “quartet,” which healed the deepest scars in my soul. It would be selfish to keep the blessing of their lives and wisdom to myself, so let me show you this remarkable quartet from the perspective of a daughter.

### Pastor Gideon Chiu (I): An Overseas Chinese Carried China

“Heavenly Father, I thank You! Heavenly Father, what’s on Your heart?”

One time at a pastors’ retreat, I heard someone talking and wondered who was speaking outside my window so early in the morning? When I arose to see who it was, I saw Gideon walk by my window as he continued talking to Heavenly Father. Later I learned that this was a habit he had developed as a child in an orphanage.

Orphanage? Yes, believe or not, Gideon, who has been appropriately called “father of many nations,” grew up in an orphanage.

### A Thigh Map of China

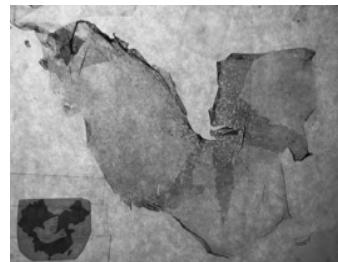
Gideon’s father, Mr. Chiu Shiu-Kwong, was a businessman who loved the Lord. When God called him to be the director of an orphanage, he laid down his career and served for twenty-one years. Gideon is the youngest in the family, and he lived at the orphanage with his five older brothers and one older sister, along

with all the other orphans. His parents not only had to take care of seven of their own children, but also over 500 orphans over the years. Gideon jokes that his parents were so busy that he, as their own son, became an orphan himself! I wonder if it was for the sake of his destiny —to become a father to many—that Heavenly Father allowed him to experience from a young age the feelings of loneliness and abandonment that an orphan feels?

In any case, through this environment, Heavenly Father let Gideon hold on to Him tightly and continue to encounter Him face to face. To this day, he has become accustomed to talking to his Father continuously. Because both his parents loved the Lord very much and served Him fervently, he has had a great fear of the Lord since childhood. When he was a teenager, he was already the leader of the youth fellowship. He had a deep longing for the Lord, and often sought Him with several of his friends.

On a hot summer day in 1972, Gideon went fishing under the scorching sun, and his legs got sunburnt. A few days later, his church held its annual mission meeting. God sent a servant who preached that the destiny of the Chinese people was to bring the Gospel back to Jerusalem. Knowing previously only of the persecution in mainland China,

Gideon was deeply moved to hear that China has been chosen by God to take the baton and run the last leg of the race in the end-times. After returning home that night, the skin on his thighs began to peel from the sunburn he received days earlier. Scratching mindlessly, he unexpectedly tore a piece of skin, and was shocked to see that it was a map of China! At that moment, the Lord said to him, “China is a part of your body,



*The map on Pastor Gideon's thigh*

the bone of your bones, and flesh of your flesh!” This incident confirmed that his burden for China was from the Lord.

From then on, he longed to go to mainland China, but the Lord did not open the door for him. In 1974, the Lord even commanded him to leave Hong Kong and move to Canada. As a twenty-something who was ready to give his life to serve China, he was puzzled and asked God, “You called me to serve China, why should I leave Hong Kong now?”

The Lord gave him two Scripture passages: Genesis 12:1-4, and Deuteronomy 32:10-12. God said, “Like Abraham, let me take you to the place I want to show you. I will take care of you and protect you, just as I protect the pupils in my eyes, and I will personally guide you in the way ahead.”

Without receiving more detailed instructions, and in the fear of the Lord, he took the first step of faith in accordance to what the Lord had commanded him to do. On May 1, 1975, in obedience Gideon left Hong Kong and came to Vancouver, bringing his burden and love for China.

As he had been part of the Alliance church in Hong Kong, Gideon first joined an Alliance church in Vancouver. Later, the church sent him to establish a new branch with two other leaders. He came across a Christian book, *Nine O’Clock in the Morning* by Dennis Bennett, and was so inspired by it that he wanted to visit the author in the United States. Then someone told him that there was a church on fire like that in Vancouver called Glad Tidings Temple (now Glad Tidings Church).

### Finding the Ancient Well of the 1948 Revival

Often, many of us do not realize that the treasure God has given us is right at our feet. He usually releases His Spirit and power on us so we can be His testimony first in our own Jerusalem (Acts 1:8). The place where He equips us and prepares us is often



(Left) Pastor Gideon and Mama May when they first arrived in Vancouver

(Right) Congregation at Glad Tidings, from right: Pastor Bob Birch, Pastor David, Pastor Gideon, Pastor Daniel, Mama Lucy

our own city and nation, but we often only look to the distant “ends of the earth,” and not our neighborhoods! Fortunately, Gideon listened to his friend’s advice and chose to search for the treasures in his own city of Vancouver.

Gideon had not understood why God led him to Canada while giving him a burden for China. But the first day he walked into Glad Tidings, he understood the good intentions of the Father, who led him to Canada so that he could find the key to enter his destiny, and receive a strong biblical foundation for the Homecoming Journey that was to come.

### Spiritual Inheritance of the Latter Rain Movement

“The Church of Zion has her roots in the Latter Rain Movement of 1948,” Gideon clearly declared. Church of Zion was born out of Glad Tidings, which was, in turn, a product of the 1948 Latter Rain Movement in Canada.

When Gideon and I were chatting about the early stories of Church of Zion, the Holy Spirit said to me, (in Chinese this time): “The ‘revival (复兴 fuxing)’ that can truly last is one that

touches the “Father’s heart (父心 fuxin) “! Actually, “revival” and “father’s heart” sound very similar in Chinese. The Homecoming Journey originates from the Father’s heart and seeks His heart along the way; and I believe that eventually the greatest end time revival will be when all His children return home and all our hearts have turned to the Father’s heart!

During the Homecoming Gatherings, one might see different manifestations such as shouting and crying when the Holy Spirit is moving powerfully. At some point, people might want to release ministries of prophecy or healing. But often, David will come on stage and guide everyone to remain in the presence of the Lord. He will boldly instruct, “Let our eyes be fixed on God. Don’t be distracted by looking around at others. Let us focus on Him.”

To the fathers of Homecoming, manifestations are not the main focus. Surely, it is wonderful to have signs and wonders, but God’s own presence is still the most important thing. Right from the beginning, the Journey was not something superficial, or just events filled with good feelings and wonderful manifestations. People who truly desire God Himself, as Moses did, are not satisfied with simply seeing God’s marvelous works, but they want to discover God’s ways and principles (see Psalm 103:7). When I found out all the sacrifices and efforts Gideon had put in behind the scenes, even before the Journey started, I could not help but call him a “theologian,” especially as he gave biblical reviews of the 1948 Great Revival and the Homecoming Journey.

As a matter of fact, Gideon went through many trials and difficulties as the journey unfolded; however, he is able to stand very firmly, and even proudly claimed that he has the “unshakeable anointing.” There is a secret behind the scenes: Before this journey began, the Lord divinely prepared his life

and the foundation of his ministry on solid biblical principles and a rich spiritual heritage.

In October 1982, he finished writing a pivotal piece, “Latter Rain Teachings on Restoration” as his dissertation for his Master’s of Theology at Regent College. His advisor at the time, the renowned theologian Dr. J. I. Packer, commented: “You have a smart head on your shoulders!” Yes, indeed. Gideon is an out-and-out scholar, who has received at least four academic degrees. We often say that our minds will impede the work of the Holy Spirit. But God truly chose this bright academic to pioneer the work of the Holy Spirit in the Homecoming Journey, because he is continually willing to lay down everything, including his ability to reason, and surrender to the Holy Spirit.

### The Latter Rain Revival of 1948

Joel 2:23 says that God will pour out the former and latter rains. The Canadian Revival in 1948 was called the “Latter Rain” movement. The “Former Rain” movement is generally said to represent the Pentecostal movement that took place from 1902 to 1906. During those years, God restored the truth about the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and there was prophecy declared of a coming great revival. Later, two world wars broke out, one after another. In the late 1940s, the world was devastated, and the faith of Christians was at a low point. In the fall of 1947, a group of teachers and students from Sharon Bible College, which was part of Sharon Orphanage and Schools in North Battleford, Saskatchewan, longed for revival to come and they started fasting, praying, and studying the Bible together. On February 12, 1948, the Holy Spirit visited them mightily, and many people received the anointing of healing. One stuttering person suddenly stood up and fluently declared a long prophecy about a new revival that had just begun, and that God would restore the truth in four

areas: unity, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, praise and worship, and world missions, until the Lord returns.<sup>1</sup>

After that meeting, many people in the area experienced miraculous healing, and Christians gathered together daily, drawing believers from around the world. At that time, many received visions regarding their ministries, and the call into the fivefold ministries. The Holy Spirit continued His mighty work as they returned to their homes to spread the gospel and build churches. This revival spread from Canada to the United States and around the world and was named the Latter Rain Movement. Gideon discussed the impact of this movement on to the city of Vancouver at the beginning of his thesis, “Latter Rain Teachings on Restoration”:

Originating in North Battleford, Saskatchewan, Canada, the Latter Rain revival has spread from Canada to various places around the world. Having received the revival message in 1948, Glad Tidings Temple of Vancouver B.C. has since become a major revival centre of the Latter Rain Movement. The Church has faithfully taught and practised the revival message for over thirty years. Besides being instrumental in establishing numerous churches around the world, Glad Tidings Temple has produced hundreds of “Latter Rain Bible students” through her Bible colleges in Vancouver, Mexico, Taiwan, Uganda, and the Arctic. Then, upon receiving a new revelation in 1980, Glad Tidings Temple launched out to bless Israel. Besides comforting the ancient people of GOD with “praise expeditions”, she has pledged one million Canadian dollars to build a kibbutz in Galilee

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1 See “What is the Latter Rain Movement?” <https://rcmi2.wordpress.com/2009/06/01>. Revival Chinese Ministry International

for Israel. Thus begins a series of moving episodes that inaugurated the breaking down of the “enmity” between Jews and the Gentile Christians. What has initiated all these? In short, this is a manifestation of the most recent development of “Latter Rain Theology.” The Latter Rain has a strong Bible-based theology. The central theme of Latter Rain teachings is “restoration.” Restoration is defined as the causing to return to a former position by regaining that which has been taken away. It is held that the Biblical concept of restoration comprises the work of GOD to restore the individual believer to the image of GOD.

The history of Christianity is viewed in terms of restoration: from Martin Luther to the present time, GOD is restoring lost truths once enjoyed by the early Church. These truths are: justification by faith, water and HOLY SPIRIT baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection and judgment, as outlined in Hebrews 6:2-3. The first three of these truths were restored to the Church through the Lutherans, Anabaptists and the Pentecostals prior to 1948. Then in 1948, the truth of laying on of hands was restored through the Latter Rains. It is believed that just as Timothy had received spiritual gifts from the presbytery when hands were laid on him, spiritual gifts would also be imparted to a present day believer when a presbytery followed the same Biblical procedure.

Since then, “presbytery meetings” have become a major event in Latter Rain Churches. Immediately preceding the restoration of the laying on of hands in 1948, GOD had been working to restore the truth of praise and worship. Psalm 22:3 brings to a new understanding that GOD would actually come down and dwell among His people

when they praise and worship Him. GOD's presence is demonstrated by the supernatural manifestation of the HOLY SPIRIT through prophecies, healings, tongues, and their interpretations etc. In 1980, Latter Rain came to understand that before the final truths of resurrection and judgment could be restored to the Church, Israel must first be restored. Thus in 1981, armed with the Biblical injunction to "comfort ye My people" (Isaiah 40:1), Glad Tidings Temple launched out in faith and obedience to bless Israel.<sup>2</sup>

### Building the Foundation

As revival is to "re-vive," it means to come to life again! As it is about the restoration and revitalization of what had previously existed, it is necessary to find the original foundation, instead of starting from scratch. The foundation is the most important part of a building. With the perspective of a rigorous theologian, Gideon meticulously examined and explored the origin and development of the Latter Rain Movement through a biblical lens in his 215-page dissertation. He pointed out that the Latter Rain Movement had a solid biblical foundation, and that the main purpose of its teaching was restoration — that is, to reclaim the positions and authority promised in the Bible to Christians. After reading this rigorous work, my heart was full of the fear of the Lord and reverent awe at His choosing Gideon. Yet, this important piece of work remained hidden in the corner of his bookshelf for at least a decade, until the fullness of time. It came into the public light when John Wimber assigned American theologian Jack Deere to study the history of the Latter Rain Movement.<sup>3</sup>

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2        Gideon Chung Kuen Chiu, *Latter Rain Teachings on Restoration* (Regent College) i-iv

3        Pastor Albert Zehr wrote a synopsis of the above thesis.

Like all other revival movements, Glad Tidings had its areas of immaturity when the revival hit; some of which even provoked much controversy. Nevertheless, Gideon's extensive research distilled the precious essence of the movement. God's good plan was indeed just that: He quickly equipped Gideon in the Holy Spirit, laying the solid biblical foundation necessary for him and the Homecoming team in their journey through the nations.

### Glad Tidings Temple and Birth of Church of Zion

"Henry, do you remember what it was like back then at Glad Tidings?" There is among us a Caucasian couple who grew up attending Glad Tidings with their parents.

"Oh, how can anyone forget! When people entered the sanctuary, the presence of God was so strong that you'd either fall on your knees or raise your hands. God was there, and you just wanted to align your heart with Him." Henry's eyes turned red and he choked up as he answered my question.

"When you came to Zion, did you feel the same presence of God?" I continued. They had started coming to the Church of Zion three years earlier.

"Yes. When we arrived here, we felt the same Spirit and the same presence of God as we did back at Glad Tidings, so we stayed." His eyes welled up with tears again.

"Every time people ask about the glory of God in those past days, he would be so moved," his wife explained. They were only teenagers at the time, but the presence of God was so tangible that their memories from fifty years ago still felt so fresh and deep.

### The Testimony of Glad Tidings

Let us go back to a Sunday morning in 1979, when amazingly,

God led Gideon and a brother to Glad Tidings of Vancouver - an old well of revival—for the first time. Incidentally, it “just happened” to be “China Week” at Glad Tidings! At that time, Glad Tidings was experiencing a wave of revival, so it was not surprising that Vancouver later became the starting point and womb of the Homecoming Journey; for there is a well of revival in this city.

In his book, *The Almighty Power of the Holy Spirit*, Rev. N. Krushnisky recorded God’s miraculous wonders during that time. At one meeting, a teenage boy was filled with the Holy Spirit and praised God in Norwegian—a language he did not know and had never spoken! At another gathering, a brother was filled with the Holy Spirit and began to make declarations in Hebrew, while another brother translated the tongue—Jesus is the Messiah! It just happened that there was an Israeli Jew among them who was so moved that he accepted Jesus as his Savior that day.

Another wonder recorded in the book dates to a meeting at Glad Tidings in early 1950. The Caucasian pastor was moved to prophesy to the congregation, but his words came out as Cantonese. A Chinese gentleman who attended the meeting was surprised and asked the pastor how and when he learned to speak Cantonese. The pastor replied that he had never learned it! The Chinese man told the pastor that what he said, in very proper Cantonese, was, “God will bless the Chinese people through our church!”

And, that same year, Gideon was born.

More than two decades later, another Chinese gentleman witnessed a similar wonder. This man was surprised to see several hundred people praying fervently together in tongues at the prayer meeting before Sunday service. Suddenly, he heard a Caucasian brother speaking in Cantonese, “Jesus is here. Do not

be afraid!” He was later shocked to find out that the man who he thought knew Cantonese in fact did not speak the language at all! The Chinese gentleman was the young Gideon.

As if that was not enough, the Sunday service that followed was even more jaw-dropping. That day, the pastor’s message was about China. He said, “God has broken all idols through Mao Zedong, and is preparing China to enter into revival!” This was exactly what the Lord once revealed to Gideon. He was moved to tears that the Lord had revealed this to a Caucasian brother as well.

During that period, Gideon was eager to know the Holy Spirit. He went to all the meetings he could, even secretly sitting in the last row of the women’s meetings! For the next several years, every Sunday, he would attend the service at Glad Tidings in the morning, the service at Alliance Church in the afternoon, and then go back to Glad Tidings for Bible school in the evening. Gradually, he felt he shouldn’t continue to go back and forth between both places and he sought the Lord for clear confirmation. On Father’s Day that year, the Lord spoke to him through John 12:26, that he would follow the Father and serve Him wherever He called him. So as the Lord directed, Gideon came out of the Alliance Church and committed himself fully to Glad Tidings, thereby entering a new season.

Not long afterwards, when Gideon and his good friend Daniel went fishing together, the Holy Spirit suddenly said to him, “As long as it is day, we must do His work” (John 9:4). The Lord instructed him to start a Chinese fellowship at Glad Tidings.

Gideon asked, “Lord, what is the name of the church You are going to build?”

The Lord said, “It shall be called Church of Zion.”

Gideon asked God for confirmation. “I’ll know this is Your

will if I see the word ‘Zion’ three times in my daily Bible reading today.”

During the morning prayer meeting that day, the word “Zion” came up three times in the Bible reading. Out of the three references, the most interesting verse was Psalm 51:18: “May it please you to prosper Zion, to build up the walls of Jerusalem.” The word “please” is translated 美意(Meiyi) in Chinese, which means “beautiful will,” and Meiyi just happened to be the name of his beloved daughter!

### Zion’s Kingdom DNA: A Heritage from Glad Tidings

So, the Chinese fellowship began in November 1982, with several brothers and sisters studying the Bible together in Gideon’s home. Starting from a Cantonese family, the church evolved into a bilingual church, as more English speakers, and later Mandarin speakers joined the family. For many years, there was an early morning prayer meeting from 6 a.m. to 7 a.m. every day. The congregation developed and grew in its deep longing for God. Often, servants of the Lord from around the world who came to Glad Tidings to preach in the morning service would then be invited to speak at Church of Zion in the afternoon. They gradually imparted a Kingdom heart and vision to this newly-born Chinese church. In this way, the precious heritage of a Kingdom DNA was passed down.

### Pastor Gideon Chiu (II): Spiritual Father Who Changed My Life

Gideon has had a great influence on my life and growth, and meeting this apostolic father was a turning point in my life. Renewal Family consists pastors from various churches in Vancouver, and we will share more about this family in Chapter Eight. Back in the days when I joined the Renewal Family, my

great desire was to listen to Gideon share about the things of the Kingdom. Meanwhile, I witnessed how he faced different kinds of people with different backgrounds, and experienced one setback after another, but it was how he dealt with these challenges and how firmly he looked up to God that deeply impacted me, a little girl walking alongside this spiritual giant. He had not been as busy back then, and I could ask him about everything. His wisdom as he shared from his life experiences often broke my prior religious framework and helped me know God better. Although the fellowship meetings I attended were long and it took more than two hours to drive back and forth, I was eager to go every week. I began to experience spiritual protection and safety, and the frequency of spiritual warfare declined.

How could Gideon become a father to many? Why do people experience the embrace of Heavenly Father in his arms, and get powerfully set free from the stronghold of the orphan spirit? It is because he truly knows his heavenly Father. We know this from his succinct sayings, two of which are the most well-known: “My Daddy is God!” and “I am God’s second generation.”

### My Daddy is God!

Gideon puts his complete trust in Heavenly Father and believes in His full protection. I recall one time at a Renewal Family meeting, when he led us to pray for a pastor experiencing spiritual attack. He said, “Lord, without Your permission, no attack will come to him. If it has to come to him, please let it come to me first!”

We were astonished to hear this prayer, and asked him, “Gideon, how could you pray like this? It sounds so dangerous!”

He chuckled, “I know my Father—He is a good Father. And He must know what to do! If I prayed incorrectly, He would understand my heart and would protect me!” Looking at this

father who has faith in his heavenly Father, I felt so safe in my heart at that moment.

His covering and protection are real. Once we decided to invite a speaker to Vancouver when he was on a ministry trip and absent. We are very careful to protect our inheritance as a city of Zion that seeks Him alone, so we usually don't invite just any speaker. But this time, because the speaker was to share some heavenly experiences that we had not heard of, we were curious and quickly decided to invite her. When Gideon came back and learned about it, he felt that we needed to discern in the spirit. It was not concerning the merit of the speaker, but we had not sought the Lord regarding whether her sharing was suitable for our city, and if her message was what the Lord wanted us to receive at that time. But I had already sent out announcements for this event, and the speaker's flight tickets had already been booked. I asked Gideon, "Daddy, what do you think we should do now? It's okay. I'm not afraid of offending her."

I knew I put him in an awkward position. He paused for several seconds, and said, "Let's invite her over for the sake of unity." Then he immediately prayed for our meeting: "I completely cover and protect this meeting in the name of Jesus! If anything happens, please Lord, let me be responsible. May the Lord protect the decisions made by the children and make everything work together for the benefit of those who love You!" Although he had reservations about the meeting, he took full responsibility, owned the decisions that were made, and covered my weakness as an immature daughter. On the other end of the phone, I could not help weeping.

In the past, I had to take on such challenges alone, but now I have a father to back me up and take them on with me. I am so blessed!

### I am God's Second Generation

When the term 富二代 (fuerdai)—translated “rich second generation”—gained popularity in China, Gideon advocated the term “God’s second generation” instead. As rich as one may get, our Father is richer still. I admire Gideon’s sense of security, as I have never seen him anxious or worried about anything. He truly knows who he is. No wonder David Demian said that they could walk together the way they have, because Gideon gave him a great sense of security. Even more amazingly, May said that the one thing she loves most about her husband, is that he is very stable and gives her a sense of security. By constantly drawing close to the Father, Gideon’s heart has become wider and wider like His. He truly lives in the freedom and joy of being a child of God.

During all the years I have known Gideon, I have never heard him judge anyone behind their backs, nor have I heard him speak negatively. In every circumstance, this father always believes and always hopes. He is very gracious towards people’s weaknesses and understands that we all need to be comforted and understood. A Scripture he often cites is Romans 8:28: “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” In his eyes, every situation is good because no matter what happens, as “God’s second generation” who belong to God and love God, we will surely turn defeat into victory.

### The White Dot Effect

Once, a couple of friends with prophetic gifts called me from the U.S. and prophesied that the Lord would fulfill a promise for me very soon. They invited me to attend a related training course at their church. Because I trusted them very much I bought a plane ticket and flew over without seeking the Lord. But after I

went, things did not turn out as they had said, and I felt betrayed and was very frustrated. What hurt me most was that because they were busy “serving in the church,” they did not even have time to meet and catch up with me, nor did they apologize at all. Feeling rejected and bitter, I flew back despondent. For a long time, I processed the incident before the Father, and He spoke many things to me — seven full pages of devotional journaling, including ten key take-away points! Nevertheless, after some time, I found that my heart was still upset. So, I decided to go see my “visible” father on earth. This couple are also Gideon’s spiritual children, and I felt he should really discipline them.

We sat down in a cafe. Gideon was patient and asked me to tell him the whole story from the beginning. After I finished talking, I waited for him to judge right and wrong. He did not preach or give me his discernment, though. He only looked at me lovingly and asked, “What did the Lord say to you?”

I opened up the journal that I brought with me, and told him what Heavenly Father said. As I spoke, I started crying. When I stopped, he encouraged me.

“Great, what the Lord said to you is very important. Anything else? Keep talking.” I opened my journal and continued. Then he encouraged me again, “Very good! Anything else?” Our conversation continued like this, and after more than two hours, I finally finished. I felt so much better.

“Have you really finished? Anything more you want to say?” he asked me.

“No more!” I said finally.

“Great! Good that you finished everything you wanted to say. You must keep these precious words that the Lord is teaching you in your heart!”

In the end, he didn’t say a word about my shortcomings, or

the couple's mistakes. He just smiled and said, "Thank the Lord, as He wants all things to work together for the benefit of those who love God. You love God, and all things must work for you! This incident has caused you to grow so much. Heavenly Father has given you such precious wisdom. It is a good deal. I will continue to pray for you and pray for your relationship with them, so that you will all benefit greatly."

Later when this couple came to Vancouver, I was still hoping that Gideon would show some displeasure with them. But when he saw them, he immediately stepped forward and gave them a big hug, as if nothing had happened. He really has "spiritual amnesia." I felt convicted, and since then stopped complaining to him about negative things.

Later, we understood Gideon's "white dot effect": He always finds the white dot on a black canvas, and continues to show appreciation for the white dot, so that it continues to expand and become increasingly brighter, while the surrounding darkness gets forgotten. In contrast, I was used to the "black dot effect": finding black dots on a piece of white paper! Gradually, I was convinced that the "white dot effect" is more effective and stopped sharing negative things, with the result that fewer people talk to me about negative things. Maybe now I am closer to the mentality of "God's second generation."

### Sharing Hearts, Not Ministries

As ministers, we like to ask questions such as, "How big is your church? How many people go there? What conferences have you hosted lately? How many Encountering God retreats have you hosted? How many people will be baptized at your church this Christmas?"— so on and so forth. Gideon's questions are different. He often asks us, "How have you been? What's on your heart?" He truly cares about the state of one's heart. At Renewal

Family meetings, Gideon asks us to share our hearts. At first, I didn't understand what "sharing hearts" meant, because I did not even know what was on my own heart. Gradually, my heart opened and I came to grasp the difference between sharing and preaching. I also understood that in this pastoral fellowship, it is not about sharing how big our church is, or how effective our ministries have been, but how our hearts are doing.

Sometimes, we felt that we served well and wanted him to know, but he seldom asked about those things; other times, we saw no progress in ministry and were afraid of others asking, but he did not ask either. When we say the wrong words or do the wrong things, he just smiles and says, "I know your heart is good." So, a culture has gradually formed among us: we are not afraid of saying the wrong words and doing the wrong things; as long as our hearts are right, it's fine! In the past, I was always afraid of doing something wrong, but under the influence of such a Kingdom culture, my heart has entered into brand-new freedom. I no longer care about my performance, but I search my heart inside.

Gideon constantly emphasized the heart of Heavenly Father and led us to spend time listening to God's voice corporately. We found that when our hearts could trust each other, we could make a major decision in just a few minutes. He cared very much about the time he spent with us, and even planned his flight schedule around times of our meetings, sometimes rushing to the airport immediately after a meeting, or heading to our fellowship first thing after stepping off the plane. Later he had to travel for ministry much more and could not be with us that often. Nevertheless, he had already established a good foundation of love among us, and we enjoy this family, and we can forget about our titles and simply be who we are. Thank God for this precious father among us.

### Inheritance Belongs Only to True Sons

Gideon knows that he is not only a true son of Heavenly Father, but also a true son of his spiritual parents from whom he has received a rich inheritance. He says the reason his life can impact so many people now is because of all that his spiritual parents poured into his life. He likes to tell stories of his spiritual parents as if he were enumerating family treasures, especially of three fathers: Pastor Bob Birch, Pastor Jim Watt, and Pastor John White.

At first, I didn't understand why he told these stories over and over again. But slowly, I began to understand: you only receive inheritance when you are a son. His wisdom and authority came from the inheritance of his fathers, so he did not have to start from scratch. I looked at this grey-haired son, and suddenly understood that being a true father started with being a true son. When we honour the parents that God has given us, we honor Him by agreeing with His plan, and He will surely break the curses by Himself. Honouring removes the curse (Malachi 4:5-6).

Gideon did not talk about the theory of honoring parents, nor did he try to acquire anything profound or new from his spiritual parents. He simply wanted to be a true son. Although these three fathers are no longer with us, Gideon continues to honour them. They are not "outdated" or "useless" because they are old or gone, as sons remain sons for eternity. When he receives his fathers from Heavenly Father, he is receiving the inheritance that Heavenly Father gives through them. Since then, I have a new revelation of the role of the father. I trust this father completely; because he also has fathers himself, he is safe and rooted. At that time, no one called him "Papa Gideon" yet, but I already recognized him in the spirit as a father I could follow.

So I started to learn not only to ask for blessings from my spiritual fathers, but to truly honour them. I once took my team to Gideon's home, just to honour him. We asked him to stand in the center and said, "Gideon, you always bless us. Today we want to honour you! Please stand in the middle and let us bless our father."

He was very moved, looking at the children gathered around him, and humbly told us that, in fact, he was also a wounded father, that the immaturity of some spiritual children caused him much suffering, and that the way we honoured him as a spiritual father brought great healing and comfort. Since then, we called him "Papa Gideon," or simply "Daddy," and developed a close relationship that surpassed past relationships between pastor and congregants, or teacher and disciples. Amazingly, I learned later that at around the same time, a Chinese house church leader, pastor Ruth from China, also felt to ask Gideon to be her spiritual father and called him Daddy. We did not plan to do this, but the Holy Spirit put the same prompting in us to call him daddy.

I do not know how many orphans have been embraced to become sons in the arms of Gideon. His hugs are not ceremonial, but he gives his heart and love fully to the person he embraces each time. He can hold someone for even ten or twenty minutes, until that person's stiffness softens in his loving arms.

One day as I was praying for Gideon, I felt the heart of Heavenly Father. In the past, Grandpa Chiu (Gideon's father) took care of physical orphans. Now, Gideon cares for spiritual orphans. They both did what was on His heart. I said, "Abba, yes! Thank you for putting Gideon in my life. I feel Your love through him, and I now am home."

Abba gently said, "Love like him! The enemy has turned My home into an orphanage, and there are orphans everywhere. In

the last days, I am releasing the spirit of Elijah, not to give you more anointing and power for your own pleasure or purpose, but so that you can eventually have the father's and mother's hearts. Love My children, so that they can return home."

That day, I shed tears with Heavenly Father.

### Pastor May Chiu: A "Threefold Being" Mother

"Come! Look at my girlfriend's photo when I was young!" Gideon loved to share his stories with us. And this time, he excitedly brought out a photo from his wallet.

"Your girlfriend? Wow! So beautiful!" We all were full of admiration, craning our necks to look.

"I've only had one girlfriend, and I married her!" Gideon chuckled as he looked at his beautiful wife, and rejoiced. And Mama May smiled as a blooming flower, like the young girl in the photo, fifty-five years ago.

### Unwilling To Be a Mother

Initially, May didn't want to be called a Mama. She acknowledged that, in the past, when Gideon came home and shared excitedly about how people were calling him Papa, she would respond seriously, "People can call you Papa, but don't let them call me Mama! You have adopted so many children, but they are only yours, not mine. It's taken a lot to raise our two children. I'm ready to retire and relax. I don't want to be Mama again!"

Yet God had the way to make her to be a mother again. One time, as she was leading worship, God gave her a vision of a Second World War movie in black and white. Many parents could not take the pressure of the war and committed suicide, leaving behind many orphans. God opened her spiritual eyes to see those orphans, and she felt the Lord ask her, "Are you as

selfish as those parents, unwilling to be a mother, leaving behind so many orphans?" She wept and wept, and her heart changed.

God released a strong mother's anointing on Mama May. She is a lovable Mama with no religious spirit at all. I admire her most for her "threefold being" principle, which is: be yourself, be free, and be natural. This endearing mom often uses her "threefold being" anointing to unexpectedly but naturally break the religious mindset off people. She says she is the most blessed of all pastors' wives because she can freely be herself in her church.

Honestly, it's hard to know whether it was the Church of Zion that gave her the freedom to release her "threefold being" spirit, or whether it was her "threefold being" spirit that impacted the church culture to be a secure, free, and naturally organic family.

### May's "Threefold Being" Spirit

Mama May knows how to enjoy herself; she can be freely and authentically herself. She loves smiling, and her childlike laughter follows her wherever she goes.

She is usually the most responsive and enthusiastic audience, and the best cheerleader to preachers. She will laugh and respond with encouraging "Amens! She calls herself an "unconventional pastor's wife" who is not bound by the title of "pastor's wife." She knows what she needs to do and when to do it.. She does not do something simply because she was asked or expected to, nor does she refrain from doing something because people oppose it. She seeks the Lord and listens to His voice. She can choose to attend a meeting, or not to; she can make a phone call to show her care, or wait to make that call, if He has not instructed her.

### Being Free!

This unconventional mom lives with incredible freedom. When I came to Zion, just seeing this vibrantly joyful pastor's

wife brought much healing to me, even before she had said or done anything. I love to hear her laugh, and sometimes just hearing her joyful laughter sets my spirit free! Often, the way she handles problems reveals a new wine skin of the Holy Spirit—something totally surprising. Almost every time she phones me, it “just happens” to be at times when I really need her.

One example of this occurred while I was still serving in my old church. I was feeling wronged for some reason, and I cried as I spoke to her. After a while, I heard her laugh on the other end, and she kept apologizing, “Oh, I’m so sorry, Haha... so sorry... Haha... I don’t know why I felt like laughing!” But her laughter changed the whole spiritual atmosphere. An anointing of freedom and joy came from the other end of the phone. Not only was I no longer offended, but I started to laugh with her! I’ve long forgotten what got me down that time. All I remember was that we both giggled for a long, long time.

### Being Natural!

Mama May is always naturally herself. She does not do anything unnatural or pretentious. She only does things at the prompting of the Holy Spirit. Because she is so free, she is not afraid to say “no”! When David asked her to lead worship in the early days, she refused. She didn’t like being in the limelight, and usually hid behind the scenes. So how did David call out this mother of worship? He said to her, “Just lead us in worship as if you were worshipping by yourself at home!” These words set her free and, from then on, she found her place at the piano. She has both the fear of the Lord and intimacy with the Lord, and she brings the deep presence of God. She is my favorite worship leader. When she worships, I often feel the heartbeat of the Father.

She is grateful to David for his encouragement in the early days when she didn't feel qualified to join the Watchmen leadership gatherings because of her language limitations. But David encouraged her, saying, "You are very important. The Lord will surely allow you to understand at least one sentence, so go for that sentence!" One time, when David came to pick up Gideon, he stood at the door and said, "I won't leave until May goes with us!"

Now she enjoys leading worship both in front of people and in the secret place. When having leadership meetings in her home, she is always joyfully chatting with people in the kitchen until Gideon humorously and tenderly reminds her, "Mrs. Chiu, please take your place by the piano!" Then she will move to the living room and obediently sit down by the piano. Sometimes, in the middle of a meeting, she will return to the kitchen to prepare lunch for usOften, Gideon will ask someone to bring her back. She once said to me privately, "Actually, what I love most is to cook for everyone. This is the portion God gave me and I really enjoy it."

To her, the kitchen stove and the place of worship at the piano are the same. They both bring the presence of God.

Mama May really enjoys hosting people. She loves to invite our team to her home for Christmas meals. Sitting around the table, we felt so wonderful to be in a spiritual family with a father and a mother. Eventually, my team and I ended up living together as one big family; our dream was conceived at Mama May's dinner table. I need another book to share about our blessed lifestyle; but I will simply state that we love being together like this, enjoying one another, eating and chatting; not necessarily doing anything, but just being together and loving each other. This was first inspired by Mama May's loving hospitality.

### The Call of A Mother

This mother—who initially did not want to be a mother—later became the loving spiritual mom of many. Twice when our family moved, she took it upon herself to buy food to cook us our first meal in our messy new kitchen. When a sister gave birth to a child, she took care of mother and baby in her home for the first month.

Mama May admitted, “If not for God’s revelation, you won’t be a real mother, even with people calling you ‘mom!’” She received the revelation, and responded to the Lord; and she often prays, “Dear Holy Spirit, work in our hearts that we can be parents like our Heavenly Father.” It takes a process even for a godly woman to respond to God’s call of being a spiritual mother.

In the past when I called, she would ask, “Are you looking for Daddy?” and before I said anything, she had already passed the phone to Gideon. I would immediately say, “Mommy! Mommy! I’m looking for you !”

But now when I call, I hear her tender, sweet voice asking, “How are you? Anything I can help you with?”

### Pastor Daniel Cheung: Pastor Gideon’s Jonathan

Many years ago, Pastor Ernest Chan of Agape Renewal Ministry commended Daniel, publicly in a conference of more than two thousands people. “He is the best associate pastor in Chinese churches!”

“Of all the people I’ve met, you have the strongest ‘Jonathan anointing’!” I once said to Daniel. I admire him from the bottom of my heart.

The reason Zion can have a strong Kingdom ministry is directly related to Gideon’s best friend and associate pastor. 2020 marks the fifty-eighth year of their friendship.

They are the same age, come from the same hometown, have the same ministry, and have spent most of their lives together—something many people admire. Nowadays, societal culture has influenced church culture. Everyone wants to be the top guy; who would want to be someone's number two man?

Pastor Ernest Chan said of Daniel, "Among the Chinese, there's no one like him who is so content being the second man." This is true. Pastor Daniel is the most faithful, joyful associate pastor I have ever known. Gideon and Daniel played on the same basketball team in high school and they were the best duo. Daniel would pass the ball to Gideon, and Gideon would shoot and score. Even now, he is still supporting Gideon behind the scenes. One thing that most touches me in Renewal Family is how he often shares what Gideon said. When he speaks of Gideon, it is always as a highly respected elder, and not just a close friend of fifty years. His respect for Gideon really astounds me.

As Gideon is always travelling to different nations to serve in Kingdom ministry, Daniel and Lucy could easily build their own influence in the church. But quite the opposite happens; he always reminds the congregation that his pastor is Pastor Gideon. He would say, "Regarding this matter, this is what Pastor Gideon said. I have to ask Pastor Gideon to see what he thinks because he has experience in this." His face beams every time he talks about how they have walked together in the past. I'm sure he has heard Gideon's messages many times. And yet, whenever Gideon speaks, he sits attentively with us, as if he were hearing those words for the first time. He has set an example for all of us.

### *My calling is to make him successful*

I truly admire the Jonathan anointing on Daniel. As this is what this generation needs most, I interviewed him about it. Since I am close to him, I asked him directly, "Papa Daniel, in all

these years of walking with Gideon, what makes you so content being his associate?" He replied, "Our friendship is very deep. We have been good friends for over fifty years. We went to the same Christian high school, and we played basketball together. At that time, I wasn't a Christian yet, but I could see that he was a godly man and that his faith was very real. In those days, our school required us to take Bible class and we had to memorize a lot of Bible verses. I just coped them; but he lived out the Bible. His ambition was to serve the Lord, even from a young age. Now he is living out his dream. I really admire him from my heart."

Daniel's response was earnest and heartfelt, but I continued to press him. "As his associate, have you ever had any struggles? Why do you serve him so willingly?"

Smiling, he replied, "No struggle at all."

Where in the world can you find such a friend? Is he from Mars? I really appreciated his big heart, but I persisted, "Papa Daniel, really never? Tell the truth!"

He laughed. "Truly, never. I think it's because I know my place and my calling, and I know his place and his calling. The Lord told me he is God's chosen vessel, so I'm very happy to serve him and support him. Helping him succeed is my calling. I never want to be number one. I only want to do what God wants me to do and to stand in my right place. I'm very happy to be his assistant. My success is to do what God wants me to do, and that is to help him succeed!"

So his secret was that he didn't just admire Gideon; more importantly, he received his mandate from the Lord and recognized Gideon in the spirit. He did not want to be number one in men's eyes, but to be number one in God's eyes, which is to be his best of self. I was convinced and finally stopped talking!

In the early days of the Church of Zion, a couple in the core

leadership team who seemed spiritual and very gifted, suddenly left Gideon without explanation. In that difficult time, Daniel chose to stand with Gideon and began to serve God full-time. He resigned from his job and began to live by faith like Gideon. During that time, the whole family's livelihood depended on Lucy's salary.

Deeply touched, I asked more specific questions. "How do you deal with differing opinions?"

Daniel replied honestly, "Yes, there were times when we had different opinions, but the important thing was that we trusted each other. I was willing to support him and listen to him, and he always trusted us and encouraged us. So, when we had different viewpoints, we were willing to submit to each other and wait."

When I commended him as Gideon's "Jonathan," he said he never thought of that. "At that time, we were just walking together; we didn't use any spiritual terms."

I sensed his heart of gratitude as he continued, "Actually, in the beginning, I was way behind spiritually, but he waited for me and supported me. At the time, I was still very young in my spiritual life and I was used to doing things according to my natural mind. But he would always say, 'don't listen to man, you have to pray and seek God.' I've also learned from him to be gracious to people and to see their positive qualities. He never forced us to do anything."

Daniel said that the key to their deep friendship is mutual trust. If he hears someone speak negatively about Gideon, he will always choose to trust his character. He said, "Gideon really took care of me and Lucy. He is our spiritual mentor, and he was willing to wait for us to grow. In our walk together, we both gave our best."

Gideon encouraged him, "All the favour and authority I

receive from God are also yours!” And it is true. Daniel shares that he is now invited to share in many places, and God’s powerful presence is with him wherever he goes. He told me that in more than twenty years of serving with Gideon, it had been hard to see encouraging results for quite a long time, but it was worth waiting; now the time has come and he sees so much fruit! He is especially moved by God’s work among the family in China. This is Daniel’s and Lucy’s greatest comfort and encouragement.

### Daniel and Lucy

Daniel loves his wife dearly. His famous saying is: “I choose the one I love and I love the one I choose!” One factor that affected the depth of their love for each other was a difficult season they walked through in the early years of their relationship. Lucy had to stay in Hong Kong to take care of her family and Daniel had to study in Canada, so for several years they could not be together. They could only write letters to each other. That is why, since then, they especially treasure the time they have together.

We love to talk about their love for each other. His WiFi password once was “I love Lucy”! One time, I was with him in China and everywhere he went he would think of Lucy. He would take pictures to send to her, seize every opportunity to call home and buy gifts for her. His love for his wife has moved many husbands to learn from him. We tease him by saying, “You should start a ‘Love Your Wife Club’!” According to Lucy, his epitaph should read, “This man truly loved his wife!”

He loves team ministry. As I mentioned earlier, when he was playing basketball with Gideon in high school, he was the one who would play the assist and Gideon would be the one who made the basket. It didn’t matter who scored, the key was winning together!

Not only is Daniel willing to support Gideon and help him

succeed, he loves to support others as well. I have been the recipient of his love and care. Years ago, I was just a young pastor in a traditional church, and I felt like a failure in the face of many challenges in pastoral ministry. So, for a period, he and his team drove an hour to be with my team every month, to encourage us and walk with us. When I gratefully asked Daniel why he did that, he smiled and said, “Maybe God gave me a gift to discern people so that I can always recognize a person with the right spirit and heart. When I saw how you related to your congregation, I knew you were a ‘right person’! There’s a big difference between someone just doing their job and someone faithfully serving God from the heart.”

He is not a man of big words or high ambitions. But wherever he goes, people are impacted by this man who genuinely loves his friends and his wife. I have seldom seen so much of the goodness of God in a person. He’s good to his senior pastor, he’s good to his church family, he’s good to his friends—and he is even better to his wife. In this season of learning to be true family, let us not just be Davids, but let us also be Jonathans. Let us support and help others to succeed and fulfill their destiny, as Daniel does. Let us not only ask God, who is the Jonathan who will support me? But also, who is the David that God wants me to support?

## Pastor Lucy Cheung: A Mother of Intercession

### A Listening Mother

One might think that Daniel’s beloved wife must be pampered and spoiled. Lucy is a spiritual mom who is full of love, but she is definitely not delicate. She almost died from two major illnesses, but the Lord miraculously healed her. Her three precious children have also experienced major ups and downs, highs and lows. As a mother, she and Daniel have shed many

tears over them. Maybe that's why she is compassionate to the weak. And being weak myself, I have often been thought of by her.

I remember one day, I went to see her when I was feeling very tired and weak . When she saw me, she said, "Dear, you look tired, let's lie down and talk!" So we each lay on a sofa, and she listened to me share my heart. She did not give any comment nor a word of correction. She just quietly listened. Two hours of this "reclining meeting" went by, and I felt much better. To have someone just patiently listen to me and not judge me was therapeutic. Her full attention and quiet company were better than a thousand words. When got up from the sofa, I was already well! With the added bonus of a bowl of warm chicken soup, I felt strengthened and ready for the next race.

Lucy shares many similar traits with Mama May. They are genuine people who can cry as well as laugh. She loves smiling too. Sometimes, there doesn't seem to be anything to laugh about, but she still laughs loudly and we follow. As she says, whether you cry or laugh, you still have to live your life, so let's choose to laugh! Even so, she is a mother who can also cry, and oftentimes she travails and weeps for the Kingdom. As Zion has been entrusted with a Kingdom mandate, the level of warfare is high. But I have seldom heard her complain.

Through her persevering love and tears of intercession, Zion has become a house of prayer, providing a strong base of intercessory support for the fathers battling on the front lines. In addition, the two pastors' wives in Church of Zion are down-to-earth and love to serve in the kitchen. They are very hospitable and good at cooking. Their "kitchen anointing" actually has helped to break the religious spirit in me and made me fall in love with kitchen work too. For them, cooking in the presence

of God is as spiritual as praying in a prayer room, and the sound of cooking is as beautiful as the sound of a piano. Here are some photos of proof:



*Two pastors' wives who enjoy serving in the kitchen!*

(Left) Best chefs in the kitchen

(Right) Most elegant ladies outside the kitchen



### A Mother of Prayer

One of the foundations of the Church of Zion is intercession. Therefore the enemy has often attacked the relationship between the intercessors and the pastors. In the beginning, there was a group of intercessors at Zion who had a strong prophetic gifting but were not mature. When what they received was different from what the pastor received, they would judge and attempt to manipulate people.

There were also a few intercessors who did not recognize the call on David in the early days, and thought Gideon was deceived by “this Egyptian.” Despite Gideon’s efforts to help them recognize David’s role, several successive intercessory leaders left. At that time, David felt from the Lord to raise up Lucy to be the intercessory leader for Zion.

Gideon knew that this was God’s calling and choice. But he was worried that if this good friend became the intercessory leader, the enemy might attack and ruin their relationship, which was what happened to the previous leaders. It would be such a pity! So, he said to Lucy, “Please be the intercessory leader, but I have one condition: when we see things differently, promise me

that you will trust me and listen to me.”

With simple trust, Lucy agreed. And to this day, Gideon has never had to confront her about anything; her heart is ready to listen to him anytime. She is completely submissive and completely obedient. This is the secret of her great authority now.

Above all, she is a real mother. When she is present, intercessors find themselves immersed in a congenial family atmosphere where they can support and enjoy each other and pray together in love; and ministry becomes easy and delightful!

### A Mother Who Empowers

Lucy is one of the rare women of wisdom I have met; with a woman of few words but great authority. I really trust her heart. When I receive something from the Lord but am unsure if I am to share it, I love to check with her. She is always encouraging and very supportive, saying, “It is good; please share it with Renewal Fellowship!” Like Daniel, Lucy is a mother who empowers people to fulfill their destiny.

Wherever she goes, she carries an anointing for unity that releases people’s hearts to be open and transparent. When this wise mother is present, she creates a safe place where there is no judgment, and the children are safe and find their place. She may not have unique insights, great revelations, or visions every time, yet she is usually surrounded by mighty intercessory generals who submit to her authority, because she has a way of bringing people together and encouraging them to share boldly what they receive. Sometimes she will not feel led to say anything; however, she knows who to give the mic to. And she will often stand besides or behind the one who shares, to encourage and to empower. Her famous saying is “together is beautiful”

Like Daniel, Lucy is ready to give her life for her friends. When Gideon was finishing his important thesis on the Latter

Rain movement at Regent College, Lucy was sick with severe asthma. But she had been a secretary in the past and could type very fast. So every Saturday, she would help Gideon type his thesis. There were no computers those days, so if one letter was typed wrong, the whole page had to be retyped. Gideon was deeply grateful and often said that she risked her life to serve him.

Gideon is often out of town, and when he is, Lucy and Daniel are the pillars in the house. Zion is a local church with a Kingdom calling, and the weight of spiritual responsibility then falls upon the two of them. Lucy says, “In the beginning, we were quite naive, we didn’t know anything about ‘covenant’ or the ‘anointing of Jonathan’ or being ‘true family.’ We had none of these terms, but unknowingly, we’ve been walking in the reality.”

Gideon likes to use an analogy of a rainbow: a complete rainbow is a full circle, but usually people only see the upper half, and forget about the lower half. By the examples of Daniel and Lucy, many in the family of Zion are willing to be the lower half of the rainbow, quiet and unknown, yet carrying the hidden strength and the covered glory. The Lord knows, and it is enough.

The church these four have established does not have a deacon’s board where people vote to pass a motion; instead, the leadership gatherings at Gideon’s home follow the model of early churches in Acts 13:1-3. We seek the Lord together and allow the Holy Spirit to speak. And actually, most Zion meetings are about seeking God, and deepening love relationships with each other. May’s worship ushers us into God’s presence. Having no agenda or plan, we simply allow Him to move freely among us, as He gives us revelation or leads us to share, or pray, or prophesy. When we need to make a decision, we come before Him in worship and listen to His voice. After each of these gatherings, our spirits are full, satisfied with the “richest feast” (Psalm

63:5). In the past, I remained hungry and dissatisfied even after attending numerous seminars and running between conferences. Now, as we earnestly seek the Lord together and encounter Him day by day, week by week, my heart has been so satisfied, and joyfully expecting more!



3

## The Womb of Homecoming (II): The Zion Family





## Enter the Family through Rest

### We Welcome You

**YEARS AGO**, GIDEON began noticing a female pastor visiting from a traditional church far away. She always came with some of her spiritual children who shared the same thirst, and they would weep profusely in God's presence.

I was that thirsty pastor. My heart was constantly attracted by God's presence, and I longed to be with these pure-hearted people, with whom I could love the Lord with all my soul and even go crazy for Him!

One day in the year 2000, Gideon told me there was a leadership gathering at his house where leaders sought the Lord together, and he said: "Since you are so hungry, we welcome you to participate!" I was exhilarated and began to join them every week. Although the drive alone would take an hour, I was always joyful on the way there, because it was my favorite gathering and because I could seek the Lord with those who loved Him with such pure hearts. At the time, Gideon had not yet become too busy, and I felt privileged to have these opportunities to learn alongside him.

Whenever I shared with my team what I heard in Gideon's house about God's kingdom, everyone accepted it and felt

encouraged; these Kingdom visions enlarged our hearts. Now, we were not only planting a local church together, but we also sought God's heart and embraced His Kingdom together. Gideon saw the longing our team had for the glory of His Kingdom, so he decided to bring the Zion team over to walk with us.

I can still remember the first time they came to my house. At the time, there were not many musicians among us, so we often worshipped through CDs. When the Zion team came to our midst, a special family anointing came with them. Even though we only used a simple CD player, suddenly, the glorious presence of God came! However, I still had a "meeting agenda" in my head: first we would introduce our team, then invite Gideon to share.

Out of habit, I was about to introduce my team when Gideon, contrary to his customary gentleness, halted me abruptly: "Wait! God's presence is very strong now, why don't we wait until later to introduce ourselves? Let us listen to God now and share what He has to say to us." So we each shared what we received during worship. At end when we finally introduced ourselves, it was as if we had already known one another in the spirit. We simply said our names without saying anything else. That was an amazing experience, as I learned to always honour what God wanted to do among us. This was more important than honouring our elders and any etiquette or agenda.

On that day, Gideon asked us a very simple question: "Why did Jesus come to this world?" We thought it was an easy question, so someone immediately replied, "To save the lost!" He then said, "That is true, but why did Jesus come to save those who are lost?" His words seemed to have a hidden meaning. We were silent for a long time, until he finally said, "Because it was God's will. The most important purpose the Son of Man came for was to do the Father's will." He then shared with us Hebrews

10:7-9, where Jesus said twice, “Here I am... I have come to do Your will!” Saving the lost was the Father’s will, so Jesus came.

Later, the Lord Himself added John 4:34 to me, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to finish His work.” His food was doing of the will of God. To him, fulfilling the Father’s heart was above every kind of service and ministry. That day, the fear of God came upon me and I could not speak for a long time.

### Rest is God’s Will Too

Gideon then added that God’s will is often different from what we expect. He sees us as sons, while we often see ourselves as servants. Sons are allowed to rest, so sometimes His will is for us to rest.

Rest? In the Baptist church-planting training, our teachers told us repeatedly that the most important quality for church planters is the ability to endure hardship and a willingness to sacrifice time, even your vacation and rest. For me as the eldest child of the family, this was not a problem. In fact, both of my parents were the eldest in their families. Their willingness to sacrifice and endure hardship were their most outstanding qualities. In my understanding, “trying my best” in ministry was the most important virtue for pastors.

But the Lord renewed my understanding of ministry, including the concept of “rest.” That day, I suddenly understood. Why did Jesus retreat to the wilderness at the height of His ministry? Why did He leave the crowd when they chased after Him? Why was He not compelled by human need? Why was He able to move so freely among the multitudes? It was because the only audience in His life and the only one He cared about was Heavenly Father whom He loved so deeply. He focused only on the Father’s will, so working or resting—either was fine. In the presence of the Lord, pillar of cloud or pillar of fire, going or

stopping, all are good.

We need to be still and restful to know that He is God (Ps 46:10). This Homecoming journey is exciting but also restful; it has now touched many parts of the world, reaching over forty nations in Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. The journey started in Vancouver, Canada, where God devoted over thirty years to build true families – Papa Gideon and Mama May’s family, Papa Daniel and Mama Lucy’s family, the covenant family of these four, and later, the family of the Church of Zion. So this Homecoming journey began with “family.”

How did I enter into this family?! I did not enter into this journey because of any wisdom or foresight on my part. Looking back now, it really was God’s hand that “forced” me to rest in my weakest hour. He interrupted my accustomed way of ministry, freed me from striving to do ministry, and brought me home to a family of destiny, the family of Zion.

### Heavenly Father Cooks Too!

When I began the work of establishing a Chinese congregation in a church near the University of British Columbia, many kind-hearted spiritual elders encouraged me to work around the clock in the first three years of church-planting if I wanted to accomplish anything. So I worked over fifty hours every week, and often fasted and prayed. I did indeed bring many to the Lord, but I was totally exhausted before the end of the first year. One day I was at a prayer meeting of our English-speaking mother church. Suddenly, I felt a whirling sensation and the next moment I had collapsed on the floor and was unable to stand back up. I was immediately taken to the hospital where the doctor did a thorough check-up, but could not identify any issue other than low blood pressure. They explained that I was simply too tired and needed to rest.

What I did not expect was that when I returned home and had just lain down, a sister insisted on seeing me for counsel. When she saw me in bed, she just sat on the bed and began to tell me her situation tearfully: her husband had an affair, and the woman was now pregnant. What should she do? At that moment, I felt I was just like her; we both needed God! Still dizzy, I said to her (and to myself), “We need to trust God!” Then suddenly my phone rang; it was sister Yuli.

Yuli is very special in the Zion family, and is representative of the faithful, yet hidden intercessors in this Homecoming journey. She has devoted her entire life to the Lord and His family. She prays with fervency and intensity that is rare. She has also been trained by the Lord to listen to His voice in everything. In 1993, Heavenly Father miraculously brought her from Taiwan to North America, and immediately she met David and Gideon. When David prayed for her the first time, she fell on the floor and remained there for a long time! Later, when she met Gideon at Glad Tidings and shared with him how the Spirit of God led her into her intercessory journey, he replied, “I need to protect you.” From then on, she recognized him as her spiritual father, and felt she had come home! Her intercession in the Kingdom now had a strong covering and protection. The Lord sent her to Canada more than twenty years ago and she, together with the Canadian intercessors, supported the Canadian fathers on their knees and with their tears as the fathers began the journey. David was deeply touched by her day-and-night intercession for Canada. He promised the Lord that when Canada broke through, he would go and help Taiwan because of this intercessor from Taiwan. And this happened! I will share more later.

I met her through a coincidence. At the time, I was still serving at the Baptist church. A friend of mine who was a pastor’s

wife saw that I was having a tough time with my ministry and felt led to introduce me to Yuli. Having heard that she was a seasoned Kingdom intercessor, I was surprised by her utter lack of spiritual pride. In our first encounter, her love and affection left a deep impression on me. Her prayers were full of love and revelation. We had only just met, but it was as if we had known each other for a long time. However, we seldom connected with each other, so for her to call me at such an hour, when I had just returned from the hospital, surprised me.

She said, “How are you? Today God suddenly told me to pray for you. I have no idea what is happening; I just thought maybe you feel lonely in your ministry. You should rest more often.” I was shocked by God’s “omniscience,” for she had no clue what had happened to me.

I told her I fainted early that morning. She said, “You need to get away from your environment, or else you would not be able to truly rest.” Hearing this, the sister who was sitting on my bed apologized and said, “Yeah, yeah; you should rest first, I will lean on God myself.” Yuli then said through the telephone, “Come to Zion for retreat. The presence of God is here, and you will be restored.”

God’s presence? Those words fascinated me, so I went. She arranged for me to stay in the retreat house of Zion called Selah House (“Selah” is the Hebrew word for rest). She cooked for me daily, and all the dishes were the ones I liked, but she would always ask me nervously, “Does it taste good?”

In reality, she did not cook very well, and had to ask Heavenly Father how to do so every time. She said, “Heavenly Father would tell me what to cook, and He held my hand when I cooked!” So Heavenly Father cooks too! I was surprised that someone could be so intimate with Heavenly Father that she could even ask

Him questions about cooking. I had previously thought that if everyone bothered Heavenly Father this way, would He not be super busy? Also, I was stunned that He cared about such trivial things.

As I ate the food that Heavenly Father taught Yuli to make by “holding her hand,” I began to weep. It was as if I “ingested” His love, and it was real and sweet. Mark 6:30-31 says, “the apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, ‘come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.’” At that moment, I felt as if I was just amid these apostles, and Jesus cared that we ate and rested.

I felt Him speaking to me in my spirit, “Have you not always asked me to use you? Actually, I do not want to ‘use’ you, but I want to bring you home and love you!”

I felt perplexed about this idea of “going home”; little did I know that Heavenly Father had truly prepared a home for me.

### Encounter During Retreat

During my retreat, I was brought to the Sunday service of the Church of Zion for the first time. The church was unique. An hour before the service started, Gideon led us to pray and seek God’s heart, then each one shared what they received and sensed. At the end, Gideon said, “Although someone has prepared a sermon, we still need to be tender before God, and be ready to follow the Holy Spirit’s leadership and guidance.” As I stood and watched, I felt bewildered - the service was about to start and we still didn’t know what to share?

With high expectations, I walked into the service, and out of habit began looking for hymn books. However, they did not use hymn books there, but were completely immersed in the stream

of the Holy Spirit. One song would be repeated many times, and there was no rush to move on to the next. At first, I was not used to such free and long worship sessions. However, after a while, I forgot everything in the thick presence of God. I began to lift my hands up alongside others, and as I lifted them, tears gushed from my eyes. I was suddenly aware that people could worship God with such freedom. It was so enjoyable.

I knew in my head that God is enthroned in our worship (Psalms 22:3 ), but this was utterly different from my past worship experiences. You could truly enjoy worship. Everyone worshiped with all their hearts. There was no need to look at others, because no one was looking at you. I felt such freedom in the spirit, and I felt I could touch God's presence with my hands.

In my heart, I said to the Lord, "I love this place so much. I love the worship leader so much. Her spirit is so pure that she can lead such pure worship!" I learned later that the worship leader was Mama May. After worship, a couple went on stage to share their testimony from the past week, then other couples joined them to receive blessings. So, a huge group of people stood on stage. I was uneasy again. Even the pulpit could be treated with such freedom? Anyone could be called up to share? This strongly challenged my religious notions. However, I envied the atmosphere of harmony, freedom, and mutual love. It was the atmosphere of family!

My spirit gradually became more accustomed to all of it. It came time for Gideon to share, and after a few words, he suddenly pointed to me, introduced me, and invited me to share. My heart had just started to settle down when I was challenged again! I had never experienced something like this. Without advance notice, without knowing me that well, and without knowing what I would say, they passed me the microphone.

I was anxious and afraid, but forced myself to go on stage nevertheless. When I took the microphone, I was nervous as if I had received a bomb. I did not know what to do, but as I looked at the loving glances of the people, I was suddenly filled with compassion and said, “You need to treasure such services and never take them for granted. To me, such glorious presence of God is truly paradise!”

After these words, I handed the microphone back to Gideon. He did not expect my sharing to be so short, . but before he could react, I had already walked off the stage. The congregation was quiet. I didn’t know if what I said was appropriate, but I had no other words. As I sat down awkwardly, a Middle Easterner came up to me with a warm smile and eyes of sincerity in his dark face. He shook my hands and said, “Thank you for your words; this is exactly what our church needs.” I did not know at the time that he was Pastor David Demian, who would be another father to bring a great impact on my life.

### A Journey Without Looking Back

In the early spring of 2005, David came to Renewal Family and shared about the “One Heart” Gathering that would take place soon in Quebec. That was the first time I heard him share face-to-face. He showed some video clips about the things God had done through Watchmen for the Nations. David talked about Israel, about reconciliation, and about unity—topics which I had never concerned myself with. He emphasized the importance of the role of the Chinese and invited everyone to participate in that Gathering.

What he shared seemed unrelated to the things I cared about, which was church planting and church growth. However, when he began to share, tears kept streaming down my face for reasons I could not comprehend. A brother next to me suddenly turned

around and said to me, “I see the Holy Spirit moving in your heart! I sense that you will participate in the Kingdom ministry of Watchmen for the Nations.” What he said surprised me. At the time I was doing church-planting, and pastoring a church alone was already overwhelming for me. To add Kingdom ministry on top of that would be next to impossible. But his words were etched in my heart, and I had to pray about it until I eventually went to that gathering.

Although I had intermittently participated in some events hosted by Watchmen for the Nations, it was through the “One Heart” Gathering that my eyes were opened, and I began to feel what God’s glory is! In worship, the Lord led me to a higher place to look at my ministry. As He spoke to me, the difficulties I encountered in my ministry became irrelevant and trivial, and they no longer bothered me. There were no set speakers or a set agenda, but I realized, with both joy and trepidation, that God was there. He was the speaker, and He was in charge of the entire gathering.

I thank God, although I thought I just participated in a special gathering, the Lord used it to bring me into an amazing journey, and I began to walk with the Canadian family. I do not remember all the details of how I was invited to different gatherings; all I could remember was that whatever gathering it was, be it large or small, for leadership only or for the public, it always gave me great joy to be there. I did not need to do anything, nor did I have to prepare sermons, so they were as relaxing as vacations! I saw how when a group of people expressed themselves genuinely, and shared their hearts with one another, then unbelievable things happened! It was so wonderful, and how I loved it! During that period of time, my heart was frequently renewed in God’s presence.

At a Gathering in Quebec, the Holy Spirit led us to proclaim the destiny of Canada, which is to heal the nations. There was special prayer for those under forty-five years of age, and I was among those on the stage. Suddenly, a Caucasian sister came to me and said, “the Lord wants me to tell you that the place you stand on is crucial. God says that the Chinese need representatives like you, so don’t assume that you’ve come here to enjoy a vacation.” I almost burst out laughing, because I loved the gatherings, and I used my vacation and my own money to go, so of course I went as if I were on vacation! However, regarding the significance of the Chinese, and myself, I was completely clueless. It was totally the Lord’s grace that I stayed on the journey.

He continued to send people to encourage me and pray for me, though I was uninitiated. Another time at a gathering in Ontario, David invited us to stand with the First Peoples. As I followed everyone to the stage, a First Nations sister hugged me and said, “I saw a halo on your head. The Lord clearly instructed me to be your intercessor.” As she prayed, I wept, for in my spirit I experienced intense warfare as I transitioned from church-growth mentality to Kingdom-growth mentality. The Lord sent her and continued to direct her to pray for me for several years, until I was released from previous ministry.

One night, I was faced with a severe attack from the enemy, to the point I almost wanted to give up ministry. Early in the morning, she called me and said, “I could not sleep last night, because I kept seeing your face in front of me, so I prayed for you. Are you OK?” Across thousands of miles, Abba Father sent this First Nations sister in Quebec, Eastern Canada, to intercede for His little Chinese daughter in Vancouver, Western Canada. It really moved me! This is only one example. Through the intercession of these Canadian prayer mothers, I, a Chinese youngster, was able to continue walking this journey.

I found true family. We did not focus on religion, but relationship; it did not focus on “things,” but on “people rather than on “things.” Whenever I was with these life-giving spiritual men and women, I would be reminded of how “dead” I was inside! Like a fish who had found a water spring, I did not want to leave. Whenever I returned to my church, I still served diligently, but my heart missed the glorious worship in the gatherings, the agenda-less freedom to seek God only, and the embrace, love, and encouragement of the family.

Gradually, I found myself changed from inside out, and the church I planted also changed. We began to enjoy greater freedom in the spirit whenever we gathered. We developed a new love language when we were together: we began to open our arms to embrace each other. This was so foreign in our Chinese culture.



*A First Nations sister put this handmade necklace around my neck at the end of a Gathering. On it is written Malachi 4:6*

### Pastor David: A Father Who Does Surgery in the Spirit

Since I had drunk from the living water of the Holy Spirit, I could no longer return to my previous religiosity and ministry. As I was trapped between the two, David helped me overcome the bondage of tradition, and I decided to completely follow the leading of the Holy Spirit.

In the early Canadian gatherings, there were not many

Chinese. As I went to the gatherings more frequently, David began to take note of me, and I began to connect with him more. One time at a small gathering in Quebec, David encouraged us to share hearts instead of ministries. He asked everyone to take off their titles as pastors and leaders and come before the Lord candidly. He urged us to walk towards someone as the Holy Spirit led us and speak words of blessing and encouragement face to face. What a relief it was to be a real person without any titles and labels! The Lord greatly poured out His Spirit among us, everyone was touched, and I was in tears. But I was challenged to share my heart in English with a bunch of “westerners.” As I hesitated, I saw David walking towards me.

Many of us were a bit “afraid” of him. Before moving to Canada, he had been in medical school in Egypt preparing to be a heart surgeon. But God called him to his destiny as a spiritual surgeon. He is spiritually sharp, and could almost see through one’s inner being. Actually, I was also somewhat afraid of him. But on that day, in God’s loving presence, I suddenly felt that he was a respectable father. He approached me, and said something I had never heard: “I love your heart!” David’s eyes were filled with tears, and I could feel his sincerity. Somebody saw my “heart” instead of my talents, ability, and ministry! This deeply touched me, and I could not help but weeping. Although he knew nothing about my ministry and my background, he saw me in the spirit. From then on, I began to walk closer with David, and the Lord used him to renew my mind, and even do heart surgeries in the spirit. Let me share with you once how he did heart surgery on me.

### Transition to a Kingdom Mindset

I began to increasingly long for God’s glory. However, I still felt I needed to finish my task of church-planting first before I

could qualify for Kingdom ministry. At the time, David was not as busy as he is now, so we had time to meet and chat. One time, he invited my sister and me to his house. There, he told us that we were instruments that God has prepared for His Kingdom, and encouraged us to participate more in Kingdom ministry. I said, “Maybe we should discuss this after we establish a bigger and more mature church. After I graduate from establishing the local church, then I will be qualified for Kingdom ministry.” I thought I had given a humble and appropriate response.

However, he asked me, “If the Lord did give you a huge church, would you be satisfied?” I knew his words had another layer of meaning, and I said, “Probably not.”

He said, “That’s right! If Father’s heart is not satisfied, neither will yours be!” I had no words to respond because what he said was true. At that moment, Heavenly Father spoke to my heart, “You will not let go if your church grows bigger; you will actually become even busier! However, if you see My Kingdom come, even the biggest church will not seem big to you!” I felt that the purpose of my visit was not just for a random chat. Two fathers, heavenly and earthly, moved together to change my old wineskin of tradition.

I was challenged to the point that I was speechless, but David continued his counsel. “If all your interest and focus are on your local church, why did you go to the Kingdom gatherings?”

I answered honestly, “Because in your midst, I experienced the glory of God and tremendous joy.”

He then said, “God wants us to enjoy serving Him! Since you truly enjoy it, that might be what the Lord calls you to do.” I never saw ministry having anything to do with joy and enjoyment, since ministry often meant hardship to me. He gave me a brand-new perspective.

To be honest, I felt such great joy every time I went to the Gatherings. I was deeply attracted by God's presence and never considered that I was actually serving God in those times. I had not experienced such joy in my ministry before. I could not help but sigh, "Wouldn't it be wonderful if I could experience the same richness of God's presence in my church as I experience in the Gatherings!"

David laughed, "Church and Kingdom should be consistent but not opposite. The principles that work for the Kingdom ought to work for the local church; likewise, what works in the local church ought to work in the Kingdom too. The principles of serving God should be the same."

I pressed on, "So you are saying our local church can be just as free as the Gatherings?"

He replied even more firmly, "The church is God's family in the first place! The church and the Kingdom are never in opposition to each other. Again, what works in the Kingdom ought to work in the church too! The things that bring you joy in the Gatherings should work in your life and your pastoral ministry. This is the healthy way. I believe Kingdom ministry will greatly benefit you and be a blessing to you."

I felt his words made perfect sense, but I did not think I could do it, and I couldn't figure out why. He seemed to see through my inner struggles and said, "Can I be honest with you? Do you feel that you need to grow your church first in order to qualify for the Kingdom ministry?"

"Yes," I confessed.

He replied bluntly, "In that case, you have secretly set a precondition for entering into Kingdom ministry; that you need to build up your ministry first, so that you may look good when you meet others. Am I right?" I felt like he hit the nail right on

the head, and I was shocked by his directness and sharpness. Seeing that I was silent, he pressed on, “If God asks you to lay down your own plans and your own kingdom now, will you be willing to do so?”

Ouch! What a skillful surgeon I encountered. However, for reasons I could not explain, I was not sad but felt encouraged on this operating table. I responded, “I am willing! Help me, Lord!”

David realized his sharpness, so he softened his tone. “Your transition will be neither easy for you nor your team.” I looked at my sister who sat next to me, and sighed, “Thanks for your understanding David. Actually, my sister and my brother-in-law have also been hurt in ministry. I feel sorry about them. If they went to a bigger church with better resources, they would not have to go through so many challenges. Others could just leave, but since they are my family, they have to stay and suffer with me.”

David looked at my sister, and spoke with piercing wisdom, “The way you see those following you is the same as the way you see yourself. If you see yourself as pitiful, then they are pitiful too; if you see yourself as blessed, then they are blessed too. I wish to tell you that they are blessed, for they are not following you but God, and God has led them to you. It is prideful to think you made them suffer, because no one but God can determine anyone’s destiny.”

Done! In one conversation, he did two surgeries. He was really hard on me, and I said to myself, “How dare I attempt to follow a spiritual father like him?” I had to admit that I need stronger self-esteem. I had become accustomed to a gentle father like Gideon, and I didn’t know if I could handle such a “sharp” father with clear discernment!

As I sat and thought, it was as if he saw through me again, so

he challenged me and smiled. “Maybe I can help you more in this season. If people can only accept a father like Gideon, and can only be embraced and loved, then they probably still have problems with self-esteem.” I had no way out.

So, I courageously responded to this surgeon father, “Alright David! I need help, so continue operating on me!”

A few years later, the Lord revealed to me that the womb He chose to birth the Homecoming journey was a small and nameless local church called Church of Zion. The only reason that Zion was chosen is because she longed to be His home where He could rest! The Lord did not let the Homecoming journey emerge from an abstract and conceptual “Kingdom”; rather, God longs for His Kingdom to be incarnational and genuine, so that His kingdom can find home in all “local churches” around the world. When a local church decides to become His resting place and seeks first His Kingdom, then she will carry the glory and authority of God’s Kingdom, and become a representative and manifestation of God’s Kingdom in her locality.

### Spiritual Discernment

Many often pursue prophetic gifts without paying attention to another spiritual gift of equal importance, which is discernment. Without right discernment, prophetic gifting alone cannot lead us away from erroneous judgments, as we see in the example of Balaam from the Bible.

I once asked David how to cultivate spiritual discernment. He said that discernment is about the “heart.” If one’s heart is not pure enough, it will not be able to discern accurately. The first thing that needs to be discerned is one’s motivation and mindset. Another thing is that the level of our discernment is proportionate to our love for the body of Christ. When we have enough love, the Lord can safely grant us higher levels of discernment and

share with us the things happening in His household, because He knows we will cover instead of expose or judge the issues in His household. The gift of discernment is not for oneself, but rather for the body of Christ. The Lord does not give this gift casually, but when we start serving His body, He will give it to us.

I asked, “If this is the case, the basis of discernment should be pure hearts. How does one keep one’s heart pure then?”

After a short pause, David said, “The simplest thing is to invite the Holy Spirit to shine His light upon you, because the human heart is wicked and deceitful, and can fool itself. The more we stay in God’s presence, the purer our hearts will be. When we abide in God’s light, we see the light, and our capacity to receive the light will be gradually enlarged. The purer our hearts are, the more we see the light; the more we see the light, the faster we grow. This is why we need God’s presence.”

Later in my ministry, especially during the transition from a traditional church-minded ministry to the Kingdom-minded ministry, such spiritual discernment, led by a pure heart, became crucial.

### Enter the Zion Family with Blessings

“How did you leave your previous church? Hope you were not driven out!” Once someone asked me this with much curiosity.

I answered gratefully, “I was blessed and dispatched, not driven out!”

I was not at all surprised by such questions. Churches that consist of individuals with different theological views—for example, debates on the Holy Spirit, women in ministry, or infant baptism—usually have a high percentage of divisions. One group will either be asked to leave, or simply depart to establish another church. Both ways of leaving are extremely painful. However, under the guidance and covering of our spiritual fathers, I left in

a beautiful third way: I left with blessings.

I loved my eighty-year-old church; everyone there was very loyal, though also extremely conservative. After I had experienced the baptism in the Spirit, even raising my hands during worship caused me to feel a lot of pressure, because I was afraid of being seen as too “emotional.” As a church-planting pastor of a traditional church, my longing for the constant filling and renewal of the Holy Spirit meant I had already overstepped the boundaries set for me. Not to mention that, after I began taking part in the Homecoming journey, my involvement in Kingdom ministry exceeded the assigned tasks of a local church pastor. Considering such circumstances, I was almost one-hundred percent sure that I would be invited to leave one day. However, God granted me great favor. Through His miraculous work, our team left our Baptist church and the denomination loaded with blessings. We were richly blessed and officially sent to the Church of Zion.

What was the secret to receiving such favor? One aspect was to listen to Gideon’s wisdom: Do not leave on your schedule but wait for God’s timing.

### Twelve Years of Waiting

Once at a pastors’ gathering, a prophet suddenly prophesied over me and said that I would not continue pastoring a church alone but would enter into a large family! Right there, many pastors invited me to join their team. However, I knew in my spirit that the large family meant the Church of Zion. The strange thing was that Gideon and Mama May were the only ones who remained silent about this. I was puzzled, so I paid them a visit, and I can still remember the words they said to me.

“Of course we would love to see such a thing come to fruition. However, God has to initiate it. We need to wait for God’s timing

and path for the fulfillment of a prophecy. When the time comes, we will all recognize it as the right time. But before the time comes, it is good we can still journey together as usual. The most important thing is that our hearts are together.”

I was a bit disappointed, and did not know how long I needed to wait. Regardless, I really appreciated their Kingdom hearts. I realized then that walking together didn’t necessarily mean coming under someone’s wings or joining a specific organization. But I became even more convinced that this was the spiritual family into which I would enter. I continued serving in my church, while Gideon continued walking with me and helping me grow. He taught me to submit to my senior pastor, despite differences in our theological viewpoints.

Gideon’s counsel was wise and good. I began to honor my senior pastor even more. However, I did not expect that I would have to wait twelve years to join Church of Zion.

Someone asked me, how did you endure those twelve years? Other than extravagant grace from God, the most important secret was walking together with family. During the waiting time, the family from Zion, especially Papa Daniel, Mama Lucy and the Zion Cantonese team, spent one Sunday every month with us to help us going through our most difficult time. Knowing our hardship, Papa Daniel and his team never accepted any honorarium from us. They said, “We come voluntarily, and there should be no distinction between us in the family!” They came to accompany us for at least four years. Through such concrete steps of walking together these years, we were deeply loved and strengthened by the family, and so we were never disheartened as we waited for the fullness of God’ time.

In those twelve years, I began traveling to China with David and Gideon. Whenever I returned, I would give reports of my

ministry in China to my church. Though the people felt excited and refreshed by what I shared, such ministry was, after all, not the traditional missionary or training work. One day, our director for church-planting came to me and said that though they appreciated my ministry in the Kingdom, such ministry was not their calling. He advised me to join the Church of Zion, because they saw that my calling and Zion's calling were the same. It was indeed hard for people to understand why a pastor of a local church would always be traveling to other places for ministry. I knew this was a respectable and reasonable "full stop," and the sign from God for which I had waited for so long: It was time to leave.

As I prayed, the Holy Spirit told me not to just simply walk away, but to honor the years of nurture and care from this mother church and the Baptist denomination. When I shared this with the fathers of Zion, they all fully agreed. So, we had a joint commissioning service, with representatives from four sides: our denominational headquarters, our English-speaking Baptist mother church, Church of Zion, and our Chinese fellowship.

Everyone came. Abba Father had graciously protected our relationships throughout these years, and our gathering was harmonious and joyful. We gave gifts to the elders of the church, thanking the Baptist church for giving birth to us and nurturing us. That day, I also baptized an old university professor from China, who happened to be the one-hundred first person baptized in our Chinese fellowship. God seemed to be saying to me, you have completed your 101 course, and now it is time for a brand new beginning.

### Sent out, Not Driven Out

That day, the Director of the Deacons' Board of our Canadian mother church was extremely excited. He said that though

we had different cultural backgrounds, different visions and different theological viewpoints—especially regarding the work of the Holy Spirit—we were able to accept and love one another in Christ. He said with great emotion, “I wish the four walls of this church could be taken down today, so that all the churches in Vancouver could see this beautiful thing happening in our midst! We gave birth to a Chinese daughter. Though the way she worships may differ from ours, she is indeed our daughter. As a father blesses his daughter in her marriage, we bless our daughter as we give her hand in marriage to Church of Zion, and as she enters into her destiny as Chinese!” Huge applause broke out from the crowd and continued for a very long time.

I came up and responded, “Amen! Although we differ in many ways, in Christ we are one family! We are not ‘kicked out,’ but ‘commissioned out’ with blessings!”

I thanked this Caucasian church who loved China so much. Through those years, they devoted a tremendous amount of effort and money to support us. However, when they saw our destiny in the Kingdom, they let go of us and allowed us to begin our new journey. That day was truly as joyful as a daughter’s marriage, and filled with God’s glorious presence.

Five years earlier, the Lord asked me to invite Gideon along with Renewal Family to ordain me jointly with my mother church. I was glad I obeyed, as it was a preparation for entering into Zion. Looking back, that ordination ceremony was like an “engagement” and now, it was a formal “marriage.”

### Brokenness and Scars

Many presume that the family of Zion is a “perfect” church. This stems from the same mindset that causes many Christians to seek “perfect” (or at least “suitable”) churches. There is a wise saying that tells us, “even if there exists a perfect church, it

will not be perfect anymore once you join it!” We are, after all, human and imperfect. God’s notion of perfection is completely different from ours. Jesus’ miracle of the five loaves and two fish was perfect, but if you were among the five thousand fed that day, would you complain because it was simply loaves and fish and not a richer feast?

In his poem “Jesus of the Scars,” British poet Edward Shillito wrote: “Only God’s wounds can speak to our wounds!” Jesus entered His greatest glory through the cross, and our salvation came from His brokenness and death. A life lived like Jesus must also experience much brokenness. The church Jesus wants to establish differs from the church we often perceive as successful, with a growing congregation, many programs, and a majestic building.

As the Homecoming journey spread to the corners of the world, people began to look for its “womb”, the Church of Zion. Many people were astounded to discover that she is not the “perfect” church they imagined; quite the contrary, she is filled with tales of brokenness and scars.

The Church of Zion encountered difficulties right from its beginning. As I mentioned before, a core couple who established the church alongside Gideon and his wife suddenly left without any notice. Mama May wept for many days because of this. However, due to their departure, Papa Daniel and Mama Lucy, who had just come to the Lord at the time, decided they could no longer stand by and watch their good friends being “abandoned” in such a manner. In that critical moment, in response to God’s calling, they made an important decision to stand firm and give them their full support. The heart of Jonathan they displayed pleased Heavenly Father, so He anointed them mightily and helped them grow rapidly in the Spirit.

In Zion, there is a beautiful legacy where everyone is willing to serve in ministry. Papa Daniel once told me the story behind this legacy. “This culture was not fostered through our strength; rather, it was through our weakness that everyone began to devote themselves to ministry. Mama Lucy went through two grave illnesses; she was even paralyzed for a year, and almost died. So people rose up to serve because they could no longer just sit and watch!

“Then there was sister Hazel, leader of the Cantonese team. She also needed support because of her eye cancer, so everyone began serving in ministry. Both these sisters were incredibly competent, but God used their weakness, instead of their strength, to bring people into ministry.”

### Open Hearts

People get close to one another because they choose to love. However, the closer they get to one another, the more they see each other’s weaknesses and imperfections. The Zion family has not shied away from brokenness and weaknesses; instead, it embraces imperfections. When we get close to one another, our problems inevitably get exposed. If we do not feel secure, we will close our hearts to people and even leave them. This is why “walking as family” is so difficult. We must choose between these two: keeping a polite and safe distance from others, or continually overcoming offence, being genuine and transparent with each other, and bearing the shame and the glory together.

Gideon is an example to us. One year during the Homecoming gathering in Hong Kong, spiritual children from different places invited Gideon to dinner. Just as we were happily sharing our hearts, a sister suddenly began criticizing Gideon for never phoning her, and claimed he did not truly care about her, and even started to weep. Without hesitation, Gideon apologized to

her for making her feel this way. Some among us tried to console her, but one sister and I felt indignant. Gideon is merely human too and confined by space and time. It was only normal that he could not take care of everyone's needs. Why did she have to say such things publicly?

Later, the two of us talked to Gideon about our thoughts. "Daddy! She is so ignorant and lacks a grateful heart! Let's have nothing to do with her anymore!"

He responded, "No, I will continue to open my heart to her, and will try to understand her. Because once I close my heart to people, it won't be long before I close my heart to God. I only have one heart, and it's the same heart relating to God or to man! If I close my heart to people, I will unknowingly close my heart to God, and I cannot afford that price!"

He was right. No wonder our hearts grow cold when we fail to face our wounds. That is why we need to constantly examine our heart. Is it hurt? Have I closed it to someone? Has it grown cold?

Since then, I dare not casually close my heart to people, because a closed heart cannot draw near to God. When a heart is broken, it is as if a door of life is forced open, and it may allow God to enter in through the wounds. When a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it brings forth much fruit. Otherwise, if it insists on keeping its original flavor and structure, it will not be able to release the life within it. Only an open and vulnerable life is ready to welcome God's glory. We read in 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 that we contemplate the Lord's glory with unveiled faces. An "unveiled face" is a state of vulnerability. Mother Teresa has once said, "Love until it hurts." Christ loved us till death, the ultimate expression of love.

The breakthrough in the Homecoming Journey in China began when David shared his heart. When we gathered for the

first time in sister Ruth's house, David led the way by sharing his heart with the Chinese leaders whom he had just met as he reclined on the sofa. Everyone followed suit and began opening their hearts and sharing their weaknesses. That gathering later became known as the "reclining meeting," which was more relaxing and freer than a normal forum. When we took off our masks and opened our hearts to one another, we gave birth to genuine intimacy and unity.

This cannot be done merely through human effort or determination. Humans can only do God's work when God comes. How do we invite God to come?

He inhabits the praises of Israel (see Psalms 22:3 KJV). That is why Zion puts a special emphasis on God's presence, and no one complains about the long worship. In God's presence and loving acceptance, we open our broken and weak hearts to our family and to Heavenly Father. By simply devoting ourselves to worshipping the Lord and loving His people, we welcome the Lord and cause Him to stay. Zion becomes His dwelling place.

### Fearing God

In reality, the Zion family does not seem to do much. We do not have many conferences or ministries, but rather focus on the one thing that is on the Lord's heart, which is the beautiful thing He complimented Mary for: worshipping at the feet of Jesus and seeking His face. I discovered that almost all the meetings of the Church of Zion are about seeking God. An hour before a meeting starts (both prayer meetings and Sunday services), we meet to discern, seek the Father's heart, and see what He wants to accomplish in the meeting. Although in the actual meeting the Holy Spirit will lead us afresh and might take us in a direction totally different from what we previously sensed, we will still seek Him faithfully with excitement.

One time, when we sought the Lord before a Sunday service, we felt to focus on fire of God, and we prayed: “Today, may the Lord release His holy fire which will incinerate everything that does not belong to Him!” As we excitingly entered the actual Sunday service, we experienced the rich presence of God in the worship time; however, the Holy Spirit came in like a wind. The consuming fire of God turned to His refreshing wind of love, and surely the message of fire was never touched. While the wind of the Holy Spirit came gently, He touched our hearts, using His wind instead of fire. We learned that we dare not to see any pre-meetings as a preparation for the main gatherings. There is no such thing like “rehearsal” for the work of the Spirit. He is the Lord. He decided how and when to visit us, in His way and His time. When He came, He came!

Until the end of the service, not a single person raised any doubt. We were all used to following the flow of the Spirit and adjusted ourselves accordingly. It is easy for one person to follow the Holy Spirit this way, but it takes years of practice for a group of people to do so. Not only do they need to trust the Holy Spirit completely, they also need to trust one another completely. Due to their reverence for God, the family of Zion longs for God to truly be God in their midst. They give Him the freedom to continually do new things, beyond all human confinements.

Mama May is the example. Many fail in attempting to imitate her worship, because she has no set mode of worship. She prays, “Lord, please never let me lose Your fresh guidance!” She knows the gift God has bestowed upon her, and she treasures it. However, she does not want to simply use her gift on auto-pilot, taking it for granted. Whenever she leads worship, even if she is leading a song she has sung many times, she will earnestly seek the Lord again, longing for Him to do a new thing, and not to stay in a specific mode. So the Lord trusts her and uses her

worship to bring breakthroughs. Heavenly Father is looking for genuine, simple, and pure worshippers.

Over the years, as I followed my spiritual parents, I saw how they led the church to fear the Lord and give Him full freedom to lead. David and Gideon have shared on certain topics many times, but whenever they travel to a new place, they will seek the Lord as to what they are to speak about. They told me they do not have any written sermons. They simply live in the Spirit and are ready to be His mouthpiece anytime.

### The Organic Life

What is the Homecoming? Homecoming is not a conference or an organization, but a group of people walking together and taking time to seek the Lord. Then they do what the Lord says. If the Lord says stop, they stop; if the Lord says go, they go. These people are on a journey in which their sole purpose is to satisfy the Father's heart. This is very different from the ministry of conventional organizations and churches.

After journeying with them for over a decade, I was finally fully grafted into the family of Zion. That's why I truly cherish every single day I spend in this family. Over the years, my life has changed unconsciously. This change did not come from any specific teaching or training, but rather through the impact of people's lives. Walking with spiritual parents and family has allowed me to discover that only lives can influence lives. Often it was not through hearing what people said but seeing what they did that stirred my hunger and reverence for God.

The impartation of life and spiritual gifts is real. Once I invited Mama May to train the worship leaders of our newly established City Prayer Altar. She smiled and said to me, "To be honest, I don't know how to teach. Worship leaders in Zion have matured over the years, not because of my teaching, but rather,

through my inviting them to worship with me. Before you know it, they have inherited my spiritual gift.” Indeed, Church of Zion does not have things like worship handbooks. During our prayer meetings and Sunday gatherings, a group of young people would always surround Mama May when she worshipped. As they worshipped together, the spirit of worship naturally came upon them.

God has used the Homecoming journey powerfully all around the world through the DNA of seeking Him with all our hearts. When people first encounter the journey, some feel excited and want to imitate the Homecoming, while others feel perplexed and unable to understand what is happening. Yet interestingly, many want to see its “operation manual.”

But there is none. David admitted candidly, “Whenever we try to organize everything into a written text, the Lord starts to reveal new things. So, let us still focus on that one thing: seeking the Lord together.” The most effective practice is to devote time to seek the Lord together. Indeed, aren’t our natural families the same in this regard? Every family is its own “organic” entity. What kind of family is constructed through a manual?

I used to love collecting information, and always preferred to have sermon notes in hand to make myself feel more secure. However, I finally realized that though I had many sermon notes, and preached many sermons without living what I preached, they were probably mere useless papers. Gideon now has many spiritual children from different places, and they preach well. Once Gideon said happily, “My children are more eloquent than me, and they share more coherently than I do!”

One of his sons responded, and we all agreed, “We know how to preach, yet you know how to live!”

Since coming to Zion, the Lord has been setting me free from the religious spirit. The family of Zion is really down-to-earth. I

used to join a prayer group where we first had dinner together. We shared our hearts at the dinner table, and spontaneously went into prayer time. And when the “scheduled” prayer time came, we continued to share with one another until God’s spirit was on one specific issue or need. Then we flowed with the Spirit and prayed for that specific thing. And often breakthroughs happened unexpectedly.

We do not usually expect pastors to visit us and would rather visit one another. I would often hear about young people going out for tea together, or about people swarming to someone’s home to celebrate a birthday, or a big crowd attending someone’s graduation ceremony. Every little thing in our daily life can become an opportunity for us to walk together! I discovered that the family of Zion care way more about “people” than “things.” We have hosted women’s tea times, men’s basketball games, and kids’ cooking shows. All these take place naturally and organically, and they do not have to become a tradition or ministry. There was a time when we felt young people needed encouragement, especially those whose parents were not around. So, families began opening up and inviting them home for activities or chats, so they could feel at home. Another time, we saw the elderly needed our care, so we sent them gifts and visited them. We have reduced administrative tasks; we don’t have Sunday bulletins, and we seldom organize training classes. Zion’s culture is to be as organic, free, and simple as possible.

### Resting Place

As Christians living in the days of His second coming, we are to face many persecutions and challenges. In places where church buildings have been destroyed and large gatherings are banned, God’s people are now meeting in small groups in homes. Nevertheless, isn’t this God’s will? The Lord may say to His end-

time bride, “I want to come into your home!” The once grandiose church buildings in Europe have now become tourist attractions.

In this Homecoming journey, we do not need to find the way back to the Father’s home, because Jesus is the WAY! As we follow Him, we will return to the Father’s home. This is why we need to seek the Lord, because when we seek the Lord we are on our WAY home!

One day, as I was with the Lord, He told me Jesus is the way, and He is not a one-way, but two-way street! Through Him, we can go to the Father; also through Him, the Father has a way to His family on earth. He only needs to find a group of people who are fully submitted to His will, and He can live with us NOW, not wait until the new heaven and new earth. We are victorious if the Lord is present. How can we get Him to stay? Give Him a family!

We often treat ourselves as laborers, like Martha. We get so busy that we lose precious time with the Lord. The Lord said Mary chose the good part that is needed! It is a blessing that cannot be taken away by busyness or persecution. When we reach a certain point in our worship, the Lord comes. When He comes, there is no need to do anything. We can cease all the music, preaching, dancing, declarations, and prayers, because these tools simply serve one purpose: that He can be with us!

There is a longing in the heart of God: “Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Where is the house you will build for me? Where will my resting place be?” (Isaiah 66:1). Since the garden of Eden, He has longed to dwell among men. Adam and Eve could be naked before God and not feel ashamed, because they were in God’s presence and His glory covered them. Their fellowship was transparent and pure, and everything was “very good.” It was the Father’s great joy to fellowship directly with humans. However, it did not last long. The serpent tempted

Adam and Eve to sin, and they could no longer stay in the garden of Eden. The Father lost the first son of man and friend on earth. Jesus knew the Father's heart, so He did not come only as the Son of God but He took on flesh, and became the Son of Man to heal the Father's broken heart from losing Adam and Eve. Jesus came to restore the communion between God and man.

### The Final Glory

It says in the book of Haggai that the final glory of God's temple shall be greater than the first. The glory of the triune God can never ever be added to or subtracted from by any created being. What is this final glory? In the New Testament, we are the temple of God (1 Corinthians 6:19). We "sons of man" are the ultimate holy temple that God wants to build! I believe that in the End Times, Father will reveal the greatest glory on His sons and daughters.

God gave Adam the authority to rule over the earth, but he lost it as well as the glory of being God's son. The final glory, however, will be greater than the first! What kind of glory will it be? I once waited on the Lord and He told me that He will reclaim from the enemy the authority and glory He had given to His sons. He will raise us up to the point where we sit with Him in heavenly places (see Ephesians 2:6).

Such glory is great, for "in this world we are like Jesus" (1 John 4:17). This glory is not for the future, but something we can experience in this world. This final glory is not only a restoration of the glory Adam lost, but also receiving Jesus's glory, which is the glory of the intimacy between the Father and the Son, with the Son in the bosom of the Father (see John 1:18 NKJV). Not only will these sons manifest in the End Times, fellowshipping with the Lord in His glory, they will also reign with Him in glory like their older brother Jesus! Heavenly Father will ordain the

sons of God in the End Times with such glory of true sonship.

As I wrote this, the Holy Spirit spoke to me, “the true sons of God possess His glory, while orphans are sons who lost God’s glory. When Adam and Eve sinned, they saw their nakedness because they had lost God’s glory that cover them.” That is why Father is so pleased with the Homecoming, because He has many children who have yet to come home. He wants to bring them home! When more orphans come home, more sons will have their glory restored and God’s temple will be more glorious. The final glory will surely be greater than the first. That is why Jesus wants to bring many sons into His glory.

### Father Wants Us to Enjoy Life

Once I read John 10:10 and saw that the Lord says we will have life more abundantly. This is the verse in the Amplified Bible: “I came that they may have life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows).”

Since I read that, I have been meditating on this verse. How does it feel to enjoy life in such a way?

Modern science has saved us a lot of time. Places that took a month to travel to on horseback can now be reached in a few hours by plane. In the past, it took at least a week to receive a letter, while now there are telephones, emails, WeChat, and Line. Technology seems to shorten the distance between us. In reality, people have become increasingly separated from one another. Many of the new generation do not know how to make friends because their parents are so busy that they have no time to sit, chat, and share with them. So, these children can only make friends with computers and video games, and it is heartbreaking.

God has come to restore the family and family relationships which are the most fundamental and precious for human beings. It says in Malachi 4: 5-6 that when the hearts of the fathers

turn to the children, and the hearts of the children turn to the fathers—when the hearts of the father and of the children align with one another—then curses will be removed. It is that simple. This is not experienced through teaching, but it needs to be lived out. We need examples, so Heavenly Father sent the Son, who became flesh, to set an example for us. He taught us how Father and Son always “turn” to each other in love and come into deep oneness. In the same way, when we turn to one another, curses will be removed. Maybe what is needed is not prolonged fasting and praying or intense spiritual warfare, but alignment with the Father’s heart and loving our family together with Him. In this way curses will be naturally broken.

### God’s Rest

I asked the Lord why He chose Gideon and David to carry the anointing for the Homecoming. The Lord said to me, “They truly trust Me, and their hearts are at rest. Thus, I can rest in their midst.” God cares if we are people of rest. It says in Psalms 46:10, “Be still, and know that I am God.” This means only those who are at rest can genuinely “know” God and be sensitive to His presence.

When God finds a group of people like that, He finds His resting place. They will have to go through many tests, though, to show they truly care about God’s presence. When God comes in the Gatherings, everything makes way for Him. The people are determined to seek the Lord above their own plans, ideas, and expectations; even their rights as speakers. I have witnessed several occasions in which David refrained from going on stage to share as he had planned when we were visited by God’s glorious presence. He would stop on the stairs and kneel to honor God’s presence. Thirty minutes might pass, then sixty minutes or more, until God’s Spirit would release him to speak.

In 2009, God chose Vancouver to host the first Chinese Homecoming gathering called “Chinese Walking Together with One Heart.” Suddenly, in the middle of one session, God showed up! For over half an hour, there was not a single sound; even the little children were quiet. In the awesome presence of God, everyone entered into overwhelming stillness. Such deep stillness was something I had rarely experienced; I was not used to such prolonged silence. Several times I looked at David and felt anxious for him. How does one proceed in a situation like this? I learned afterwards that this was the first time he experienced such prolonged silence among the Chinese, and he enjoyed it! Gradually I became accustomed to the stillness in God’s presence and enjoyed it too.

I have learned not to attempt to do anything when God’s Spirit quiets our hearts, but just remain in His presence. In Exodus 35:15-16, God promised Moses He would keep His word and bring the Israelites to the promised land. However, He would only send an angel instead of going by Himself. Moses said, “If You do not go with us, we will not go.” Moses cherished God’s presence more than the angel, the miracles, or even the promised land. He knew that God’s presence was what made the biggest difference between the Israelites and other nations.

In Church of Zion, I see a group of people who share the heart of Moses and only want God’s presence. Their hearts are satisfied as long as God’s presence is with them. They aim to encounter God’s presence and seek His heart in every single meeting. As time has passed, different spiritual gifts have been released in us. We do not have training courses in Zion, but God has trained our prophetic team, intercessory team, and healing team through His own presence.

In God’s presence, we don’t mind what ministry we do. Our roles are interchangeable, and we cover and support one

another. Why is there no competition? It is because our goal is not becoming a small-group leader, a pastor, or someone with any other “title.” Our goal is entering His presence together. In the End Times, when God’s people truly desire Him above all else, He will have total sovereignty, which is the biggest victory. When He reigns, is there any battle too hard to be won?

### The Army from the Family

“How many have come for this gathering from your church?” asked Pastor Nathaniel Chow during one gathering. He is the founding pastor of the biggest church network in Taiwan, the Bread of Life Church.

“Roughly speaking, over a hundred!” Gideon did not know exactly how many from the Zion family had come.

Pastor Chow was shocked. “How many are there in your church?”

“Those who can come have all come!” replied Gideon.

### Family or Army?

Is the church a family or an army? Or both? And which comes first? Many have asked me these questions in recent years. In the early days, when very few people understood the journey, many from Zion attended the different gatherings and were the main support. They came because they heard God’s voice, not because Gideon mobilized them. Zion is first a family, and then an army. From a family, an army will emerge. There is a Chinese idiom that says, “Catching a tiger requires true brothers, and fighting a battle requires fathers and sons.” “True brothers” come before “catching a tiger,” and “fathers and sons” come before “fighting a battle”!

This reminds me of the story of Abram’s army in Genesis 14:14-15. When Abram heard that his nephew (or, in the original

text “brother”) was taken captive, he knew a disaster had come upon his family. Immediately he took action to rescue them. His army was special as it was comprised of trained servants born in his own house. Though there were not many of them, they prevailed because God was with them. Every soldier from Abram’s household was blessed by God, and was elite, reliable, intelligent, and loyal (see Genesis 17:12, 18:19, 24:27). Such was the authority of this family army that even Melchizedek, the priest of the Most High God, was moved to bring bread and wine, and give Abram his blessings (see Genesis 14:18).

No other victorious army in the Bible received such a high honor except this family army.

Church of Zion encourages everyone to devote time to building family relationship, both naturally and spiritually. Caleb Chiu, second-generation pastor and Gideon’s son, aptly summarizes Zion’s family culture in a single phrase: “More eating, less meeting!” Though Zion give little formal training, our hearts are united as we enter the battlefield.



(Left) *The Zion family on an outing, some to be the keynote speakers, some just to have fun!*

(Right) *The Chius and the Cheungs drove to Los Angeles together quite frequently, this time to attend a wedding*

Ever since the beginning of the Church of Zion, Gideon's focus has been on building God's Kingdom and not his own ministry. He often travels with David, leading gatherings in different places. The family at Zion could easily complain that their senior pastor is not responsible, and indeed some have left the church because they can't understand why their senior pastor is so often absent. However, most people in Zion are not only strong supporters of Gideon and David as they travel the nations, but also faithful intercessors.

In the early gatherings, Zion was usually the church with the highest number of participants. Sometimes most of the church attended gatherings, serving behind the scenes in administration, intercession, reception, taking the offering, and other, mostly hidden ministries.

When the pastors lead the church in seeking God's Kingdom and righteousness first, the Lord will take care of the church Himself with abundant blessings. The eyes of the entire congregation are fixed on the Lord, not their pastors; everyone serves willingly; no one ever troubles the pastors with trivial matters, and the church is healthier. The fathers and mothers of Zion often comment that they are the happiest pastors, because their children are obedient and mature. Indeed, I rarely see pastors who are so satisfied. God promised Gideon, "As you serve My big Kingdom family, I will look after your small church family!" So Gideon always encourages other pastors in the journey to bring their congregation along with them to receive the Kingdom vision, because not only are generals needed in God's army, but soldiers too. This is the testimony of the Zion family.

David has said: "We are not a leader with a team, but a team with a leader." This means that although we have well-known

fathers like David and Gideon, we are to carry the responsibilities even when they are away. The most beautiful thing about Zion is that we serve in teams. Everyone has become used to doing things in teams. If we have a burden to do something, we will first invite a few others who carry the same burden to discern together. Then we ask our spiritual parents for confirmation, blessing, and covering. After these steps, we begin to minister together with joy.

I remember once when Papa Daniel was invited to share a message somewhere out of town; he invited me and a few others to go with him. He does not like to pressure anyone, so we all love walking with him. We were relaxed and enjoyed great food, and had fun. But one hour before the meeting began, with a smile on his face, he announced to us that we were a team. He said confidently, “God will give His message to our team. Up until now I have not received too much from Him, so He must have delivered the message to some of you. So be prepared to share what you receive from Him!” He trusted in God, and also in us. So, after seeking God together, we went on stage. Our team ministry pleased Heavenly Father. He was with us, and everyone shared beautifully.

As Mama Lucy always says, “Together is beautiful!”

Team spirit is indeed highlighted in the family of Zion. Zion is truly living out every part of its vision as outlined in their website ([www.churchofzion.org](http://www.churchofzion.org)):

- We are a church of prayer and worship as a lifestyle, longing for the fullness of God’s glory.
- We wait on God until we hear Him corporately. When we hear, we inquire of Him for the steps and timing.
- We are committed to, and enjoy the protection and synergy experienced while serving in teams.
- We see ourselves as a part of, and committed to walk with,

the church in the city, the church in the nation, and the body at large in the nations.

- We have a heart for the “one new man”— Jew and Gentile.
- We value the voice that God has given children, and choose to make room for them to share.
- We are a local church functioning in the five-fold ministry as a team with a leader.

### Army of Worship: Judah Leads the Way

If we say that the Tuesday prayer meetings are Zion’s powerhouse, then the Friday leadership meetings are her spiritual headquarters and the prophets’ chamber. In the deacons’ and leaders’ meetings that I attended in other churches, we spent most of the time discussing and planning our work. In Zion, however, “Judah (the worshipper)” must lead the way (see Judges 1:2); devoting time to worship God is the most important thing.

Although he is the senior pastor, Gideon often does not speak first. Instead, his “Judah” wife, Mama May, always leads us into a time of whole-hearted worship. Some will sing in the spirit, some might pray or praise, and some receive revelation (Imiel Abidir, a trusted and accurate prophet, often prophesies during worship). Gideon follows the leading of the Spirit, and he will facilitate, respond, and pray.



*A Friday leadership meeting at Pastor Gideon's home. Pastor David was sharing about his trip to Japan.*

The Holy Spirit moves mightily whether Gideon is present or not, because He is the leader. This reminds me of Paul's description of the vibrant early church gatherings led by the Spirit:

*"When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up"*  
(1 Corinthians 14:26).

4

## Heritage of Zion: Generations Walking Together





## Crying Out For Father

ONE PRECIOUS INHERITANCE of the Church of Zion is generations walking together. It was God's answer to Gideon's heart cry.

Gideon started his ministry with a heart for the Kingdom and so Zion served more than the Chinese even in his early ministry. He once led a daughter of a Sikh leader to the Lord and helped her run away from her father's persecution, and he experienced fierce spiritual warfare during that period. The same Sikh sister came to visit Gideon and Mama May many years later, and brought them great comfort and encouragement as she had been greatly used by the Lord.

As a pioneer who welcomed the Holy Spirit in the Chinese church, the spiritual warfare that Gideon experienced was far greater than the warfare that came from outside the church. Some challenged his experiences, some doubled his theology, and some simply kept distance from him and May. Even their close relatives became critical and indifferent to them during those years. Insomnia and severely damaged memory were a few scars Gideon carried. Even if he may won the spiritual battle from time to time, without the spiritual covering of the fathers and the family walking together, he would still be lonely

and hard. He knew he needed fathers to go further.

One day Gideon was in the prayer room, a demon in the form of a big bird came to attack him. He was pinned on the ground by the demon and could not move at all. Caleb was four-year old at the time; he happened to come in and saw what was happening. Caleb declared to his father on the ground: "In Jesus' name, I rebuke Satan!" At that moment, Gideon was immediately set free. This is an amazing beginning of two generations walking together.

Life with frequent fierce spiritual warfare was tremendously harsh for Gideon in the beginning. He realized that he had encountered a higher level of spiritual warfare, and he needed more wisdom, authority, and spiritual covering. He started praying earnestly for spiritual fathers to walk with him, cover him, and guide him. The Lord heard his cry.

### Spiritual Father's Covering

When Gideon attended a prayer gathering in Pastor Yonggi Cho's church in Korea in 1986, God gave him a miraculous opportunity: he was able to pray in Pastor Cho's personal prayer cave. While Gideon was kneeling and praying there, the spirit of prayer came upon him, so that his whole body bounced from the floor into the air. The Lord charged him to bring the fire of intercession from Korea back to Vancouver.

Gideon started gathering brothers in his church to meet and pray at 6:00 a.m. beginning in 1990. This prayer meeting gradually expanded to encompass the whole city, as many brothers from different churches began to attend. Pastor Bob Birch was an apostle of prayers of Canada and we will take more about him in Chapter five. When he heard about it, and he invited Gideon to attend the prayer meeting of Watchmen for the Nations. Gideon joyfully accepted the invitation and went two days later. At that

time, several hundred people attended the prayer gatherings in Vancouver facilitated by Pastor Bob.

In 1991, Pastor Bob invited prophet Rick Joyner from Morningstar Ministries to Vancouver. Mama May led worship, God's presence was extraordinarily strong, and Rick Joyner prophesied to five leaders in the gathering, including Pastor Bob Birch, Gideon, and David. A Caucasian brother happened to stand beside Gideon, and for some reasons he suddenly told Gideon that he had headaches in the past few days. The Holy Spirit thus reminded Gideon of his cry for a spiritual father, and also revealed to him that Pastor Bob Birch in front of him was just the God's answer to his prayer. Immediately Gideon asked Pastor Bob to be his spiritual father to cover him and guide him. Pastor Bob gladly accepted Gideon's request and prayed for him.

From that time on, Gideon experienced much less spiritual warfare, and his memory was gradually restored. Having tasted the goodness of a father's covering, Gideon honors spiritual fathers and mothers very much. Furthermore, Gideon's experience of being an "orphan" in the physical realm (his biological father was so busy taking care of orphans that he did not have much time for his own sons) as well as in the spiritual realm gave him a deep understanding of the helplessness of an orphan, and helped him treasure the protection and covering of spiritual fathers even more.

Another amazing thing happened soon after Rick Joyner's prophecy. All five leaders, that Rick Joyner prophesied to, were leaders in different churches at that time. But God started shaking their circumstances, and as a result, the other four leaders soon came to Church of Zion for different reasons, and the five of them started to walk together.

### A True Son to the End

Gideon remained a true son to Pastor Bob Birch till the last moment when Heavenly Father took Pastor Bob home. Margaret, Bob's wife, said that he lived his last ten years completely for his two spiritual sons—Gideon and David.

In his last days, Pastor Bob was in the intensive care unit and had not had any food or water for eight days. Yet he Margaret, "Gideon will visit me," even though he didn't know where Gideon was. Sure enough, Gideon came back from Malaysia to visit him and as he walked into Bob's room, declared "Gideon is here!"

Hearing the voice of the son that he had been longing for, Pastor Bob suddenly jerked, despite being in a coma. Gideon held Pastor Bob's hands tightly and said, "You are the Simeon of this age. The Lord has promised you that you would see the end-time revival before you go back to the heavenly home. I believe this baby of revival would be born soon. If you agree, please shake my hands." Pastor Bob shook Gideon's hands twice. Gideon knew that his spirit was totally alert even though he was in a coma physically.

Gideon had to fly to Montreal in eastern Canada to attend an important national leadership gathering the next morning. It was time to say goodbye to his beloved spiritual father who loved him deeply. "Pastor Bob, you can go home without any burdens now. Please greet my biological dad and Papa John White in heaven and tell them what happened here on the earth."

The next day in Montreal, while Gideon and eighty-eight leaders from Watchmen for the Nations were seeking the Lord together, the Holy Spirit came into the room like a strong wind, and someone cried out in a loud voice, "My father! My father!" Everyone prostrated themselves on the floor and began to travail in prayer. Gideon knew in his spirit that it was the time for his spiritual father to be taken away. He phoned Margaret, who said,

“Pastor Bob was just taken away by the Lord.” When she stepped out of the hospital, she saw a huge double rainbow in the sky! The rainbows were so bright that it was reported in the daily news. God is faithful and He honored His servant greatly this way.

Gideon knew in his spirit that something happened that day. Since then, the spirit of fatherhood has been on him. He first discovered it in Beijing when he happened to be with a well-known prophet who could not agree with his existing spiritual authority. Gideon tried to persuade this prophet to honor his spiritual father, but the man said, “I will do it only if you first agree to be my spiritual father.” Gideon was shocked, but he agreed. It was the first time that Gideon felt that the spirit of Elijah was on him. Ever since, Gideon has been releasing the spirit of fatherhood wherever he goes, bringing breakthroughs in relationships and many blessings.

We can see that spiritual inheritance is as real as physical inheritance. “Honor your father and mother, that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” This applies to both natural and spiritual realms.

### Culture of Honor

One day, as Gideon’s beloved nine-year-old grandson Levi rode in the car with his mother Carmen, he asked, “Mum, why doesn’t Grandpa ever drive? It seems that it is always Grandma who drives.”

“Maybe Grandpa is tired from work.” Levi’s mother suggested.

Levi blurted out, “No! It’s because Grandpa is always busy talking with the Lord!” Levi suddenly got the answer to his own question.

Levi’s six-year-old sister Emmia chimed in. “Of course! Grandpa loves God so much that he created his own English (referring to tongues) to talk with God!”

Gideon's face gleams with joy each time he recounts this story of his grandchildren's conversation. He has commented, "Children observe their parents closely. If we honor our parents and spiritual parents, our children and grandchildren will honor us!"

His grandchildren are close to him. They like sitting on his lap and following him wherever he goes. They are receiving their spiritual inheritance from their grandparents and parents naturally. For example, the children of Gideon and the children of Papa Daniel are best friends. Their grandchildren are also best friends. Papa Daniel's daughter, Pastor Rebecca, has two children, Sophia and Jax, who are close to Levi and Emmia, children of Caleb, Gideon's son. One time when Emmia was asked whether she had any sisters, she immediately answered, "Of course! I have an older sister Sophia!" In Emmia's mind, Sophia, Jax, and Levi are all her siblings, and they are all one family.

Gideon understands that honoring our parents is the key to living a long life. He also understands that it applies first to the natural realm, and then to the spiritual realm (see 1 Corinthians 15:46). He inherited this understanding from Pastor Jim Watt, another of his spiritual fathers. Any disobedience to God's commandments will bear the fruit of rebellion, and lead to division in the church until we repent and honor our parents.

### The Key to Authority

When people ask Gideon "Where did you get all the authority?" He always replies with humility, "It's not from me. It's what I received from many streams and what I inherited from my spiritual parents." His humility is like a deep valley that draws many tributaries from surrounding mountains. His heart is so big that he honors all the spiritual parents God gave him and accepts various types of spiritual children.

Gideon and David visited many important leaders in Canada before they started the Canadian gatherings and asked those spiritual fathers to bless the Canadian journey. Gideon kept honoring them even when they got old. When Pastor Bob sighed that he was not of much use, Gideon would show him the videos he taped during the gatherings and encourage him, “You have such a great impact on the Kingdom! Our effective ministry in the Kingdom is the result of your intercession!”

In 2006, sister Ruth came to Vancouver from China, and Gideon took her and me to visit Pastor Bob. Gideon introduced Ruth to Pastor Bob saying, “Pastor Bob, here is a fruit of your many years of intercession for China! Ruth is from China. She has only been a Christian for three years, yet she has already established a church.”

Then Gideon introduced me, “This pastor is also from China. She is serving now in the same Baptist church as your son Paul. She has been renewed by the Holy Spirit and she is also a fruit of your intercession!” Hearing his son’s name, Pastor Bob looked at me and nodded with a smile. Gideon asked Pastor Bob to lay hands on us to bless us. His prayer was short but weighty; he prayed for us to seek the face of God. Both Ruth and I wept before these two generations of fathers who loved China deeply. Pastor Bob laid his hands that on our heads; these praying hands that had prayed for China every day for many years, and the love of God’s love was pouring out on us from this Canadian apostle of prayer. I can still feel the weight of his hands to this day. That was the last time I saw him.

Pastor John White was another important spiritual father in Gideon’s life. Gideon always talks about how he quietly supported the next generation. When the gatherings started in Canada, David was still unknown. One time as David was sharing, people paid no attention to him and kept chatting. John White stood up

and remained standing until everyone quieted down. He simply said, “I agree with what Pastor David said,” and sat down.

People started paying attention to David’s words.

Gideon is following Pastor John White’s example. One time David was sharing about something in a leadership gathering, and people had different opinions and started to discuss among themselves. Gideon broke his usual silence, took the microphone and said, “I agree with David. I know his heart and trust his decision.” Then he gave the microphone back to David. Gideon’s short speech calmed and united everyone.

I have also heard David introduce Gideon on many occasions this way: “This is my pastor. I honor him and I am very grateful that he and his whole family walk with me.” This is the honor that Gideon and David show to each other. From them, many of us have learned to honor each other and surrender quickly even if we have different opinions.

Gideon is also extremely grateful for Pastor John White’s support and often talks about one particular experience. While he was still in Hong Kong, Gideon had been labelled as a cult leader because of one of his spiritual sons. Pastor John flew specifically from Canada to Hong Kong to defend Gideon. That was his last trip to Asia and it brought Gideon great encouragement. Following his spiritual father’s example, sometimes Gideon will fly all the way to China just to encourage a spiritual child in need. This testimony helped me understand why he once drove an hour to come and help me, a spiritual daughter.

### The Quartet of the Second and the Third Generations

“My son, when I get old and we come to a wall that I cannot climb over, you should step on my shoulder, jump over the wall and keep running the race.”

“No Daddy! I will never let you go! After I jump over the wall, I will gather my friends to pull you up and we will continue to run together!”

Gideon always talks about this touching conversation between him and his son Caleb. Is it possible to have such a wonderful second generation? Can it be real?

The answer is yes, it is possible. If you ask Caleb, “What is your vision?” he will clearly answer you using his version of Joel 2:28: “The father’s dream is the son’s vision.”

Inheritance can only be passed down when two generations are in alignment. Parents without children cannot pass down the inheritance. Children without parents do not even have an inheritance! Church of Zion truly has the inheritance of generations walking together. Pastor Albert Zehr and his wife, Janet, and their children are also good examples of generations walking together.

Papa Albert and Mama Janet are Caucasian and the last of the five couples who joined the pastoral leadership team in Church of Zion, making the senior pastoral team a true fathers’ team from “United Nations”! Papa Albert and Mama Janet had pastored and taught in many different places in Canada, but they never felt at home until they met Gideon and David. They quickly recognized each other in the spirit and Papa Albert and Mama Janet joined Church of Zion in 1996, at a time when most of the members were Chinese. When Gideon experienced more opportunities to minister outside his church, Pastor Albert told him, “Do not worry about the home church. We are here to take care of it!” Together with Papa Daniel and Mama Lucy, Papa Albert and Mama Lucy took care of Church of Zion, freeing Gideon to pursue Kingdom ministry. Papa Albert and Mama Janet have father’s and mother’s hearts, therefore God raised up a younger generation of sons and daughters in many

nations to walk together with them. Their daughter, son-in-law, and grandchildren are all active in the church and Kingdom ministries. They are another precious family in Church of Zion.

God's choice of the second-generation leadership in Church of Zion is amazing. God called Caleb, the eldest son of Gideon, and his wife Carmen, together with Rebecca, the eldest daughter of Papa Daniel, and her husband Colin to be the second generation pastoral team in Church of Zion. They complement and love each other like a musical quartet. Caleb, Carmen, Rebecca, and Colin have been best friends since Sunday-school days. They were already true family before Caleb and Rebecca were ordained. The two big families of three generations always hold "pajama parties" on Christmas, where the four couples, their children or grandchildren will spend Christmas together wearing the same style of pajamas. Furthermore, the third-generation quartet has already started with the four children of Caleb and Carmen, Rebecca and Colin. They stand in front of the church every Sunday and lead the kids to collect the offerings. This "quartet" of three generations is not symbolic, but real. Who else could have arranged the friendship, love, and marriage of these two big families but our omniscient and omnipotent God. We cannot help but praise and worship Him!

The two pastor couples in the second-generation quartet of Zion all love the Lord. They are also very down-to-earth. They have excellent capabilities, outstanding wisdom, and genuine life examples. Rebecca inherited from her father his superb administrative capabilities and "Jonathan's" helper anointing, and from her mother the love and compassionate heart towards the family. She and Colin not only play a key role in the local church family but are also involved in the administration of many Homecoming gatherings. Caleb and Carmen inherited from their parents the father's and mother's love and covering for the

church. Their gifts complete each other, and their harmonious teamwork far exceeds any other we have seen in their peers. They are honored and loved by the whole church family.



(Top Left)  
Another Christmas  
pajama party  
for the three  
generations of  
the Chius and the  
Cheungs



(Bottom Left)  
Mama May leads  
worship with the  
little quartet on  
Sunday



(Right) The little  
quartet collect  
offerings during  
the Sunday service

Caleb is an exceptionally good preacher loved by all generations. His sermons are full of revelation and spiritual insight. I am one of his super fans! David's daughter, Anna, once described Caleb to her grandmother, "Caleb preaches like my Dad, worships like Mama May, and has a harmonious relationship with everyone like Gideon." Anna's description truly captures the favor and wisdom that Caleb has inherited from all the fathers and mothers in Church of Zion.

These four young pastors have inherited all the gifts of their parents. They are steadfast and devoted, yet courageous and creative at the same time. They capture the hearts of the youth and raise up the young generation for the Lord.

I interviewed Caleb and asked him, "Your dad had been

travelling a lot and sharing the Kingdom vision for many years. But it seemed to have little impact until the breakthrough in recent years. So for many years, many people did not understand your dad and doubted him. Did you ever doubt him during those years?"

Caleb replied "To be honest, I have never doubted my parents, not even once in those barren years. I do not know the exact reason. Maybe it can be traced back to my close relationship with Dad when I grew up. He spent most of his time with me as he held a student visa in Canada and could not work. My mother also taught piano at home. Therefore, our family has a strong bond among us."

Gideon spent a lot of time "walking together" with his son in his early years. He won his son's heart. Therefore, Caleb is determined to "walk with" his father. Caleb is a true CBC (Canadian born Chinese), and English is his mother tongue. Usually, a CBC will establish an English-speaking congregation when he or she steps into the ministry. But Caleb resolved at the beginning of his ministry that he would walk with the fathers and not set up his own English-speaking congregation for young people. He has persisted in having both English and Chinese for all the sermons and announcements every Sunday. This kind of bilingual church is rare in North America, as it is inconvenient to have interpretation all the time. Although Caleb gave up convenience and efficiency, he has truly received the fathers' inheritance in full and also won the hearts of the whole congregation.

The anointing of two generations walking together is not only overflowing from Gideon and Caleb; it has also impacted many pastors in Vancouver and their children to walk together. It has brought unity and great authority to remove curses from the generations (see Malachi 4: 5-6). In the early days, some

people in the Renewal Family were critical of Gideon. There was one person in particular (let's call him "Joel") who often shared opposite viewpoints. Every time they disagreed, Gideon would apologize to him. We thought that Gideon did not have any principle, but he was not concerned about right or wrong; he always took responsibility as if whatever happened was his fault. This kind of response did not have any lasting effect on "Joel," and the same thing would soon happen all over again soon.

Later, "Joel" changed a lot. He became much more humble and gentle, and was willing to lay down his opinions and walk in unity. I was curious to know what changed him. I knew for sure it was not Gideon's apologies, because Gideon was spending less and less time with us in Vancouver, as he was travelling more and more for the Kingdom. The answer came a few years later.

One day, Gideon was back with us in Renewal Family, and said, "I am so excited to be back in my city. I want to ask you one question: why do you think Homecoming has gone all over the world?" Different ones shared what they thought made Homecoming successful. But "Joel's" answer caught my attention. He said, "When I saw your son willing to lay down himself and walk together with you, I was totally convinced!"

Wow! I got it. When fathers and sons align with each other, the curse is removed (Malachi 4:5-6). God's Word is so true and powerful!

## Anna's Story - A Daughter's Inheritance

"What do you think of my dad?"

Anna Demian turned her head to me and with an intent, earnest expression asked me this question on a flight to Asia.

Her question took me by surprise and I did not know how to answer her. Didn't she know she had a great father?

"He...he's our spiritual father," I said.

"What has he been doing?" She was not satisfied with my answer at all.

"He is a pastor to the pastors! He excels in discernment. His wisdom and his ministry are extremely important to the Kingdom. God has given him authority and wisdom to be a peacemaker among tribes and nations. He is both an apostle and a prophet!" I tried to use some impressive words to help Anna realize how great her father is.

"Really?" Anna blinked her big eyes and pursed her lip.

"Thank you and your family members for releasing your father to the Kingdom work. We have been so blessed by him." I thanked Anna with a grateful smile.

Anna looked at me without much emotion. "You are welcome." Then she turned to read and didn't talk anymore.

Anna is David's second daughter. She has sought the Lord most earnestly among her siblings. She devoted herself to seeking God, reading the Bible, and praying. But she could not hear Him clearly. Even David was puzzled about this and said to his most "spiritual" daughter, "Both your mom and I have strength in hearing God's voice. Why haven't you got it?"

Anna was disappointed at her dad and also bitter towards God, because her dad travelled a lot around the world for Gatherings, spending little time at home with the family. The conversation between Anna and me happened on a flight from Japan to China.

The trip to China totally changed Anna's view towards her father, and also powerfully impacted her spiritual life.

Anna had planned to go to Japan for a month and attend a scheduled Gathering in Okinawa during her stay in Japan. But her father asked her to consider going to China with him after she had stayed one week in Japan. Anna prayed about it and felt at peace to go. However, she found out the two-and-a-half day trip to China would cost her 1,500 dollars (CAD) for flights and visa. She discussed it with her parents. They encouraged her not to worry about the money, but focus on knowing God's will. Anna prayed more and still felt peace about it. Therefore, she went to China.

To Anna's surprise, the first day of the Gathering was cancelled because it had attracted attention in the government. Anna asked her dad: "Aren't you disappointed about the cancellation of the Gathering? Every day away from home should be treasured." He answered: "We are not here for the Gathering, but to walk together as a family. Whatever happens, we are one heart."

His reply surprised Anna. So attending a Gathering was not the purpose of the trip to China, but to visit the family there and to walk together with them.

We could not gather on the second day either. But it was wonderful when the family was together no matter what we did. A few hundred of us split into small groups and took a walk in a park. A few hours later, we all came to a resting space in the park. The joy of the Lord suddenly came upon us and we spontaneously started to sing and dance. The presence of the Lord was tangible. I noticed Anna beside me, weeping throughout the worship. It was short but precious, and everyone was grateful and satisfied. We went to a restaurant in the park for lunch, chatting and laughing. David stood up, greeting and honoring the family, thanking them for their love and trust. He had barely begun sharing when a

group of policemen came up and asked if he was David Demian. When they tried to take David away, all the leaders at that table stood up and surrounded David, saying, “Wherever he goes, we will follow!” Several of them had been imprisoned before for the sake of Christ.

Then all the people at different tables stood up. No one left or panicked. They stood by David calmly and courageously when he was interrogated by the police. A few brothers even followed David to the washroom with the police. A few hours passed this way. Suddenly the police received a notice from their superiors to call it off.

I was at the same table as Anna and noticed that she had been crying from the beginning of the incident. We could not comfort her and stop her from crying. I felt sorry for her, thinking she must have been frightened. But to my surprise, Anna was not crying out of fear.

When I interviewed her later, she told me that she heard Heavenly Father’s voice at that time: “These Chinese are more like a family to your dad than you and your family members.” Suddenly, a “godly jealousy” was aroused in her heart, and she asked God “Why can these Chinese walk with my dad so closely, while I am stuck in my own anger?”

Because David was often away from home for ministry, Anna felt Heavenly Father took her Dad away from her family, and she was angry with them both. Even though Anna tried to express love to her dad, she could still feel a wall of separation in her heart. In that moment, the Lord broke that wall and she wept. She said to God: “Oh Lord, forgive me that I had not supported my dad like the Chinese family all these years.”

Anna felt the great power of family love that was released from her dad and the Chinese leaders. The enemy had tried every effort to break their family bonds, and suddenly a righteous



*Papa David  
and Mama  
Ruth  
raised seven  
children.*



indignation rose up in Anna's heart. "Never again! You shall never again steal the family bonds from my life! Enough is enough!" Then she prayed: "O Lord, help me embrace this vision. Help me and my family to have this kind of covenant love relationship."

Anna experienced a great breakthrough in her relationship with God that has affected her since that time of alignment with her dad. It is easy for her to hear God's voice now. Anna understands that her alignment with her dad enabled her to immediately receive all his spiritual inheritance.

In the two weeks she spent in Japan after this, Anna heard the Lord speaking to her every day, "Come and meet with Me." So she walked with Him daily. "I started to experience a freedom like never before. I had never been so close to the Lord. I felt the breakthrough in my spirit and I knew it was because of my alignment with my dad. The Lord opened heaven's door for me! I am still receiving blessings and inheritance every day, since that time of alignment with my father."

Anna had one desire after her experience in China. "When I return home, I want to help my siblings to understand our dad, align with our dad, and to stand with our dad." She became an

“angel of love” between her father and her six siblings. She helped them understand their dad’s heart so they could align with him. Anna became a great comfort to David.

Anna is now a leader calling younger generation Christian leaders together globally. As she walked with her Dad with one heart, she began to walk into her own destiny.



5

# Canada: The Journey Walked by Hearing





## Pastor Bob Birch

PEOPLE AFFECTIONATELY CALLED him Pastor Bob. As pastor of St. Margaret's Church in Vancouver, Pastor Bob Birch was a reserved and even shy person, but he ministered to hippies in the 1960s and 70s! We can imagine the challenge this different breed of new young believers posed when they flooded his church! For their sake, Pastor Bob gave up his clerical robe, the prayer book, the pulpit, and the choir so they would feel accepted in God's family. He became the spiritual father and mentor to many young people. He loved them dearly and spent a lot of time just being with them and training them. Many of those he ministered to still miss those precious days. People do not just remember him as a highly respected pastor, but as a passionate intercessor who sought after God, faithful to his vision from heaven throughout his life. He constantly urged the church to seek the Lord and listen to Him.

In 1991 when Pastor Bob was eighty-two years old, he received the call of the watchmen from Isaiah 62:6-7. He obeyed the Lord and gathered a group of people to pray and intercede for Canada. From that beginning, he founded "Watchmen for the Nations." On Dec 4, 2007, three weeks before his one hundredth birthday, the Lord took him home.

Pastor Bob sought the Lord with great passion. He would wait on Him day and night to hear His voice and than obey absolutely. The most important Scripture to this servant of the Lord was “whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (Rev 2:7). He even wanted this verse to be engraved on his tombstone. In the early years he travelled to many places sharing, teaching, and encouraging churches to live a lifestyle of seeking the Lord. His deepest heart desire was the prayer of Jesus in John 17—to see the church, the body of Christ, align fully with the Head and be in complete unity.

I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. (John 17:23)

The journey in Canada sprang from the seed of seeking God’s heart that came from this “apostle of prayer.” For fifty years, he would rise at two or three a.m. to pray and seek God till seven or eight in the morning. He did this even when he was travelling. David remembered, during one of his trips with Pastor Bob, they sought the Lord together before bed. Pastor Bob’s habit was to pull up a chair, kneel against it and pray. After a while, David laid on his bed to rest as he was tired. He woke up in the middle of the night, saw Pastor Bob still praying, and went back to sleep. He awoke later to see Pastor Bob still praying and urged him to sleep. Pastor Bob said, “I haven’t heard God yet.” It was almost dawn when David woke up to see Pastor Bob climbing into bed with a smile of satisfaction on his face, showing he had heard God’s voice and knew His heart. This incident made a deep impression on David.

The Father embedded the DNA of seeking the Lord deeply into David’s life through his intimate walk with this spiritual father. In 1998, at a leadership Gathering in Harrison Hot Springs, near Vancouver, Pastor Bob passed the baton of “Watchmen for

the Nations” to his spiritual son David Demian. The Lord then raised up Gideon to walk with David, to continue this journey of seeking the Lord together. There were many key spiritual fathers and mothers who contributed to the DNA of the journey in Canada. If you want to know more about this amazing journey, please check the website: [www.watchmen.org](http://www.watchmen.org).



(From left) *Pastor Gideon, Pastor Bob, Pastor David, during a meeting in the early days*

#### **Pastor Bob's two sons**

Once, David stood up to begin praising Gideon at a leadership gathering. “I’ve never met another person who hardly ever gets offended like...”

“I know another person and he is David Demian.” Before David mentioned

his name, Gideon quickly stood up to respond with humor and humility.

“I just knew Gideon would say this! So, whenever I want some encouragement from him, I will tease him like this!” Everyone laughed at the joyful banter of the two fathers, with David laughing loudly like a mischievous boy.

As David and Gideon honored Pastor Bob as their spiritual father, his influence became their spiritual inheritance. These two spiritual fathers changed my life, not just because of their father’s hearts and humility, but even more so because of the beautiful testimony of their love for each other. In any gathering when David is present, Gideon sits quietly in the audience, his presence being the best support and the unspoken message. Someone asked Gideon how he was able serve David this way. He answered, “Because I recognise him in the spirit; he understands

the will of God more than I do.” As I stood by and heard these words, I was deeply touched, because he did not recognize a person by the position he held. He did not pride himself as the senior pastor, but fully supported David and became his Jonathan.

David would often introduce Gideon by saying, “This is my pastor, and I honor his family.” But even in such a close friendship there were times of neglect or oversight. One time David forgot to inform Gideon of an important meeting. When I reminded him, he wasn’t worried at all that Gideon would be offended. He said with a smile, “We never doubt each other’s motives. I believe Gideon would say, ‘Maybe he told me already, and I forgot.’” And he was right! Gideon’s first response was: “Did I forget?”

How can they have such mutual trust? They are very different; one is sharp, one is gentle; one can pierce the spirit like a surgeon’s scalpel, one loves to bind up the wounds after the operation. But they have one thing in common that brings them together: they are both Pastor Bob’s dear spiritual sons. They can walk together in the nations and become “fathers of nations” in these later days, because they experienced the Father’s love through Pastor Bob. There are many healing conferences on removing the orphan spirit and receiving the Father’s love. But Gideon has wisely said, “It’s the work of the Holy Spirit. Unless a person encounters a true father in his life, it’s very hard to break off the orphan spirit even with a lot of teaching and knowledge. You need to experience a



Pastor Bob and his two sons

true father to become a true son.” This is true. Like all biblical truths, the truth that God is a loving Father must be made real through firsthand experience.

### The Prince of Egypt in the wilderness of Vancouver

David’s absolute obedience to God amazes me. He is used to remaining flexible for any possible changes in his responsibilities, like readjusting his flights or rescheduling his plans. I asked him how he could be so obedient to God’s schedule. He jokingly replied that he could now lay down his plans anytime because from the beginning of his ministry, the Lord usually interrupted his orderly life and totally changed his plans without asking his “permission” so many times, that he no longer struggled but let the Lord lead with no reservation at all!

He had never thought to come to Canada. He was a successful doctor in Egypt. He was passionate for the Lord and loved his country. But God asked him to lay down his medical career to serve Him fulltime. He did not understand why the Lord asked him to lay down everything, after the Lord blessed him so many years of outstanding medical study, but he decided to obey. This was a big challenge to his parents, but they ultimately supported his “irrational” decision. Later, unexpectedly, the Lord radically changed the course of his life once again. He uprooted his family from Egypt and transplanted them in Vancouver, Canada.

“This move was totally unexpected. I had built up a successful ministry in Egypt and was focused on my calling—reaching out to my own Arabic people. And suddenly, I was brought to a northern country where the culture was as cold as the weather. I was distraught, lonely, and sad. The only comfort came from Pastor Bob who God had connected me with. At the time, Pastor Bob was eighty years old, an “apostle of prayer” who was loved by many leaders in the world. Soon after we met, he invited me

to travel with him in ministry. I agreed and carried his bags for him, accompanying him on many ministry trips.”<sup>1</sup>

What caused this unexpected change in the course of his life? David’s wife Ruth was about to give birth at the time. Since Ruth was a Canadian doctor and was more familiar with the Canadian medical system, she wanted to have their first child in Canada, and David agreed. He planned to return to Egypt after a few months. They arrived in Canada in 1988; their son Daniel was born, and a few months later they were ready to return to David’s beloved and dearly missed home country as originally planned.

David was excitedly emptying the fridge, preparing to return to Egypt when something unexpected happened. His sister Eman came to visit and shared with him a vision she had. She did not know that this vision would change the course of his life. In the vision she saw Jesus’s back to a closed door labeled “Egypt,” and his hand pointed to a huge open door on which was written “Canada”!



Pastor David's sister Eman's vision, illustrated by an artist friend. To this day it is still displayed prominently in his living room

1

David Demian, *Kingdom Experiment*. <https://watchmen.org/resources>

David was not prepared for such a big surprise in his life, though he had known for a long time that he served the “God of the impossible.” He faced a huge turnaround. David knew and trusted Eman, so he wrestled in his heart with this for quite a while. Finally, he decided to bow down and seek the Lord, even if it seemed totally unreasonable. He sat down on his packed luggage and asked the Lord. He was surprised to hear that God did want him to stay. So again, he determined he would obey and remain in Canada, waiting for the time when the Lord would release him back to Egypt. At that time, he did not realize that it would be thirty years later. Like Moses in the wilderness, God led him through a time of humbling and brokenness.

Someone asked him one day at a gas station, “What do you do?” It touched a painful spot in him, and he couldn’t answer. He wondered what purpose God had for him in Canada. This well-known doctor and powerful spiritual leader, who had many followers in Egypt, now in a place where no one knew him, and he had nothing to do. It was very humbling. Ruth began to practice medicine, but David did not find his place until he met the father in his life.

Pastor Bob recognized David in the spirit and took him all over Canada. At that time, Pastor Bob was a spiritual leader that many looked up to and was frequently invited to speak. He would take David with him. People only saw David as an insignificant young person who carried Pastor Bob’s bags, but the older man was a true father. He did not want to “use” David, but to raise him up. One time, Pastor Bob was sharing a message on stage when he suddenly heard the Lord say, “I am not interested in what you are saying.” He stopped in the middle of a sentence and told the audience what he had just heard, then he walked off the stage and invited David to speak instead.

Another time Pastor Bob stood at the pulpit and said, “Before

I came, I and the Holy Spirit both knew what I was going to share today. Now only the Holy Spirit knows!" Then he invited David to share and stepped off the stage.

David had felt "used" in his previous experience with spiritual leaders, but this father truly wanted to build him up and support him. It brought great healing to his heart.

Someone told Pastor Bob, "This young man is taking away your pulpit!" He replied calmly, "If my whole life is to do one thing: to raise up a young man like David Demian, I would have fulfilled my calling."

David's eyes would be moist every time he spoke of this.

### Gideon emerges

God was preparing Gideon at the same time. When Pastor Bob gathered a group of young pastors to pray together, he also invited Gideon. Gideon's attention was drawn to one young man among the twenty pastors he met. When he got home, he told his wife, "I want to introduce a young man to you. He prays like Moses!"

That weekend, they went to a buffet restaurant, and they saw the young man who "prays like Moses drinking coffee. They went over to talk with him, and the young man opened his heart and began sharing his story. Suddenly he stopped and said, "Gideon, who are you? Why am I telling you these secrets? I am not usually like that!"

God had already begun to knit their hearts together.

The young man was David. He was waiting to pick Ruth up from work that day. Gideon's family had just moved to that area, and they discovered that May's new family doctor was David's wife. Only God could have woven all these threads together.

Gideon's heart was always for China, but the door was not yet open. He had thought maybe he could serve China by living in

Hong Kong, but that door was also closed. He had been rejected by the churches in Hong Kong due to bad reports spread by an immature spiritual son.

When these two fathers met in Vancouver, one wanted to return to Egypt, and the other wanted to return to China, but neither could go because God's time hadn't come yet. In God's storyline, He had them meet in the womb of Vancouver and made them friends at first sight. They walked as two generations with their spiritual father, Pastor Bob. They loved and supported each other, and they became the closest friends and comrades-in-arms. They did not realize they were setting the stage for the whole Homecoming journey that later unfolded.



*Pastor David's ordination ceremony.*

(Left) Pastor David, Mama Ruth and Pastor Gideon  
 (Right) Pastor Bod (second from the left) and Pastor Gideon (far right)

### Grandma Chiu and her Egyptian son

Not only did God place Gideon by David's side, he also moved upon Gideon's mother, Grandma Chiu, to adopt this Egyptian son. Years earlier, Grandma Chiu went through an abortion due to economic hardship, but when she saw the fully formed baby afterwards, she knew she had killed her own son. This tragedy troubled her for almost fifty years. In the middle of the night, the

face of her aborted son would appear in her mind and she would not be able to sleep. Although she knew that the merciful Lord had forgiven her sin, she couldn't forgive herself. But the Lord continued to have mercy on her, and one day she met David. The following is from her memoir *Crowned With Lovingkindness*:

I had only met him a few times, but every time I felt very close to him. One night, that terrible nightmare of the baby whom I had murdered reappeared in my mind. I again begged for God's forgiveness. This time, however, when I opened my eyes the baby disappeared. In his place was a smiling face, dimly and gradually revealed to me. Who was this person? It was David whom I had only met several times. Then I had this crazy idea, "Could this be God's mercy on me to let the young man replace my lost child?" With complicated emotion, I could hardly wait for Sunday to arrive. In my heart I prayed silently, "Dear God, please let him be the first person I see when I go to Church of Zion, then I'll know for sure this is coming from you." I did not tell a single soul about it, not even Gideon or May, for I needed to find out whether this was from God or just my wishful thinking. Sure enough, the next day, the first person I saw at Zion was David. After saying how do you do, with great courage I said to him, "You will my son." Utterly wrong English! David looked surprised, then seemed to understand and said, "ok." All of a sudden I felt embarrassed and walked back to my seat. My mind was somewhere else throughout the whole worship service. Such a state of mind lasted for two days, until Tuesday when Gideon told me that David had accepted my request. Gideon said, "David waited until today to tell me because he needed

consent from his parents, his wife, his children and his brothers.” Because there is no adoption practice in the Egyptian culture, they really had to discuss and agree with it. Due to David’s impending travel, we reserved a dinner table at a restaurant on that Wednesday night to make the adoption official. I gave him a necklace with an eagle pendant, meaning that he would soar like an eagle. He presented me a necklace with a heart pendant. We finished the dinner with joy. This is how David and I became mother and son by adoption. From that day on my nightmare has never reappeared and never haunted me again. Praises to the Heavenly Father for His wonderful arrangement and for His magnificent love! Hallelujah!



*(Left) The deep affection between Pastor David and his Chinese mother. He excitedly hugged her when he saw Grandma Chiu during a Chinese Gathering*

*(Below) The Egyptian son of a Chinese mother, David has become a tremendous blessing to the Chinese people. He was completely free and at ease in a Chinese Gathering in Hong Kong*

The next day after the dinner, David had to go to Spain and he asked Grandma Chiu to pray for his family and his ministry. She was delighted to do so, and until the Lord took her home, she faithfully prayed for her Egyptian son.



Grandma Chiu always thought that meeting David was God’s mercy on her, but God’s perfect will far transcended that.

She didn't know that her simple response to God's prompting her to adopt David blessed the Kingdom of God!

When she passed away at 103 years old, Gideon reminisced, "A simple woman who obeyed the Lord could transform nations." Later, David was able to minister to the Chinese because he was Grandma Chiu's son.

## The First Gathering

### Listen and obey

Pastor Bob often said: "Watch and pray; this is the calling of every Christian." At 82, the Lord called him to gather a team to pray and seek the Lord, and to hear "what the Spirit says to the churches" (Rev 2:7). This became the prototype for today's Gatherings, which were not conferences or meetings with specific agendas, but a group of people seeking the Lord with pure hearts. Initially they did not know how to describe the meetings, but they were not the traditional kind of evangelistic, teaching, or training conferences, these "Gatherings" were under the name "Watchmen for the Nations." Later, they were called "Family journey" in Malaysia, and "Homecoming" in China, a term appreciated by many and so came to be widely used. David said that anything that came to China would increase exponentially. Even with the "Homecoming," it was fashioned in Canada, went through trial production in Taiwan, and through the womb of Hong Kong entered China for mass production!

Initially, the fathers and mothers did not want to put a human label on the journey that the Holy Spirit had initiated and continued to lead, and they did not want to promote any ministry or movement. So, when this pure stream flowed from Canada to the nations, the name "Watchmen for the Nations" was not emphasized, and no "branches" were established in other

places. The only thing the leadership desired was to find local fathers and mothers in a region and bring them together to seek God's fresh leading for that place. "Homecoming" gatherings are the work of His own hand in every place; to Him be all the glory! David has a well-known saying: "Don't leave human fingerprints on God's work."

There have been over a hundred Gatherings, large and small, within Canada. In retrospect, we see how the Father miraculously brought the two sons from Egypt and China to Canada, to walk with Pastor Bob and prepare them to take up the mandate of "seeking God alone." This was to fulfill His dream of incubating His end time "Homecoming" journey in Canada. But thirty years ago, little did these two know that, as they carried the flame of "seeking God alone," they were already at the starting point of one glorious journey! So, when the "gunshot" sounded to start the race, David hesitated and did not immediately start to run.

### Papa Imiel

The starting gunshot came in the form of a strange prophetic word that David received: "You will start a gathering that does not have any agenda. You will have the first meeting next year and you only have two months to prepare for it. If you don't start to prepare for it, you will miss something. The Lord is about to do something great in your nation."

The prophet who gave this word that would transform an era was Pastor Imiel Abadir, another Egyptian God sent to Vancouver. He was famous in the church in Egypt; a revered prophet recognized as national treasure. Imiel's prophetic words have richly blessed Canada and God's Kingdom. Interestingly, both he and David came from the "City of Destruction" in Isaiah 19:18 (also called City of the Sun). Because the Lord gave him an accurate and effective prophetic gifting, many came to him for

prayers. He established a powerful church in Egypt, led many people to Christ, and trained many to be pastors. As children of Zion, we were privileged to live near him and would often visit him, seek His counsel, and learn to hear God's voice from him. I was later blessed to be one of his spiritual daughters. We call him Papa Imiel.

There are two things Papa Imiel loves to share with visitors; one is how the Lord led him to know his wife, Mama Raouth. Imiel is extremely sharp spiritually, but in the natural is very simple-hearted and even a little inept. The Lord blessed him with a competent wife, who is not only his English student and disciple, but his driver, cook, and personal secretary. He loves her dearly.

How he came to Zion was a miracle. In his early years in Egypt, he saw a vision where he was ministering to thousands of black-haired Chinese people. He did not know any Chinese back then and was surprised. He was a prominent prophet in Egypt and, like David, he would never have wanted to leave his home country if the Lord had not intervened. But the Lord began to "stir the eagle's nest," and he was forced to leave Egypt because of unexpected circumstance and persecution that affected his family. In 1994 he traveled to Los Angeles. When David knew that his friend had come to the United States, he invited him to visit Vancouver in order to introduce him to Pastor Bob and Watchmen for the Nations. That was Thanksgiving weekend in November 1998. The immigration office was closed, but miraculously, an officer was working overtime, so Papa Imiel was able to enter Canada, and thus enter his destiny of walking with the Chinese.

Years later when he saw the thousands of Chinese in the Hong Kong Gathering, he said in amazement, "So many Chinese! This is the picture the Lord showed me over thirty years earlier in

the vision!” The Father supernaturally brought Prophet Imiel to join the journey in Canada and function as its “eyes.” He released many important prophetic words over the years; especially the prophecy regarding the first Gathering. As I wrote this, Papa Imiel just went to with the Lord on December 8, 2020. He is so dearly missed by the Zion family and many around the world.

### You were born for THIS!

When prophet and apostle meet in God’s time, something always happens! God had waited a long time for the moment David and Imiel would first meet, so when they did, His presence came powerfully. Imiel stared intently at David and prophesied, telling him there would be a special meeting the following year, that the Lord was about to do something great in Canada, and he must prepare for it.

Everyone present felt good about this word, but David was hesitant. He was tired of all the church conferences he had attended. So, he was unmoved when he heard the prophecy, and since he was unmoved, he did not take action. But God would not let him go.

How did he change David’s heart? David shared in *Kingdom Experiment*:

“THIS,” a voice inside my heart sang, “THIS is what you were born for!” “This,” my mind countered with skepticism, “this is what I was born for? I was born to organize a conference?” So I shook it off and tried to forget the whole experience. One thing you have to know about me is that when I’m determined, nothing is going to sway me. I was not interested in planning a conference or any other event for that matter. Frankly, I was becoming disillusioned by much of what I saw in ministry. So many programs, so many events, so much

effort and money and time and yet there seemed to be very little lasting fruit. Where was the change and transformation in our city or our nation? No, I had no interest in repeating what others were already doing. Just thinking about planning a conference made me weary. So one month passed. Then another few weeks went by when suddenly people in my church started having dreams of conferences. And they went to my pastor, Gideon, and said, “We see a conference next year and we feel it is urgent that the planning begins now.”

Gideon is one of my closest friends and he had been at the meeting when Imiel prophesied to me. So he came to talk with me. “David, what’s going that you don’t even want to consider this word?” he asked. “I don’t want to plan a conference, Gideon! There are already tons of conferences and I can’t see how I’m going to do something more than what’s already being done. I don’t want to repeat things. I’m tired of trying to initiate things, to get God to move. If God wants me to do something He has to tell me plainly what it is.”

“Ok, David,” he responded gently, “I understand what you don’t want to do. But can you tell me what is on your heart?”

“I would love to see a people who are longing for the presence of God come together only because God calls them, not because of an agenda or the names of speakers. Imagine a conference where there are no speakers announced and we just wait on God until He speaks to us about His heart for Canada. Imagine worship without time limits—we don’t stop until the Lord releases us. Even if all we do is worship for hours—as long as He is pleased, then we should be too. And if the Lord wants to say something, then He can anoint

whoever He wants to speak the word of the Lord. Even if it's an eleven year old boy—if he has the word of the Lord I want to see that word released. I want to see the Church in Canada being prepared for His presence, His glory.”

“I have never been to a conference like that,” Gideon said. “But I want to. I think this is exactly what the Lord wants us to do.”<sup>2</sup>

When I heard David share this story, I was in awe of God. It was good he had the support of Gideon. He always believed in 2 Chronicles 20:20: “Have faith in the Lord your God and you will be upheld; have faith in his prophets and you will be successful!” It was so good Gideon had the father’s heart and wisdom right from the beginning. I thought, what would have happened if, as the senior pastor, Gideon had criticized David when he heard David’s negative response? Or what if he had given up and not asked, “What is on your heart?” What if Gideon had not taken what the brothers and sisters in the church family sensed seriously? What if Gideon had been busy with church ministry and did not walk with David? From the beginning of the journey, the Lord showed us that He did not choose a spiritual giant, but He chose a spiritual family. As the director of the journey, He found a church that was like a family, with the senior pastor as father and the congregation as brothers and sisters, and as the family listened to Him corporately and obeyed Him, then things were accomplished!

### The Gathering begins

So the two walked together, sharing the vision of “gatherings” all over Canada. But some people in the church did not understand Gideon and were critical of him. After going through this difficult phase (more details in Chapter 9), they

gradually attracted a group of people who only wanted to hear and obey God; so the journey of seeking the heart of God began in Vancouver.

The first gathering took place in 1995 in Whistler, a town near Vancouver, as a result of earnest seeking and “hearing” the heart of God. God instructed that this gathering was to be very pure and simple, with no publicity, no book tables, no agendas, no assigned speakers, and no specific goal except to come together to seek His face. The theme was “In His Presence. *Kingdom Experiment* records:

July 1995, we held the first “Gathering of the Nations.” As we prayed about the location, the Lord confirmed in our spirits to hold it in Whistler, BC, a beautiful resort community nestled in the Rocky Mountains. We didn’t want to use the word “conference” because we knew that what we were doing was very different from a traditional teaching conference. The Lord led us to Zechariah 10:8 “I will whistle for them to gather them together.” Whistle...Whistler...gather...gathering? It seems the Lord wants us to call it the Gathering.

We didn’t do a lot of advertising for the Whistler Gathering because we really wanted people to come because the Holy Spirit spoke to them, not because of fancy marketing and promotion on our part. We created a basic brochure that explained in very simple terms the heart of the gathering: we believed the Lord was looking for a remnant of His body to gather to worship and wait on Him with a heart to see His resting place established in the Church. One day when praying about the heart and purpose for the Whistler Gathering, the Lord posed a question to the Watchmen team: “Can eagles fly together?” This was an intriguing question because

eagles are known for their independence – they fly alone, not in flocks. The Lord was saying the gathering would be a unique test: would believers, and leaders in particular, have the humility to lay aside their independence (their allegiance to a particular vision or denomination or stream) to come together, without schedule or agenda, to simply wait on the Lord together? A few months before the gathering, a report came on the national news about an unusual phenomenon happening in Squamish, a small community near Whistler. Thousands of eagles had congregated over the town and began flying together, locking their wings to the point that pilots were unable to see the runway in the local airport. It seemed to be a confirming sign from the Lord that eagles can fly together and they would!<sup>3</sup>

## The Second Gathering

The battle begins

One day, Holy Spirit asked David, “What do you want to leave for your children when you have to leave?”

“I want my children to live in a country that the Lord blesses,” he answered.

“But can’t you see Canada is on the path to God’s judgment now?” Holy Spirit reminded him.

Then He continued to reveal that He was looking for a remnant of his people, regardless of position or name. They could be laymen, housewives, and children. And if they would determine to walk with Him, they would see the nation healed and restored to her destiny!

This was also the longing of his spiritual father, Pastor Bob. David distilled the DNA of seeking God from Pastor Bob into a threefold “until” covenant. From the very beginning of the Canadian gathering, David led the team to covenant with God:

1. We will not initiate anything UNTIL God speaks.
2. We will corporately discern His word to us UNTIL we could say that “It seemed good to Holy Spirit and to us.”
3. After we discern that the word is of God, we will wait on Him again UNTIL He reveals His strategy, the steps, and the timing to fulfill the vision.

The Lord richly blessed the first gathering. His presence drew 2,300 who came to a gathering without special speakers, schedules, or agendas. Because of the sheer size of the crowd, half of the chairs in the conference center were removed for people to sit on the floor; but nobody complained, because the presence of God captivated them. David and his team did not expect such unprecedented success! Least of all did they expect that the Lord’s heart for them was a journey and not just a gathering. David began to understand why he was born for this. He had not been born for a special meeting, but he was born for God’s dream of a homecoming journey.

Whether it is to restore the family on earth, or to prepare for the eternal home, the Father’s heart is for his children to “come home”! Who would have thought this journey that started in Canada would be a journey of no return. Now it has gone all over the world and has been called the “never ending” journey. Yes, how can this journey end before Jesus comes?

### The Battle begins

Of course, the journey was not a romantic trip full of flowers. The enemy began to attack with great ferocity in the second

Gathering. The spiritual fathers and mothers had increased to twenty people. As they sought the Lord, He directed them to gather the following year, in July 1996, in beautiful Victoria, Vancouver Island. Almost 4,500 came and the Lord faithfully manifested His glorious presence again with the Holy Spirit orchestrating the whole Gathering. But real problems began to surface afterward. David described the serious spiritual warfare during that time:

First, the enemy hit the leadership team very hard. We were fracturing and splintering at our core. I knew the gatherings were powerful. I could see the Lord was opening issues of division and wounding in the Canadian church that were key to releasing it into its destiny to be a healer to the nations. The problem was the breakthroughs weren't lasting. A few weeks or months after the gathering, the effects seemed to "wear off" and people went right back to how they were before – wounded, suffering, divided. It was very frustrating. Even worse, recently a number of respected international prophets had begun releasing words warning of a judgment that was coming to Canada. All of this troubled me deeply. I loved experiencing God's presence in the gathering, but I wanted more than just great meetings. I wanted to see permanent measurable transformation in our nation. Something was holding back His favour from Canada, something was preventing the breakthroughs from becoming permanent victories. Until the Lord revealed what this root issue was, I knew there was no point in doing more gatherings.<sup>4</sup>

David was tired and discouraged and even vowed, "I'm not doing another gathering." Eventually he sought the Lord, "What is hindering Canada from entering into her destined blessing?" The Lord did not answer immediately. David led the Watchmen

team to stop everything and wait on Him. He determined not to plan any Gatherings until they heard from the Lord. After a few months, God finally spoke: “The root issue is the anti-Semitic heart that the European ancestors came with when they founded Canada.”<sup>5</sup>

This went back to the eve of World War II in June 1939. A ship named the “St. Louis,” carrying over 900 Jewish refugees fleeing Hitler’s persecution, drifted from one country to another, looking for a place of refuge. But because of fear and self-interest, none of the countries allowed the ship to dock. Canada was their last hope, and she became the last country to reject them. The ship returned to Europe with its passengers in helpless despair and extreme agony, and eventually many of them died in the holocaust.

## The Third Gathering

### The Critical Turnaround

“The blood of the innocent is crying out. I want you to call Canada to repentance for its anti-Semitic heart,” the Lord said to David.

“Lord, your servants are here, what do you want us to do?”

“Lay hold of two keys: The critical mass and the critical moment,” He instructed.

#### 1. Critical Mass.

The first thing necessary is to find the “critical mass.” We might think that we need to gather a large group of people in order to change the spiritual atmosphere. Change may happen, but the reason for the change is not based on the number of people, but because a group heard and obeyed God’s strategy.

The Lord revealed a spiritual principle that it does not require great numbers to usher in the kingdom of God or to transform a nation. Our strength is not in numbers. As long as there is a critical mass, a “sufficient number” willing to humble themselves



*St. Louis, the ship that hoped for a welcoming dock in 1939*

Photo: HULTON-DEUTSCH COLLECTION/CORBIS  
(From <https://watchmen.org/newsletter/05>)

in brokenness, and respond to God, God’s heart will be satisfied and He will execute His sovereign rule.

So, what would be this “sufficient number”? The Lord taught David that it is different for different situations. Sometimes one is sufficient. The Lord said to Ezekiel, “I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it” (Ezek 22:30). Usually, it’s a group of people. The Lord reserved for Himself 7000 in Israel who did not bow to Baal. When God was about to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, He only required ten righteous men to stand in the gap in order to save the whole city from judgment. In Gideon’s time, God used 300 men to defeat tens of thousands of enemy forces. In the early church, the 120

gathered in one accord and released the promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

### Unity releases authority

Why does God like to use a small group of people? A particular group may not be better than others, but the Lord wants us to know that victory is not dependent on human strength, lest we boast” Our own hands saved us.” (Judges 7:2-7). The Lord wants a critical mass to stand in the gap to bring blessing and breakthrough to the whole, just like the little leaven which affects the whole dough.

Therefore, we must first call a “critical mass” from across the country to stand together. When the Lord spoke to David about anti-semitism, the team was just a small group of leaders from one region of Canada (Vancouver). They knew that a national gathering required national authority, and as people from just one region, they did not have the spiritual authority to make such a nationwide call.

At this time, David also had hands laid on him so that he could rise up to lead the next phase of the journey.

It was April 30, 1998, the fiftieth year (Jubilee year) of the establishment of the State of Israel. That day Pastor Bob and his team were seeking the Lord in Gideon’s home. The Lord asked David to read Daniel 9, and told him, “Today you are landing on Daniel’s time. Just like when he read the promise of Jeremiah 29, and knew the fullness of time had come for the end of exile, he rose up to pray, not for himself but on behalf of his forefathers.”

David was so greatly filled with the Spirit in God’s presence that he travailed and wailed on the floor. There were about twelve people present that day, and among them, John Elijah, one of Gideon’s spiritual sons, recorded how God presence suddenly

came, and the fear of God filled the room. He knew in his spirit that something major was about to happen, but he could not stand in God's presence; human flesh could not bear the weight of His glory! This large man had to hide behind the sofa and lift his head to peek at what was about to happen.

Then Pastor Bob stood up, laid hands on David, and passed the baton of "Watchmen for the Nations" to him, charging him to lead the Canadian team to seek God. No one would have thought that this small group would be the seed for the Gatherings that is now blossoming and bearing fruit in over forty nations some twenty years later.

At that small home gathering, the Lord said, "I give you one year to prepare Canada." In response to His call, David and Gideon travelled across the nation for almost a year, meeting with leaders and sharing their vision. Canada is the second largest nation by land mass in the world, spanning five-and-a-half time zones and stretching 4000 miles from west to east. It was not easy for these two fathers and forerunners to travel across this vast nation, but God surprised and comforted them with His presence along the way. As they went from city to city, sharing with whoever would listen, they discovered that it was the Lord who opened the door in every place, and His presence followed them step by step. He also prepared the hearts of people, so that even traditionally reserved leaders were touched and wept openly. They knew the Lord had already chosen the critical mass and confirmed that Canada's sin against the Jewish people was indeed a spiritual root issue of the nation.

The last province that they had not visited, was Prince Edward Island, and since they had no prior arrangements, they did not plan to go there, intending to return to Vancouver through St. John's, Newfoundland. However, they unexpectedly met a pastor from Prince Edward Island while changing flights

at Halifax airport. He came up to them asking, “Weren’t you on TV recently? We have a pastors’ meeting on May 1; we welcome you to be with us!”

This was a door God opened by Himself. They immediately changed their tickets and visited this final province. All ten provinces were now covered. The first Prime Minister of Canada, John Alexander Macdonald, came from PEI, and it was the Father’s heart for them to go there and honor this founding father of the nation.

On the morning of May 1, David suddenly remembered that when he was travailing in Vancouver on April 30 the previous year, the Lord told him that He gave them one year to prepare Canada. Now it was exactly one year to the very day. How awesome is our God!

## 2. Kairos Time.

“If you delay, you will miss it!”

David and the team were determined to follow the Lord’s leading although they did not understand what was meant by “miss it.” David and Gideon had travelled a year sharing the vision of a national repentance, so what would waiting a few more months matter? The Lord began to teach them about the difference between “chronos” time and “kairos” time.

Those are two Greek words for time in the Bible. “Chronos” is normal linear time, the day-to-day, year-to-year passage of time. In chronos time, we seek the Lord daily, faithfully walking with Him. God’s plan requires obedience but He gives us the choice to respond in one of three ways: obey, disobey, or delay.

With “Kairos” time it’s different. Kairos is the fullness of time and refers to specific times in history when God steps from eternity into human time to fulfill His perfect plan and purpose. In kairos moments, normal rules of time and nature

will be changed. In kairos time, God determines to execute His purpose, and no one can delay it. Our obedience or disobedience will not affect His work, but only affect our part in it, so that we will either be a participant, a bystander, or totally miss His move.

One day in September 1998, the Watchmen team was seeking the Lord together again. Mama Lucy shared a dream she had a few days earlier. In the dream she was distracted by many things and did not realize it was already very late—eleven minutes to midnight. Disaster was going to strike at midnight! She awoke and the Lord said to her, “It’s the eleventh hour!” She understood this to mean “Time is up! Last chance!” Her dream alerted everyone to pray. Then the Lord revealed that His plan was to first gather a group of leaders and intercessors to share the vision with, before calling a gathering for national repentance. Since the Lord highlighted the number “eleven” everyone felt the meeting should be held on November 11 (11/11). They immediately began the process of discerning this word with some key leaders. There was full agreement with calling a leadership meeting but everyone felt that November was not a good time because pastors were busy and needed a few months’ notice to schedule their time. Also, being close to Christmas, people would be busy planning for Christmas events. They proposed delaying meeting until February when more people would be able to attend.

Their advice made sense, but when they sought the Lord, He did not change His plan. So, they obeyed His “unreasonable” plan and met November 11, 1998. To their amazement, over 600 people responded from across the nation.

#### Holy Spirit was the Live Director

The Lord loves to have the leaders earnestly seek His face. He might then reveal His heart in the leadership pre-meeting before the Gathering, or He might choose to reveal His heart during the

Gathering. This requires great sensitivity to the Holy Spirit, and obedience and trust to fully flow with the Spirit during worship, and it is truly awesome and amazing to experience. On the first night of the November Gathering, the Lord did not reveal His plan because He chose to direct the show live. At that time, Church of Zion took care of administration and Mama May led worship. When I found out that Mama May played a key role by the Holy Spirit at that wonderful event, I went to interview her. With tears in her eyes, she looked back and shared:

I was leading worship at the time. When I started to sing the second song, “Our Heart” (by Don Moen), I remembered Ezekiel 37 and quoted the Lord’s question to Ezekiel, “Son of man, can these bones live?” Then I replied like Ezekiel, “Lord God, You know.” As I sang this, I burst out crying. Suddenly a strange thought came to me. “Take the sackcloth and wrap it around the provincial flags of Canada.” The Holy Spirit continued to give revelation and reminded me of a dream I had two days ago, which I had not understood. Before the meeting started, we had two days of leadership pre-meeting to seek the Lord. That night I dreamt of a huge cloth above my room. My spirit was lifted up and I saw that it was a sackcloth, and



*Since the very first gathering in the womb of Canada, God's glorious presence never fails to pour down*

completely covered my room. Now I and Mama Lucy have a habit of carrying a small piece of sackcloth when we pray to help us enter into deep repentance. I did not have my piece of sackcloth with me at that time. Mama Lucy stood behind me as usual to support me in prayer, so I turned to ask her, "Do you have your sackcloth?" She said yes! I obeyed the Holy Spirit, left my piano and walked up to the provincial flag on the far left, which was the flag of our province, British Columbia. The flags were placed in order from the west to the east. The moment the sackcloth in my hand touched the British Columbia flagpole, the spirit of grace and supplication came upon me, I fell to the ground and wept deeply, and my tears pouring out like running water. I didn't know how long I cried before I calmed down. Then I got up to go to the next flagpole and the same thing happened! I travailed on the floor till my tears stopped. By then David came up with the core team to stand behind me to protect me and pray for me. The whole congregation also started to weep and wail. I went to wrap the flagpoles with the sackcloth, one after another. I fell down and stood up again and again.... I didn't know how long it took me to finish all the travailing prayer. But I knew without the support and prayers of David and the team, I could not complete the deep repentance and travail that required supernatural spiritual and physical strength!

David was totally astounded. Initially he was not even sure that the gentle and well-mannered Canadians could weep! But God's presence suddenly swept across the whole hall, everyone fell to their knees and wept and travailed, leaving no strength even to get tissue. He was stunned because the Holy Spirit came

and took over before He even had a chance to share the vision. He suddenly realized that this was the kairos moment that God had said they must not miss.<sup>6</sup>

But what really amazed him came later. In January 1999, Gideon saw in the news that Jean Chretien, the Prime Minister of Canada, was making the first official visit to Auschwitz. Accompanying him was holocaust survivor Mordecai Ronen and his son. When Mordecai started to pray for his mother and sister who died in the concentration camp, the Prime Minister could not help crying. It was the most moving journey in his life. “Six million Jews were killed in the Second World War,” he said. “We all shall have responsibility to make sure it never happens again.” The Canadian Prime Minister declared that he would lead the nations to prevent this kind of tragedy happening again.

David’s spirit was deeply stirred. He now understood what the Lord meant when He spoke to him as the leaders wept and travailed in the November 11 Gathering.

“David, because a remnant has risen up in the land like Esther to present themselves before Me, I am extending to you the sceptre of My favour. I am about to show you what I can do.” When Esther chose to stand in the gap for her people and present herself before the king without concern for her own life, the Lord gave her favour with the king. He stirred the king to look into the scrolls and remember Mordecai’s faithful service to the kingdom, which in turn brought the king into alignment with God’s heart - to protect the Jewish people. In November, God had caused a remnant of intercessors and leaders in Canada to present ourselves before Him, our King. And now God had caused our natural “king”—our Prime

Minister Jean Chretien to go to Auschwitz to “look into the scrolls” and remember the story of the Jewish people. And He had even arranged for a “Mordecai” to go with him! And now our Prime Minister had declared that Canada would stand for the protection of the Jewish people, literally bringing Canada into alignment with God’s heart.<sup>7</sup>

David and the Canadian team could only bow their heads in worship, “Lord, now we understand if we had delayed our gathering to February, we would have missed it. Lord, we want to follow Your schedule and not for You to follow ours! We surrender to You!”

### The Fourth Gathering

#### Train of tears and the National Gathering of Repentance

“In preparation for the national repentance gathering, apart from the gathering of the critical mass of leaders, what else is on your heart?” David asked the Lord. As he sought the Lord, the Lord reminded him of the trains the Nazis used to transport the Jews to the gas chambers in the death camps.

God moved him to call Canadian leaders and intercessors to go on a completely different kind of train, carrying a deep love for the Jewish people and cleansing the land of Canada with tears of repentance. From April 13-15, 1999, eighty-eight leaders and intercessors representing every province in Canada responded to the vision from the Lord, and got on the “Train of Tears” that traveled from Vancouver to Winnipeg, carrying them with their tears of intercession. They divided into shifts, crying out to the Lord day and night for the entire forty-two-hour journey, asking

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 21-22

for His mercy on Canada. This Train of Tears broke through the darkness over Canada so that the Lord could revisit this beautiful land.

On July 1, 1999 over 2300 people from across Canada gathered in the gymnasium of the University of Winnipeg, prepared to weep in repentance for anti-semitism in Canada. After two days of worship, waiting, weeping, and giving their best, there was still no breakthrough in the spirit. During the discernment meeting, David used the story of the prophet Elisha and King Joash to encourage everyone not to let go, telling them there must be total breakthrough in the spirit first before they would see breakthrough in the natural realm. In 2 Kings 13:18-19 Elisha asked the king to strike the ground with arrows, but the king only struck three times and stopped; therefore he would only be able to defeat the Arameans three times. If he had struck the ground five or six times, he would have been able to completely destroy the Arameans.

So everyone returned with renewed faith to the gymnasium for the next session, and continued to cry out to the Lord. David could not think of anything else in which they had not obeyed the Lord and could only ask for His mercy on Canada to remove His judgment. He prostrated himself on the floor crying out to the Lord, asking Him to help His people in their weakness, for even repentance needs His strength. David knew if God did not intervene, there was nothing more men could do. He heard himself praying, "O God! Please help us, give us a push! Let there be breakthrough!"

The end of man's effort is the beginning for God. Suddenly, a wind of the Holy Spirit flooded the room, setting off a deeper wave of travail and weeping. He truly gave them a push in the spirit, showing Canada how much He desired to release her

into her destiny. As suddenly as the wind of the spirit came, it suddenly subsided, bringing His peace, and a gentle and sweet presence that filled the whole room.

As the people were still enjoying the heavenly rest on the gymnasium floor, the Lord spoke, “I have received your sacrifice. You may set up the altar with the stones you brought!”

Before the gathering, the Lord had asked everyone to bring a stone from their hometown. As he dedicated the altar, David prayed, “God, we make You a witness and the angels a witness of this day. And may these stones be a witness for generations of

the faithfulness of a remnant, who wept and repented before You. Because of Your mercy, please remove the judgment to our nation, so that we will have your favour again.” As he finished praying, a double rainbow suddenly appeared in the sky over Winnipeg. We were reminded of God’s promise to Noah that He



*To enter her destiny, Canada recognized that Israel played a pivotal role. In the earlier Canadian gatherings, we ceaselessly embraced and blessed Israel*

would never send a flood again to destroy the earth. The Lord had received our repentance!

David Mainse, another of David’s key spiritual fathers, offered the services of “100 Huntley Street,” his national TV ministry. This brought awareness of the journey to many more intercessors throughout Canada. That day happened to be the seventeenth of Tammuz, the day the Temple was destroyed. Jews and Gentiles at the gathering made a covenant together declaring the realignment of the church of Canada to the heart of the Lord. At the end of the Gathering, a temporary altar was set up on the

sidewalk outside the gymnasium with thousands of stones from different places of Canada, to remember God's acceptance of Canada's repentance.

Every stone on the altar represented a heart of obedience that longed to please God. One of the gifts was particularly touching. A young sister from BC could not come but she asked a friend to bring a small vial that collected the tears she shed while she prayed and wept for this Gathering for months. As she requested, David poured her offering of tears on the stones.

Another precious sister offered her stone: her diamond wedding ring. This was the most expensive "stone" among the 2,300 stones. But it was her heart that was even more precious than the stone. The Lord honored her heart, and the wonderful second half of the story of this precious stone will be told at the end of this chapter.

### The Fifth through Tenth Gatherings: In the Footsteps of the Holy Spirit

#### The Fifth Gathering: Repenting to Survivors of the St. Louis

In the year 2000, the Lord led Watchmen for the Nations to search for the survivors of the St. Louis from all over the world, and invited all of them to Ottawa, Canada, to receive repentance and respect. Forty were found to be still alive. The children who had been aboard the ship and survived the return to Germany were now seniors. Because of physical weakness, unwillingness to face the past, or not believing there would be people truly wanting to repent, not all the survivors came; but twenty-five accepted the invitation and funding and came from England, Australia, Israel, the US, and different parts of Canada. On April 10, 2000 in Ottawa, representatives from the church, First Peoples, and Parliament repented deeply to the twenty-five survivors for

Canada's part in rejecting the ship filled with precious Jewish lives.

The survivors received grand welcome with love and honor in Canada. It was something they never expected, and they were deeply touched and healed by the love, unity, dedication, and humility of the body of Christ. Each of them received a precious gift of glass artwork consisting of Canada's maple leaf, the star of David, and the St. Louis carved on it. It represented Canada's commitment to stand with Israel so the Jewish people would not face any possible future persecution alone.

In an interview on the "100 Huntley St." David said, "For our children's children, we must cleanse the past and repent before these survivors. In 2000 we went one step forward by going directly to Israel with 550 representatives of the Body of Christ in Canada on the 'Journey of Hope' where we publicly repented to the Israeli government and Rabbi. We said to the former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, this is not just a one-time ceremony; please teach us how to walk with the Jewish people so we can build bridges of friendship with the Jewish people in Canada. Gentiles walking with Jews is something that pleases the Heavenly Father. In 2007, we invited Knesset members to Canada and they were warmly received in Ottawa, Toronto, and Vancouver. I was very touched because I felt it was not just a special friendship, it was about Canada's destiny which is the healing of nations."

I was privileged to join the reception dinner in their first stop in Vancouver with the Renewal Family. We all dressed formally like attending a wedding. The room was filled with God's glorious presence.

Gatherings that have taken place over the years are like a prophet's inner chamber where spiritual breakthrough happens, which in turn affects change in the natural realm.

In 2018, the Canadian government publicly apologized for turning away the St. Louis. Although this apology happened eighteen years after the Canadian church asked forgiveness, it shows when we follow the Holy Spirit and move in the Spirit, what the body of Christ does in the spirit realm will impact the natural realm, whether the results are immediate, delayed, or not visible for a long time.

### The Sixth Gathering: Covenant of Love

In the winter of 2001, there was a leadership gathering in Kelowna, British Columbia, where David and the team did a prophetic act. Each person threw a small stick into a large fire to symbolize laying down their personal plans for God's purpose and coming into complete unity to cover and protect the nation.

Within a year, in August 2002, when the world was still under the shock of 911, God invited the Canadian church to gather in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island—the birthplace of confederation. Several thousand responded to God's call. Representatives of the spiritual fathers and mothers from Great Britain and France also came to witness the historical healing and unity among the descendants of the English and the French in Canada. The British and the French were the two people groups instrumental in founding the nation and there had been many divisions and misunderstanding between them in the past. But in God's powerful presence during the Gathering, they made a covenant with each other and released declarations of love.

In that Gathering the Lord also brought great healing to the wounds between the Amish and the Swiss church. In the sixteenth century, after the Reformation, the Swiss persecuted the Anabaptists, who were the forefathers of the Amish. But at the Gathering, Swiss representatives repented to the Amish. This led to a Gathering of healing between the Anabaptists and the

Swiss church in Winterthur, Switzerland in May 2003.

It was as if the Lord had waited for Canada to walk in her destiny for a long time. The two founding peoples of Canada had only just begun their journey of reconciliation and unity when she immediately became a womb to heal the nations.

### The Seventh Gathering: Engagement

After declarations of love came the courtship. From July 25 to August 9, 2003 a delegation of 250 French and English Canadians and native leaders travelled in charter buses east to west across Canada, from Montreal, Quebec to Victoria, British Columbia, stopping in twelve cities along the way. In this nation where God's destiny is to bring healing for nations, the Father wanted her to experience His love and healing first. The highlight of the journey came on August 3 when French-Canadian representatives accepted a marriage proposal from the English-Canadian representatives at the Legislature of Edmonton. This was followed by a big engagement party. They made a prophetic declaration: "We have received the favour of the Lord, now we want to be His delight!"

Canada is a multi-ethnic nation, but the blood of Jesus made us one people. The family of God came together to worship, dance, release declarations, exchange gifts, picnic, and celebrate. There were no longer walls of division between the people groups.

### The Eighth Gathering: Homecoming

During July 8-10, 2004, there was a special gathering in Montreal, Quebec to prepare the French-Canadian bride who was going to get married. Before the marriage, she needed to restore her relationship with her mother, France. The theme of the gathering was "Homecoming." (It is interesting that several years later, this journey was called the journey of "Homecoming")

in Asia, a name that became commonly used; but very few people know that Canada already had a “Homecoming Gathering” long before that. Some said, everything needs to go through “Made in China” to multiply and expand, and this is one example!) The root of the wound carried by French-Canadians can be traced back to the seventeenth century, when the French people living in Quebec waited in vain for France to send reinforcements to rescue them as they faced bombardment from English troops. But France did not send help, so these French people remained in Canada like orphans without parents and eventually fell under British rule. They suffered the deep pain of abandonment and rejection.

And the Father heard the weeping of these children.

The Gathering took place on the 400th anniversary of the French settlers arriving in Canada. The French-speaking church in Quebec warmly welcomed a large delegation from the Church of France, then the fathers from France repented and asked forgiveness from France’s children in Quebec, for not standing in the father’s place at that time in history. Malachi 4: 5-6 was displayed before everyone again. When the Spirit of God finds a group of people totally obedient to Him, He can move quickly. As the hearts of fathers and children aligned with each other, the curse of hundreds of years was removed in three days.

### The Ninth Gathering: One Heart

On August 28-31, 2005, 3000 representatives of the Canadian church dressed up for the “One Heart” Gathering in Quebec. After a few years of preparation, the English and French in Canada now made a covenant with the Lord together and with each other, declaring that the blood of Jesus had healed the historical wounds between the two people groups. Now before God and the fathers of the nation, they were entering into a holy

matrimony. This miracle of unity was a milestone in the journey which blessed the nations.

But the Lord had more beautiful intentions for the Gathering. When David honored the First Peoples and invited them all onto the stage, something amazing happened. Lack of unity among the First Peoples (which included the First Nations, Inuit and Metis) was one of Canada's greatest pains. When they stood together, amidst thunderous applause, God's spirit fell upon them and they suddenly began to reconcile with each other, agreeing to retake their place together as gatekeepers for the nation, and even making a covenant to walk with each other. The whole congregation was stunned by the swift and beautiful work of the Holy Spirit. The participation of the First Peoples brought the Canadian journey into God's divine order, with the blessing, authority, and spiritual strength released from the firstborn of the land. The covenant between the First Peoples of Canada later stirred the First Peoples of Taiwan to also covenant to walk with each other.

This was the first large gathering I had been to. I was amazed and overjoyed to see two people groups reconcile, love, and marry each other in His glorious presence. On the last day, we marched to the Plains of Abraham, declaring a new unity and new season. That year, Pastor Eddie and Louisa Ma from Hong Kong and Miriam Chang from Taiwan were also present. It was the first time I met them. As Chinese representatives, we did something beautiful: we tied the flags of China and Taiwan together! I don't remember who suggested that, but I remembered the prophetic act clearly.

We followed the crowd to the Plains of Abraham, where in 1759, the English and the French fought, with a great deal of bloodshed. But this location that had been a painful place of gunfire and bullets was now filled with worship and joyful

noise. In God's presence, the different people groups in Canada picnicked together as the children played hide and seek. I sat on the grass with others and listened to the sound of the national anthem coming from afar.

### The Tenth Gathering: Consumed

On August 22-26, 2006, 3000 people again gathered in Edmonton for one thing: to seek the Lord. Among them were 200 individuals from 30 nations, most of them attending a Gathering for the first time. They witnessed how God brought forth supernatural unity and poured out His glory. In His presence, a deep longing for family and unity was birthed. Many leaders from the nations were powerfully filled with God's love and felt they found a family in Canada, so they opened their hearts to share their burden for their nation with the Canadian family. When hundreds of Canadians streamed forward to pray for them, they were deeply comforted. Three years earlier, the engagement of the two people groups in Canada had taken place here, and now the destiny of Canada was revealed: A place of refuge filled with His love, healing, and hope; a safe womb where different people groups can love each other and walk in humility together; a model of unity for the nations.

This was a life-changing Gathering for me. I experienced the weight of God's glory in a way I never had before, and I could never return to the religious trappings and ministry patterns of the past. This was also the first time that sister Ruth from China attended a Canadian gathering. The Lord stirred a longing in her for the glory of God which became the seed for China's journey of Homecoming.

## From Brokenness to Restoration

### Eleventh Gathering: The Promise

As I have mentioned, this amazing journey brought breakthroughs in Canada right from the beginning, but the spiritual warfare was very intense. The Canadian team celebrated unprecedented breakthroughs, but also went through unprecedented brokenness. The enemy severely attacked the unity of the leadership team. In 2009, David and the Watchmen team experienced a great trial. In the following ten years, the enemy attacked David relentlessly, and the team was so shaken that it split into two. Internal division forced the journey in Canada to come to a standstill, but God's calling transcended man's weaknesses and failures. Just as the early believers were forced by persecution to leave Jerusalem and so the gospel was spread out, David and Gideon came to Asia. This seed of seeking God's heart was preserved and flourished. Even so, I struggled to interview David regarding this part of the journey, because I knew it touched something very painful in his heart. I finally took courage and interviewed him.

"In 2009 we obeyed the Lord and moved the stones from Winnipeg to Ottawa, because He said He will bring down His kingdom from there, so we named that gathering 'The Promise.' We prepared two trumpets and a crown. The Lord asked us: 'Are you prepared?' We replied excitedly, 'Of course!' The Lord said, 'I know you want to be prepared, so I will help you!'

Then he started to shake us! Actually, grapes produce juice only when they are shaken and pressed down. So, in these ten years, the Canadian team has gone through the wine-making process and become choice wine for the nations to enjoy. The Lord's work was to break us but not to crush us...

Ten years ago we thought we were ready. When Moses thought he was prepared at forty, the Lord led him to the wilderness. Forty years later, when he thought he was not ready, the Lord brought him home. So in 2009 when we thought we were ready, reality proved that we were not, because we were not broken enough. Ten years later, in 2019, when we thought we had totally failed and had no hope, the Lord saw us as choice wine ready to be served to the nations. When God breaks us, there is no way for us to restore ourselves. I have been broken in every way, even in ways I did not expect. I was alone and helpless and wrestled with God like Jacob. I could only wait for God to come. And if He didn't show up, I was finished. There was no plan B or plan C. At that time, it was easy to blame myself and others. The most difficult lesson was not to judge myself or others, to know all things come from Him, and trust that He can use evil to become blessings.

Through this process of brokenness and restoration, I believe the Lord will use Canada in a greater way. Not by might or by power, but by His Spirit! He released victory from brokenness. He created beauty from ashes. The kingdom of man focuses on strength and abilities, but the kingdom of God stresses brokenness. When people wanted to see Jesus, He said, unless a kernel of wheat dies, it will not produce many seeds. The world sees death as the end, but He says death is the beginning. The seed is pure but the vessel needs to be cleansed."

David and Gideon strove to protect the pure seed of "seeking the Lord alone," especially after Canada aligned with God's heart through corporate repentance for anti-semitism in Winnipeg in 1999. The period from 1999 to 2009 was a historic ten years for the journey in Canada. The time had come for a pause, but God's grace allowed us to end well. He called for a Gathering in Ottawa, our national capital, in July 2009 to declare His "Promise": we are

one body under one King and one Lord, even though that body was about to experience a great shaking.

The Watchmen website at that time introduced the Gathering this way: “The Promise Gathering celebrates the 10-year milestone of our journey. We come before the Father in humility and brokenness to seek His face, and ask Him to lead us into the new season, to see the majesty of His Kingdom and government released in our nation.”

### The Wind of the Spirit turns to Asia

The amazing thing about this Gathering was that everyone received a covenant ring with the words “One King” engraved on it, as a seal to the Holy Covenant that was made there. This was such a precious prophetic promise, especially in light of the imminent shaking and breaking of the Watchmen team. The even more amazing thing was that the rings were donated by the family in China for the Gathering, as if to reveal that the next phase of the journey would be in Asia: Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, and especially China.

In November 10-11, 2011 the Lord used the Chinese to initiate the 1111 Gathering in Vancouver (see Part 8 “Vancouver: Homecoming in our own city”) where half of the attendants were Chinese. The number eleven speaks of alignment, and the Lord used this critical time to confirm to David and the Homecoming team that the wind of the Spirit had turned towards the Chinese. In fact, in the seven years from 2011 to 2017, there were no major Gatherings in Canada, until the “As One” Gathering in Montreal in 2017.

Of over 100 big and small Gatherings in Canada, I have only mentioned eleven of the most important. The whole journey follows the faithful trail of the fathers of Watchmen for the Nations, whose tears and toil were known only to God.

The 1111 Gathering in 2011 gave the Canadian journey a mark of alignment, but also signified a painful halt. The journey in Canada was not finished, but God had already opened the door to Asia, and David focused fully on the journey with the Chinese.

### Two “As One” Gatherings: Restoration of Family

Through these years of brokenness and humbling, the pause in the Canadian journey became the starting point of the Asian journey, which began to blossom and bear fruit all over the world. But God remembered the womb of the Homecoming journey. The Holy Spirit began to move the hearts of His people in Canada. He reignited their passion and desire for a united family in Canada. He started to heal and restore to the Canadian family the unity that had been stolen and destroyed by the enemy.

“As One” Gathering, July 2017: As we gathered in Montreal in eastern Canada to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the nation, the Canadian family was finally reunited again. God has chosen the Canadian church, not to fulfill a purpose or a vision, but to love one another and be one true family. As we come into deeper unity, we have greater authority to release Canada into her destiny of healing the nations. Once again, we made a covenant with God and with each other, with the young people aligning with the fathers and mothers, to receive the Kingdom inheritance from the generation before us.

“As One” Gathering, August 2019: We gathered in Ottawa, capital of Canada, and revisited our dream for Canada from twenty years ago, which is the desire of the Father: that He would find a family in Canada and come into His resting place. Despite our inadequacies and failures in the past, the Lord has never forsaken us but has been watching over us with His faithfulness and compassion. At the Gathering, more than five Kingdom ministries in the land linked hearts and hosted the Gathering

together as one team. It was awesome to celebrate the restoration of the family, and listen to family stories with the next generation. One of the most memorable stories is the story of the stones.

### Story of the Stones

There are many stones in Israel. Jerusalem is called the city of stone, and those stones have witnessed the rise and fall of the nation. Stones have important meanings in the Bible. The forefathers set memorial stones and built altars of stones. Christ is the Rock and the Cornerstone, and we are the living stones.

Praise the Lord! When He moved in Canada, He also used stones to testify His faithfulness and majesty.

As mentioned before, people brought stones from across Canada to the Winnipeg gathering in 1999 as a memorial of God's faithfulness. Of the 2,300 pieces of stone, one was a wedding ring with diamond from a sister. With the rest of the 2,300 stones, this ring had been stored in the home of a Jewish brother in Winnipeg, who built twenty-four wooden crates to keep these precious stones. The twenty-four crates were later transported to the National House of Prayer in Ottawa. David reminisced: "We filled a huge bus, worshipping, praying, and making proclamations all the way there!" From 1999 to 2009, those stones witnessed the transformation of a nation, from God's judgment to God's favour; from 2009 to 2019, they also saw the transformation of Canada, from God's favour to God's Kingdom!

Through many tears and intercession, the fathers in the early Canadian team, many of whom had been divided and scattered, restored their relationship and covenanted with each other again. In the summer of 2017, some of them met in the National House of Prayer and decided to bring up a box of the stones from the basement. Much to their surprise, they found that

the box randomly picked from the twenty-four boxes of stones “just happened” to have the wedding ring in it! The thousands of stones had gone through a tumultuous journey, from the Winnipeg Gathering venue to the truck, from the truck to the home, and into the crates; then from the Winnipeg home to the basement in the Ottawa House of Prayer, where they stayed for ten years. But now the precious ring was sitting on top of the box that had been randomly selected.

Everyone was stunned. Abba seemed to say: “I am with you! This is the sign that I am pleased with you all, when you covenant again!”

Everyone knew no human hands could have done this. The Lord moved Pastor Michael Pierce’s heart to bring this precious ring to the Korea Gathering in Jeju Island in March 2018, though he did not know how the Lord would use this “stone” from Canada; and he simply gave it to David, who kept the unusual “stone” and waited for God’s instruction.

Unexpectedly, the Japanese leader Pastor Yoshiko Ito was moved by the Holy Spirit to propose that Japan was to marry Korea and the nations and walk in unity with them. When David took out the ring and shared the story behind it, the strong presence of God fell. David highly honored Pastor Ito, the forerunner in Japan’s Homecoming journey, and then the Jewish leader, Pastor Asher Intrater, put the priceless ring on her finger. Pastor Ito wept and so did I. As her good friend, I knew she remained single to devote herself to serve the Lord. She never thought that she would own a wedding ring on earth.

I marvel at God’s thoughtfulness. He is a Father of all details!

In the Gathering in Ottawa in 2019, the stones that had gone through so much were brought on stage again. And the Canadian family was once again brought onto the stage in the



Jewish Pastor Asher put the wedding ring from Canada on Pastor Ito's finger. She accepted it with tears of joy.

spirit realm. Then another amazing thing happened. A Canadian representative of the next generation, Faytene Kryskow, brought her “stone” with her, which was a ring with all the names of her family engraved on it. In the pre-gathering, she felt led to add this “stone” to the twenty-four crates of stones, representing the desire of

her generation, and the family members who had joined later, to embrace this original covenant and to see God’s heart for Canada fulfilled together. David felt that this was an important prophetic act and should be done in the main Gathering session. But it was too late to stop her, because Faytene threw the ring into one of the crates as she spoke.

Later in the Gathering, Faytene shared her heart and invited the young people to join her in this covenant of stones. She then asked some leaders to bring the crates to the stage. As David glanced at the box he was carrying, he was surprised to see that Faytene’s family ring was on the top of it! It was another God moment. David’s daughter, Anna, was so touched that, with her face streaming with tears, she took off a ring that her parents had given her for her eighteenth birthday and gave it to Faytene. She wanted to represent her generation as standing with the generation of older brothers and sisters. Anna and Faytene embraced each other and wept. God’s presence was so tangible then that everyone on stage fell on their knees and prostrated themselves on the floor.

Many things happened quickly in God's presence. Representatives of many nations stood with Canada to worship Jesus and welcome the King of glory to come in. Two sisters from Germany presented a "sword" to Canada, declaring that God had put His sword in her mouth, and that Canada was to release His heart and words to heal and bless the nations, like the export of natural oil flowing from Canada to the nations. That day, the Lord released loud thunders and a beautiful double rainbow in the sky! He was with the humility of the spiritual fathers and mothers in the land, and their mutual forgiveness and reconciliation. It was apparent that He was pleased with what happened in the Gathering. It was a new day for Canada!

### The price of listening to the Holy Spirit

As we follow the pillars of cloud and fire of His presence, waiting or moving forward at His words, many difficult situations are overcome with ease. In God's presence, Canadians, though known as people who don't cry, wept bitterly and wailed in repentance for the sin of antiantisemitism. In God's presence, the centuries-old grudge between the English and French dissolved in an instant, and they were quickly married in the spirit. In God's presence, the misunderstanding and division among First Peoples was resolved.

After every breakthrough, the leadership team continues to seek the Lord. The focus is always on following God and not solving problems. After the breakthrough in dealing with



*In the Ottawa Gathering in 2019, Faytene brought her stone to add to the covenant of the previous generation*

anti-semitism, the Holy Spirit led them to deal with the issue between English and French Canada. Some objected: why turn to a new issue and not continue to deal with antiantisemitism? In the early days, leaders of First Peoples also felt their issue was paramount and should be the priority, so when David and the team waited for God's time and did not give their issues enough attention, some were offended.

Some people had a burden for Jews but not for First Peoples; some only had a burden for the English and French, so when the two peoples reconciled, their mission was done, and they stepped away from the journey. Thus, different ones joined and left at different times. There were breakthroughs in every phase, but there were always some who got offended. This was a price that had to be paid to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit.

David and Gideon do not focus on a specific issue or a breakthrough. They are focused on God Himself, and like Pastor Bob Birch, they seek to "hear what God is saying to the church today" (see Rev 2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22; Heb 3:7-8,15; 4:7), and they insist on only doing what the Holy Spirit wants them to do. Through trials and challenges, this small group of pioneers laid the foundation of the Homecoming spirit, which is to fear God only, and not be afraid to offend man. This is how they have been able to persevere to this day.

Though the way the Holy Spirit sometimes led was quite incomprehensible, David and Gideon humbly and resolutely followed the Spirit, allowing Him to fully take charge. This can be a great challenge for anyone who simply wants to serve faithfully in a local church or anyone who wants to see obvious results. I was one of them. That's why David always encourages us to rise above our knowledge, reason, and external circumstances, if we want to have clear spiritual discernment.

Naturally, the streams usually flow into the lower valleys. In fact, when the journey in Canada went through a difficult time, the Holy Spirit directed this pure spiritual stream of “seeking God” to flow into a humble and hungry people group and was embraced earnestly by the hearts of Chinese. This was God’s wisdom beyond human understanding.

As David was about to go to Asia, he encountered a problem that required discernment.



# 6

## Journey in Asia: God Chose the Chinese





## Surprising Encounter

“SHOULD I CANCEL my trip to Jerusalem?”

David was going to speak at a conference in Israel, but 9/11 happened and flights were in chaos. It was natural for an Egyptian to ask this question.

But the Lord said, “You must go, because I want you to meet one man.”

Who was this man?

At the conference, David was introduced to Pastor Nathaniel Chow, but he didn’t realize that Pastor Chow was the man the Lord spoke of. I interviewed Pastor Chow and heard the story from him. He said their encounter was a total miracle, since they almost missed each other.

In 2001, 9/11 happened and it wasn’t likely that Pastor David would be able to go to Israel. Before I left for Israel, a huge typhoon was about to hit Taiwan, so I didn’t want to leave Taiwan either. After I arrived in Israel, the typhoon came to Taiwan. I wanted to return home earlier but the flight was cancelled, so I was there and happened to hear Pastor David’s message. I didn’t fully understand it. And I usually don’t meet with speakers in a conference, but a sister insisted that I should talk with Pastor David. We talked for less than ten minutes, and I learned that he

was coming to Taiwan at the end of the year. Our global Bread of Life pastors' conference happened to be at that time, so all our pastors attended his meeting. This had never happened before! This started our journey of unity that has continued to this day. Unlike my normal way of doing things, it was totally God!

Originally, David went to Taiwan only to release God's message. But when he arrived in Taiwan, God asked him, "I don't need your message, I want your heart. Are you willing to lay down your life for the Chinese?" It was hard for David, because his deepest burden was for his own people, the Egyptians, and for the Arabs. God had already enlarged his heart in Canada by giving him love for Canada and the Jewish people. He could not imagine how he could have the capacity to also love the Chinese. Then the Lord reminded him that when Yuli came from Taiwan to pray day and night for Canada, he had promised the Lord that one day when Canada broke through, he would go and help Taiwan, to pay back this faithful intercessor from Taiwan. But he still struggled and said to the Lord, "I'm not Chinese."

God was gentle and persistent, "Aren't you Grandma Chiu's son?"

David had to surrender. Then God further revealed the destiny of the Chinese to him. So, at the conference, he shared what the Lord had shown him to the leaders of the Bread of Life family gathered from around the world in Taiwan. Everyone was deeply moved by the message about their destiny, and they all went forward weeping, crying out to God in repentance. Tony Tseng, the CEO of "Good News TV", who was the interpreter also wept profusely. The Lord then told David that one day He would gather His Chinese bride to worship Him and seek His face. That would not only bless the Chinese, but also bless the Middle East and the global body of Christ.

### From Taiwan to China via Hong Kong

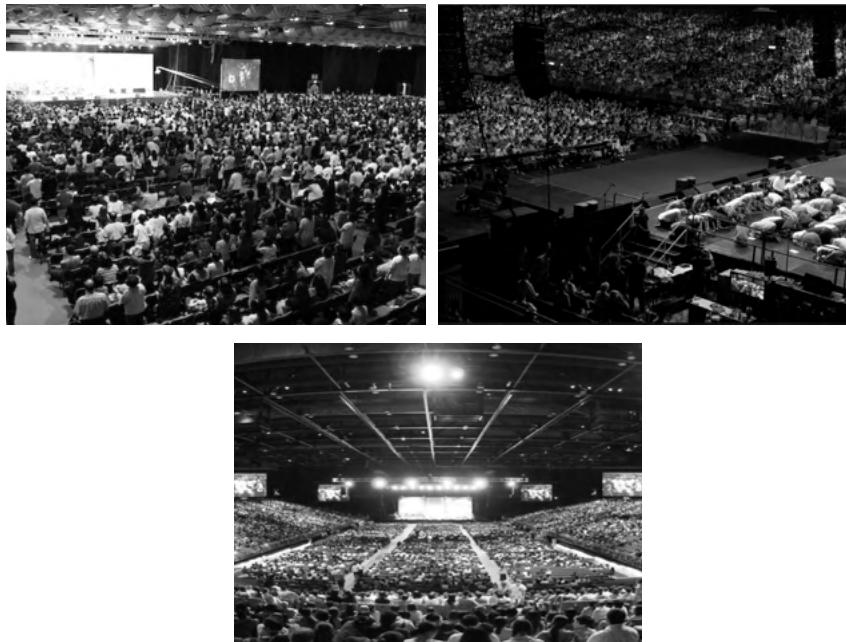
During that time, God did amazing works in Taiwan. Some of them happened during a two-bus trip, which traveled the whole island of Taiwan. No one knew who would be coming to the Gatherings, but God's presence was there faithfully. The work of the Holy Spirit brought reconciliation in every city they visited. There was reconciliation between big and small churches, urban and rural churches; between different ethnic groups; between generations, and even between the genders. God had prepared many hidden intercessors, who rushed forward at the altar call to weep and wail in repentance for themselves and for Taiwan.

In 2002, Rick Joyner prophesied that Taiwan was a "leadership." When she followed the Holy Spirit and sailed into China's harbour, she would pull out the huge ship of China. Taiwan is truly a spiritual pioneer in the Chinese world and has received the heart of God in many areas. Taiwan was also chosen to be the first to receive the Homecoming seed from Canada. The family journey first started in Taiwan and then flowed from there to Hong Kong.

God chose Hong Kong to be another womb to nurture this Homecoming seed outside Canada. In the ten years from 2010 to 2019, seven large Gatherings were held in Hong Kong, which birthed the Homecoming journey in Asia spiritually. Then the journey rapidly expanded to the whole world.

The dedication and excellent service of the Hong Kong family is amazing. For example, Sherri Chan, who was usually on the stage doing interpretation for the Gatherings, became my good friend through the journey. She proudly observed, "Apart from Canada, no other place in the world except Hong Kong hosted so many successive and large Gatherings. Apart from online gatherings, the largest Homecoming Gathering ever held was in Hong Kong. I am so grateful that God so trusted Hong Kong that

He gave us so many opportunities to serve the family. Hong Kong was a door that was especially opened for the family in China, and also acted as the midwife that helped birth the journey in China. Mainland China in turn became the midwife to the global family, being a motivating force to help birth the global family journey! Though Hong Kong didn't fully understand the depth of the journey initially, we caught the ball in the spirit, and perfectly pushed the snowball out, getting bigger and bigger..."



(Top Left) First Homecoming Gathering in Hong Kong in May 2010. 5,500 people attended from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Macau and overseas.

(Top Right) "Holy Array" Gathering in July 2013. Christian representatives from the countries involved in the Siege of the International Legations knelt down and repented.

(Middle) Asia Homecoming in July 2015.

The leaders in mainland China also humbly admitted, “The Homecoming journey in mainland China was like a child that has already been born. She is a fruit as well as a seed, as a seed she multiplies. The seed from Canada was nurtured in Taiwan, birthed in Hong Kong, became fully formed in China, and multiplied.”

This was how the pure stream of seeking God flowed from Canada to Taiwan, from Taiwan to Hong Kong, and then to mainland China. We can say that the Homecoming vision was conceived in Canada, but after it left Canada, it came to rest among the Chinese where it was birthed, grew, and then spread to the nations!

### Invitation from China

“What do you want for the first Gathering? What kind of people do you want to invite?” Andrew asked David.

“I am not going to preach or teach on this trip. I just want to meet people. Please find ten people you can trust. How can we start our journey without meeting the people we can trust?” David answered.

“What kind of people can we trust?” Andrew asked.

“Find the critical mass; those who are pure in heart and who are willing to lay down everything for the Kingdom of God. This is what we need to do for the first Gathering,” David said.

### The Journey in China Begins

The journey in China began with finding people with the same heart. When I talked with David about the journey in China, he began to tell me about a Chinese friend he trusted, Andrew Ho, director of the Hong Kong Kingdom Ministry Center:

“Andrew understands my heart. Early in our journey in Taiwan, he kept asking me, ‘Why do you do this?’ ‘How can you

to do that?' At that time, I always had a heart to go and bring the Homecoming journey to China. But I never planned anything, I just wanted to know what God would do. Then Andrew hosted a conference in Hong Kong and I was one of the speakers. At the conference I met Ruth who later invited me to China. At that time I was walking with Hong Kong and Taiwan, and people from mainland China were always going to Hong Kong or Taiwan, so I naturally thought of bringing the trio of China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan together. But no one from Taiwan or Hong Kong felt to go to China with me. Since I had never been to China, I thought I would let it go. But God wouldn't let this go. He said to me, 'Why do you want to put China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan together? China is where I want you to go.' So I contacted Andrew, and gave up my original plan; but focused on China.

"At that time Andrew was used to hosting large conferences, and he wanted to host one in China. My messages were already broadcast on Good TV, so people in China knew me and they wanted conferences. But I did not want a conference. Finally Pastor Eddie Ma, Pastor Lydia Huang, and Andrew decided to accompany me to China, because it was too dangerous for me to go alone. This was the beginning.

"We spent two-and-a-half days with leaders in Wuhan, China. We met and talked, one after another, one session after another. I longed to hear their hearts so I kept asking them to share. When I want to listen attentively, I would usually position myself comfortably by sliding into the chair. I didn't realize my very casual way of gathering shocked the Chinese leaders. Gideon, I, and the sisters stayed in Ruth's home while the other brothers stayed in a nearby hotel. On the second night the boys (I meant the brothers) couldn't stand it anymore. They kept chatting till three a.m. and complained that the meetings were meaningless. Early that morning, the Lord said to me, 'Wash their feet after

worship today.’ I asked the Lord why, but he simply said, ‘You wash their feet.’

“They were about to ‘speak the truth in love’ from their night’s conversation, but thanks to God, right before they spoke, I shared what He told me, then they all cried. They said, ‘You are a westerner, you wouldn’t wash our feet!’ But we washed their feet. And the spiritual atmosphere suddenly changed. God’s love melted our hearts, there was a major breakthrough in the spirit, and our hearts were knitted together! That time Priscilla invited us to Guangzhou, and we went.”

So the homecoming journey in China was birthed in Wuhan, the trumpet was blown in Guangzhou, and quickly resounded throughout the nation.

### Find the Critical Mass

The “Homecoming journey” started from family. The Lord first established the family of the Church of Zion in Vancouver, Canada, the birthplace of the Homecoming. Then as He built the Canadian family, they followed the Holy Spirit and went to Taiwan, Hong Kong, and eventually China. Now we are seeing the China team blossom and bear fruit. But the way the journey entered China was very surprising. The Lord chose Ruth, an unknown believer who had only known Him for three years.

Ruth was led by the Holy Spirit to attend the gathering in Edmonton, Canada. She was captivated by the glory of God and prayed, “O Lord, China also needs such gatherings with Your glorious presence!” This dream started to brew in her heart until the Holy Spirit urged her to invite David to China. It was not easy for David to respond to her invitation. After all, she was not a well-known Christian leader, did not come from a Christian background, and was not an ordained pastor. All she had was simple faith. But David did not use human judgment; he sought

the Lord's heart regarding the invitation. He sensed it wasn't something he should take lightly, so he phoned a few leaders in Taiwan and Hong Kong who all felt he should not go. Only a few, including Andrew, felt it was the right time. David also prayed with pastor Imiel. From the beginning, the Lord had positioned him in the Homecoming journey like eyes to a body, enabling the journey to know God's heart with greater clarity. Imiel received from the Lord that it was time to go into China. David made a prompt decision and immediately asked Papa Andrew to call the first mini-Gathering.

Andrew had a few people on his heart whom he had been in contact with over the previous ten years. So, the first gathering of the critical few began in China. After that, small gatherings began in several cities. Those who came were not invited because they had big churches or because they had special gifts and talents. People later asked Andrew, "How did you choose these people? They don't have a strong church background or exceptional gifts; how can they represent China?" But after a few years, the same people who had questioned him before now asked, "How did you find such an outstanding group of people?"

Andrew could not say anything. God doesn't see man as man does. When He chose King David, he was despised by his own family and even forgotten by his parents, but the Lord handpicked him.

### Reclining Meeting in Wuhan

I went with Gideon and David to China, I was deeply touched by their humility and servanthood. Overseas speakers usually came to preach and teach, and were addressed as teachers and pastors. But Gideon and David went to China again and again with a calling from God, not as speakers or conference leaders. They were willing to spend a lot of time just to fellowship and

walk with a small, crucial group, listening to them and being with them, and hearing God's voice and seeking His heart with them. Gideon would most often simply greet and embrace people in the meetings, and rarely appear on stage. He didn't mind such an inconspicuous ministry, as his silent presence trumped a thousand words.

During October 22-24, 2006, thirteen people forming the "critical mass" met in Ruth's home in Wuhan for the first Gathering to take place in China. Just as David recalled earlier, the fathers did not come to do ministry, but to really get to know the family in China and to hear the longings in their hearts. Many who came with notebooks to record fresh messages from a well-known overseas speaker ended up writing nothing. And David was reclining on the sofa! It took them quite a while to get used to seeing the big speaker they had seen on TV reclining on the sofa before them. They were asked to be open and share what was on their hearts, which was totally unheard of. The meeting was kept informal; it was not a forum, but a "reclining and sharing" meeting! After three days, the attendees began to realize that was exactly what China needed: not more knowledge and teaching, but more intimate fellowship and relationship. It turned out that Heavenly Father had not sent two teachers who could preach or teach well, but two fathers who could listen well. Gradually, they became comfortable enough to call them Gideon and David.

### Humble Fathers

At one meeting, David gathered some core leaders before the meeting for a pre-meeting. The leaders in China are very hungry for the Lord, so they usually arrive early. When some of them arrived, and saw a group of people already meeting together, they were not pleased. One asked why had they been notified to

come early and not us? In that moment, David did not justify or defend himself. He went and knelt before the one who was aggravated and said, “Brother, I am very sorry. This is not the fault of the organizer; I was the one who asked them to come early, so please forgive me if there is any offence.” Like everyone else, I was totally shocked. But seeing David’s humble servant heart, we all knelt and yielded. That day God did a deep work of unity among us.

It is so beautiful to have fathers who are peace makers. You need a father’s heart in the ministry of reconciliation and unity. In most arguments, people do not fight over the truth but over who has the final word. If one person would let go and deny himself he would win back a family. This person could be party A or party B in the dispute, but if neither party will yield, then there has be a mediator who takes responsibility for both sides, regardless of right or wrong, and stands in the gap to bring reconciliation. These two fathers have continued to stand in the gap to bring reconciliation, being ready to pay any price as long as people are willing to walk together to fulfill God’s will.

So David and Gideon mentored this group of Chinese spiritual children, sharing with them the family journey that began in Canada. Though they were fathers, they saw themselves only as “surrogate” fathers.

On the one hand, they are fathers representing Heavenly Father. Though the children are their pride and joy, the children belong to the Father. On the other hand, they act as surrogate fathers until local fathers appear. They greatly honor the authority of the local leaders and recognize the importance of local fathers standing in their positions. In fact, wherever they go, their focus is not on numbers but on whether fathers would arise. When a father of a locality is recognized and is willing to

stand up, then that place has hope because the orphan spirit will surely disappear.

The time came to call forth the fathers of China.

### Father of China: Papa Liang

How is it accomplished? The Holy Spirit did an extraordinary thing in China: fathers were birthed from the tears of the children! Of the fathers of China, Pastor Zhang Rong Liang, later honored as Papa Liang, was the first one to be called out. He was a gospel pioneer in the darkest hours of the Chinese churches and established the China for Christ Mission (formerly called Fang Cheng Team), one of the five major house-church families in China.

He was born to an impoverished carpenter's family in Fang Cheng, Henan Province in 1951. He came to the Lord as a young person and was imprisoned for his faith six times between 1971 and 2011, spending a total of sixteen years in prison. Upon release every time, he would passionately spread the gospel again, and was used by God mightily in the great Henan Revival. He and his wife have two sons and the whole family serves the Lord. His book *Apostle Through the Fire* gives a historical picture of God's amazing work in the Chinese house churches.

I asked him how many people there are in his church, and he answered, "Five million, on the conservative count." This humble servant of God should naturally be counted as a father of the Chinese church, but the story isn't that simple. I interviewed him on this, and asked him to share how this Chinese father was birthed by the tears of the sons and daughters:

"I had just recently come out of prison. On October 22, 2011 Ruth and Priscilla invited me to Wuhan. So I declined, saying that I was not even home yet. I thought to myself that this group of city folks are rich but I am poor, so we won't go together! I

was willing to attend their spiritual meetings and receive God's blessings, but I was a bit reluctant to join in their fellowship. Then they said, 'If you are busy, we will come to visit you.' My, if they are going to come visit me, then I'd rather go to them! Because if they come, how would I host them and feed them? Where would I accommodate them? I had just come out prison and was unfamiliar with things in society! So I went to visit them. I didn't know what to expect, and didn't know why I felt a great joy in my heart. When I got to Ruth's home, the people there were very warm, calling me Papa Liang. I was a bit embarrassed; this title was too much for me.

"Gideon spoke and said that in the years that we were absent, he became a surrogate father. Now that we were out of prison, China should her own indigenous fathers, those who have cried, laughed, and walked the way of the Cross together, to lead China and be the fathers of China. After he finished speaking, he asked me to represent such a father. What a huge responsibility! This country is so big with almost 100 million Christians, and Christians today are cultured and well-educated. I am just an old peasant who tended sheep in the mountains; it was way too much for me to represent the father of this nation! Though what he said was correct, I felt unworthy and incompetent. Somebody else may take that role, but not me! I could only lead the flock roughly, hold revival meetings, pray and heal the sick, and cast out demons, but I don't have the stature to carry the responsibility of a father.

"We had just met and didn't know each other well, but they came and surrounded me, crying out for me to be China's father! O my, they kept weeping, praying, and pleading with God. Their tears and desperation moved me deeply. Where did China come out with such people! Ruth said, 'You birthed us and nurtured us.' I thought to myself, that's not right, I haven't been to Wuhan,

I didn't know them before; we just met. They knew what I was thinking and said, 'It was you, or people from your team, or the ones they sent, or ones impacted by your team. Whichever the case, we are calling you Papa!"'

"My heart broke at that point! Even some of my own flock, the ones on my team, those who stayed with me, even rejected and betrayed me. Yet here these people who I first met, honored me and said that I birthed them. I was deeply touched and cried. How could there be people with this kind of life in them! I was stunned, captivated, and convinced...Finally, I acquiesced. It was what happened."

It wasn't easy to call out a father of China. But once one father stood up, the rest of the fathers of the five major house church families in China also stood, one by one. No one is perfect, and these fathers of China are not perfect either. They were not chosen by men, but were birthed by the Holy Spirit through the cries of a fatherless generation to be the pioneer fathers of this new era.

Some people said that they cannot fully represent the fathers of China. Here I would like to speak up for them. Actually, they were all reluctant like Papa Liang, and none of them volunteered themselves to be fathers. Not seeking any name or profit, they stood in their place simply because China needed fathers. Even though they might be misunderstood as proud or ambitious, they still took a bold stand, proving that they were truly chosen by God to represent true fatherhood in China. It was not easy to be the first fathers, but when they finally stood in position, the church in China had fathers, and finally, the Lord could find a family in China!

He has been waiting for these fathers of China to emerge, because He had an important key to give to China.

### God chose the Chinese church

“David, what hinders the establishment of my kingdom in the Middle East?” the Lord asked David, as he sought Him for the message that he needed to preach for a big conference in Los Angeles in 2001.

“Fear of persecution and death,” he quickly answered. He was born and raised in the Muslim nation of Egypt.

But the Lord said, “Yes, but I have prepared a people in my body, who are not afraid of persecution or death. This remnant is the Chinese. They will play a very special role in releasing the Jewish and Arab peoples into their end-time destinies.”

In July of 2001, as David drove with his family of eight to speak in a conference at Agape Renewal Center hosted by Pastor Ernest Chan, he had a major accident on the way that almost took all their lives, but God supernaturally protected the family. Even though he encountered such serious spiritual warfare, he still decided to rush to the conference. As he sought God for the message he was to give, he had the above conversation with the Lord. This revelation really surprised him because he never thought he had anything to do with the Chinese. That night as he released this revelation, God’s extraordinary presence came, and the whole congregation was deeply stirred and excited. Pastor Ernest decided on the spot to duplicate one million CDs of the message to distribute to the Chinese world. But strangely, somehow the recording of that session happened to be blank. At first, David thought it was the attack of the enemy, but the Lord clearly told him that it was not yet time to circulate the message.

Because of God’s clear revelation, and because he saw the impact and weightiness of the message in the spirit realm, he began to pay attention to China, waiting for God’s timing to release the message on Chinese destiny. It was eleven years

later, in 2012, that the revelation God gave him became a reality acknowledged by most others. At that time, the leaders of the persecuted church in China and their next generation boldly stood on the stage in a historic moment in the Hong Kong Homecoming Gathering, and they received the key from the western church to lead in the new season.

It was fifteen years after his revelation, in the Greater China Gathering in 2016, that David shared about the end-time role of the Chinese in greater depth. He began with an overview of the Homecoming journey among the Chinese from 2009 to 2012. During the Jewish New Year in 2009, the Lord chose Vancouver to give birth for the first Chinese gathering. One thousand Chinese Christians gathered to worship and wait upon the Lord. Chinese are proficient at planning and administration, but they laid aside their natural talents and allowed the Holy Spirit to take full leadership in that Gathering. The Lord honored their obedience with His presence, and used this Gathering as a seed that led to the first global Chinese Gathering in Hong Kong in May 2010.

As mentioned earlier, Hong Kong is like a womb and bridge in Asia, and seven large gatherings were convened within ten years in Hong Kong,<sup>1</sup> connecting the Chinese family around the world and birthing the “Five in One” Chinese body of Christ comprising of China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Macau, and overseas Chinese. It would take another book to talk about these Gatherings. Here I would like to briefly mention the first two,

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<sup>1</sup> 2010 May 5-8 Chinese Homecoming

2011 June 8-11 “One Heart, One Way” Homecoming

2012 August 1-4 “Kingdom Come” Homecoming

2013 July 3-6 “Holy Array” Asia Gathering

2015 July 7-10 Asia Gathering

2016 July 13-16 Chinese Homecoming

2019 July 24-27 “Oneness” Chinese Homecoming

and then focus on the “Kingdom Come” Gathering in 2012—especially the part where the western church conferred the key to the Chinese leaders.

In the first Gathering in Hong Kong, the Lord brought 5,000 Chinese from Asia and other nations together, to wait on Him in obedience as one prophetic body. He released the spirit of repentance that broke denominational and regional barriers and knitted the hearts of the people to become one family. At the end, all those present in the Gathering made a prophetic declaration on behalf of the greater Chinese body of Christ: “All Chinese are one family! The Chinese have come home! We have come home to the Father!”

The following year, the Lord called Chinese believers in Asia and around the world to gather in Hong Kong during Pentecost (June 8-11, 2011), and He gave this promise: “I will give them one heart and one way” (Jeremiah 32:39). Twelve thousand people from over thirty nations responded to this call. God desired that this corporate surrender would become a seed of miracle that would bring unity and love to the global church family, to prepare the bride for the Lord’s return. When we made a covenant with each other by faith, we became forerunners for unity in the global body of Christ in the spirit.

On August 1-4, 2012, 15,000 from the nations gathered once again in Hong Kong for the “Kingdom Come” Gathering. If God’s Kingdom is to be established on earth, He must first rule and reign among His own people. God used the Chinese to be a prophetic seed for the whole body of Christ, to declare that our God is the King of kings and Lord of lords, and the bride of Christ in the nations will acknowledge His sovereignty. Pastor Chuck Pierce represented the leaders of the western church as he presented a key, engraved with Isaiah 22:22, to the leaders of the Chinese church, prophetically signifying the western

church's recognition of the leadership role God was now giving the Chinese for the next wave of His move globally.

### Unshakeable Kingdom

David stresses that God's kingdom is an unshakeable kingdom, birthed by the body of Christ. The Lord must first shake the kingdom of the world to deliver the church from the powers that profane His name. The financial crisis that began in Rosh Hashanah 2008 shook the economies of many nations. This was the first sign of shaking. The increasing clash of two kingdoms in the Middle East in the last several years is another sign. Isaiah 19 speaks of Egypt and the end-times, and the first verse of the prophecy says that the Lord will come in a swift cloud and the idols of Egypt will tremble before Him. The ancient gods of Egypt that attempted to manipulate through governments and the financial system will be shaken. This battle in the clash of kingdoms belongs to the Lord; we only need to align with the Commander in Chief. God is looking for people all around the world to deal with evil spirits, but they must be yielded, humble, and broken. They will be people who are not after their own fame, but only want to seek His Kingdom and glorify His name.

For the sake of establishing His victorious Kingdom, the Lord has ordained the Chinese to lead at this hour. Chinese churches have gone through many shakings, tests, and trials—even the threat of death. But they have remained faithful, surrendered, and consecrated to the King. Now God is ready to raise them up and entrust them to birth a pure seed for the whole body to establish His Kingdom.

But this does not mean that the western church can just be bystanders. This is not a relay race, where the previous generation passed on and finished their leg of the race, so the baton is passed to the next generation. In this age of acceleration, God works in

multiple generations, not just one generation. It is appropriate to see the change of leadership as the way Canadian geese function. When they fly, there is always one goose that flies at the head of the V-shaped company, and this bird bears the strongest resistance from the wind, so that the flock behind it can fly with greater ease. But when the goose at the forefront gets tired, it will drop back and another goose takes its place.

David believes that God is saying, “Western church, you’ve done very well. You’ve brought multiple breakthroughs to the global church, but now I have especially prepared another part of my body, the Chinese churches, to lead this part of the journey. They have the faith and tenacity to face the challenges ahead and stand strong.”

In the face of such a shift in leadership roles, both parties need a measure of humility and grace. In the first place, the western church, which has long been in the leadership position, must be willing to acknowledge God’s hand on the Chinese. At the same time, the Chinese must humbly honor what the western churches have planted, because only in honoring the fathers before us will we be able to remain in God’s blessing.

God prepared the hearts of the Chinese to honor the fathers, and this has deeply moved David. When Pastor Chuck Pierce presented the key to the leaders of mainland China in 2012, they thanked the western church for sending thousands of missionaries like James Hudson Taylor to China, and for even giving their lives for China. They also repented for their forefathers who



*The Holy Spirit mightily moved in a Chinese Gathering, for their hearts were deeply hungry*

persecuted and killed western missionaries. They declared, “God has highly favored us and given us the opportunity to take the lead. We will surely rise up to fulfill all that our western spiritual fathers longed to see.” They told the western church leaders who were standing on stage, “Please walk with us; we need your wisdom, support, and love. We are one family.”

Because of the faithfulness and humility of the Chinese, God especially placed them in the leadership role in the last part of the journey—to share the gospel from the ends of the earth back to Jerusalem. The Chinese are not only unafraid of death, but they hold another key that qualifies them to run this leg of the race: they have the same passionate love for the descendants of Ishmael and the descendants of Isaac. The Chinese church loves the Jewish people dearly just as she loves the Arab peoples. God let the Chinese find favour before the Arabs as well as the Jews, so they can venture where the western churches cannot go; they can bring the Jewish, the Arabic, and the western churches together, and link the body of Christ into one family.

Before Jesus returns, Heavenly Father will restore all things (see Acts 3:21). Every promise of God will be fulfilled, including Haggai 2:9 “The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former.” To take the Gospel “back to Jerusalem,” the next important restoration will be the fulfillment of the promise of the Feast of Tabernacles: God will dwell among His people in a way never seen since the days of Solomon.

Lastly, David said, “What I have seen in Chinese is impossible to describe. They are totally humble and willing to completely surrender to obey God’s will, which allows the Lord to quickly lead them into oneness and alignment with Him. I also believe that the presence of God that I have seen among the Chinese is a foretaste of the glory the bride of Christ will experience at the end of days. I believe the Lord will use His manifesting presence

among Chinese to provoke the jealousy of the rest of the body, so that the remnant of every nation will rise up to cry out to the Lord, to prepare them to be a dwelling place for His glory. Two thousand years ago, wise men from the east followed the sign that pointed to the Messiah. Today in His eternal plan, the Lord has again raised up wise men from the east to be forerunners to blow the trumpet to the global church, so they will recognize the sign of the coming King. In His global end time 'chessboard,' He has placed the Chinese in a strategic position to ambush and defeat the enemy!"

### Chinese Churches that Blossoming in Suffering

Just as God told David, the Chinese are His vessel, prepared for the end-times, so they have experienced great persecution and suffering. *Destiny of the End-Times Chinese*, written by Nicole Jisi, tells the story of the miraculous birth of the Chinese churches. From a macro-perspective of Chinese history, she identifies that western missionaries brought the gospel to China five times, from Han dynasty to Ching dynasty. The missionaries gave everything, even their lives, to bring the love of God into this great nation, but the gospel did not take root in China. After five aborted attempts, the Chinese church was birthed in the most impossible circumstance when the western missionaries were kicked out of the country. About the same time, Israel was restored as a nation under almost impossible circumstances as well. Through this important observation, God speaks loudly and clearly that the destiny of the Chinese churches is closely related to Israel, and the Chinese church was born in the End Times. She is to take the Gospel back to Jerusalem.

The church in China blossomed in suffering and has a precious spiritual legacy. Although I came to Christ overseas, my spiritual growth was closely tied to reading the biographies of

western missionaries and suffering churches in mainland China, as many other overseas Chinese believers. The church in China experienced great suffering but also great revival.

Zhang Rong-Liang (Papa Liang) is a Chinese father whom I appreciate very much. In his fifty years as a Christian, he experienced much hardship and trials, but he says, “Sixteen years in prison have purified the dross of the flesh, and I have received a more abundant life.” I once took a team to accompany him to minister in France. The seven of us spent several days together, and we became quite close to him. There was no smell of fire on him (Daniel 3:27); he was filled with joy and life. This is the anointing of China! I interviewed him regarding his perspective on persecution. I was not prepared for his first sentence, which shook me to the core.

“Persecution is a treasure for China. China cannot do without persecution; the revival in China came from persecution. If there had been no persecution, there would not be the revival today. Persecution is a reminder to China that we must continue to follow Jesus. Persecution caused the church in China to expand and strengthen. When the suffering was the most severe, the church grew the most. When there was less persecution, there was also less revival. In recent years as people seek after wealth and the good life, they are becoming spiritually numb. That’s why the church in China doesn’t abhor persecution but give thanks for the years of persecution. We ask the Lord to revive the church in China but we do not ask Him to take away the persecution. Persecution is the fertilizer that makes the church in China strong.

“The church in Europe declined because there was no persecution. They are too comfortable and too rich. In their circumstance, God is superfluous. They have money in their pockets, they don’t need God. They can do without Him, all is

well. People are finally awake through this year's (2020) corona virus pandemic. They realize money can't guarantee safety and neither can insurance companies. Money and material things will become as nothing, people need God.

"In the Bible, David said, My suffering was good for me. Job said, I had only heard of you before, but now through these adversities and tragedies, I have seen you with my own eyes. Praise God, the persecution and pressure were essential for our growth. Every good thing we have comes from the Lord. He knows what we need in the different seasons and He makes adjustments for us accordingly.

"The places of greatest revival in China were places of greatest persecution; the most troubled places were very much loved by the Lord. Some places in China have experienced the most persecution and hardship, yet the five major house-church networks that impacted the whole nation came from those places. Praise the Lord! Sister Xiao Min, who never learnt music but has sung thousand of worship songs directly downloaded from the Holy Spirit, wrote in one of her songs, "Persecution brings blessing and spiritual outpouring, so we are like crop of wheat bearing a greater and better harvest." We are grateful for the suffering that has accompanied us these years. It has blessed the churches in China. Everything God allows is good, and we are very thankful, remembering with nostalgia how He led us those years!

"The churches in China were born out of bearing the Cross in total surrender. We have no resentment against our nation or government or security forces; we feel they have brought us continual blessings. We are not bitter towards the government. We forgive the government; we understand the government; we support the government, because they are also servants of God except that they have a different perspective of things. It was

God's good will that they brought us persecution. We receive all things from the Lord. Praise the Lord!"

Hearing his words was better than ten years of theological study! What more could I say? Papa Liang even said he longed for those days of suffering. I truly admire his life and the lives of other spiritual fathers in China. They are more than conquerors; their lives have been purified by the Lord. This is the unique anointing of China: fearlessness in persecution and suffering, and blossoming in adversity.

Pastor Zheng, another leader of the house churches in China, also had a very profound insight into suffering. He said,

"After the implementation of the 2019 Religious Regulations, many house churches were closed. But I believe it was a good thing. It forced the house churches in China to truly become family. We had to pay high rents in the cities before; since persecution, we have met in homes and rent was saved. The relationship among our coworkers is very good, and the attitude of local officials towards us has also been very good. What we've learned over the years is to always respond with a positive attitude, no matter how the government treats us, and the results have all been positive. One church closed down but God opened ten homes. The ways circumstances lead are often God's ways. I believe this is not just the case with China. With the pandemic, people in nations, with freedom or not, all have to go home; the real 'homecoming'!"

"These are the words from the hearts of the family in China who are more than conquerors: God is in control of every circumstance, including persecution and suffering. Because of persecution, China has opened the door to the home, which is the right way to go, the 'homecoming' road. Maybe this is why the Homecoming journey has spread so quickly in China. China's

house churches originally met in homes, without set pattern or formality, and simply followed the Holy Spirit.”

### Chinese Step into Place

In the 2012 Homecoming Gathering in Hong Kong, Pastor Chuck Pierce released a historic prophecy to China before an audience of 15,000 people, which included Chinese from all over the world and representatives from the nations. He stood on stage with representative leaders from the western church, including Pastor Bill Johnson, Pastor Sandra Teplinsky, and Pastor Peter and Donna Jordan, and he presented the key of David, signifying authority and leadership, to the church of China. He said,

“It is a great honor to be in this nation again. It is a great honor to be on the stage that has been prepared for China. It is also a great honor for us to represent the kingdom that is come! I sense this meeting represents many years of prayer and tears, so that it represents a moment of fullness. But I also sense that it represents a new beginning. In 1986 God visited me and showed me through the year 2026. He showed me in ten year increments, but the nation He revealed His will to me over was the nation of China through the year 2026. And this year of 2012 represents the year of a new administration. And when God is ready to enter into a new administration we must reflect what he is doing in heaven and demonstrate it here on the earth.

“We feel that these three days of gathering are very key. I want to say, this may be the time for China to become the key. What God instructed me to do was to bring a key! A key represents authority. A key represents opening up something that’s never been opened up. A key represents your future and a key represents a moment of change. On this key is the verse from Is 22:22: ‘What He shuts no one can open, what He opens no one can shut!’

"And the Lord asked me to bring this key from the western world because of the significant moment of time we are in. He



*Chuck Pierce presenting the key of David*

asked me to bring this key to the Chinese leaders who have walked before us and suffered much for the Lord. A key represents a change of authority. In the past, the western church, especially the American church played an important role in spreading the gospel.

But now a new thing is happening on earth. God wanted me to represent the authority of the last season to pass on and transfer this authority to those He has chosen to represent His Kingdom now."

Pastor Chuck then turned to the fathers of the five major house church families in China, and did a shocking prophetic action. He knelt in humility and placed the key the Lord had asked him to bring into the hands of the Chinese fathers, which meant he gave the key to the China church.

"I humbly bring this key to these leaders. And I say it is time to shut the past and open the future. Now is the time of the transfer of power, God is placing a new model in your hearts, an apostolic model will manifest throughout the earth! This is a time we know that the church in China has been chosen to model and lead us into the future. We know it is time for China now to rise up and for the church in China to lead! And we say if you will lead, we will follow! We honor your sacrifices in the past and we honor your understanding and revelation of God which is for you to teach the whole earth. And we say this is a moment

in history where God says to the China church, rise up! Lead my people into a kingdom demonstration!"

It was a historic moment. The passing of the key from the west to the east took less than thirty minutes on stage, but the Holy Spirit had to intervene and prepare the hearts of many before that. In the first place, the western leaders had to completely obey the Lord's sovereign leading. Not only did Pastor Chuck have to bring the key in obedience to God, many other important leaders like Bill Johnson and Sandra Teplinsky had to be there too. Second, the family in China, especially the fathers, had to be prepared; otherwise to whom would this key be given to? And the two generations of leaders in China had to be fully in place. This key of authority was especially presented to honor the fathers of the house churches in China who had given their lives for the Gospel. They had just started the Homecoming journey, so were they willing to come out of "underground", and boldly stand on stage in public to receive this key? But this new-found family greatly empowered them; they knew that they were not lonely and did not need to hide anymore!



(Left) Pastor Chuck presented the key of David to the Chinese leaders

(Right) Standing on the left are the leaders of the five major house church families in China, on the right representatives of the western churches

Pastor Chuck had prophesied before that the years 2017 to 2026 would be the decade that China would lead the nations forward. In the seven years since receiving the spiritual key, from 2012 to 2019, the economic status of China has greatly improved; she has taken leadership in the spiritual realm as well as leadership in the natural realm. President Xi Jinping advocated “One Belt One Road,” which touches over sixty-four nations in the world.

In His time, China is in perfect alignment to God’s plan. God has been preparing China both naturally and spiritually, in order to lead the body of Christ to run the last race and bring the gospel back to Jerusalem.

As a representative of overseas Chinese, I was also standing on stage that day. I had many questions. There are so many people in China, and we are so dispersed; it is not a light thing to receive this important key. Why did the Lord choose China? The western church passed this weighty key to China, but what doors is it supposed to open? What special role do overseas Chinese have in this matter? But my little brain was overtaken by God’s awesome presence. I was overwhelmed and could hardly stand.

7

I'm Home!





## Where East Meets West

HOLY SPIRIT HAS been the ultimate director of the Homecoming Gatherings. He has directed and put all the different roles together behind the scenes, so people can willingly step into their roles in His sovereign time. It was the wisdom of God, and I am awed and privileged to be a small part of His plan. Gideon often says that the rainbow is actually a full circle, but the lower half of it is hidden from most people's eyes. When I had a peek of such hidden glory, I was really stunned.

Overseas Chinese are a bridge linking the East and the West. In this Homecoming journey, overseas Chinese have always played the part of “the lower half of the rainbow”—hidden yet very significant. Pastor Jason Liu from Bread of Life Church in Toronto is an overseas Chinese, and an important bridge. He joined the journey in Canada in 1998. In 2002, he was prompted to attend a gathering in Taiwan, but he was not sure exactly what he was supposed to do there. That was a retreat for pastors in Taiwan, David was invited as speaker, and Pastor Jason was also there. At the retreat, the assigned interpreter was nowhere to be found, and Pastor Jason was asked to help. That was the first time he interpreted for David. (Those were the years David and Gideon traveled to Taiwan frequently.) Every time Pastor

Jason would seek the Lord to know whether he should go along, the Lord often urged him to go, and he would often be asked to interpret, so he became David's designated interpreter right from those early years of the journey. He went to Taiwan twelve times within fifteen months, until the national Gathering for repentance in Taiwan on February 28, 2003.

Pastor Jason said it was a life-changing journey, which greatly renewed his life. He went through three stages of transformation during those years: from "little self" to "big self"; then to "no self."

The Chinese went through the same process. At the first stage of "little self," we focused on how the Homecoming Journey would benefit our own spiritual lives and ministries, just like a little kid growing up, who primarily saw his own needs. But gradually, this focus of "little self" evolved into "big self" when we saw the needs of our ethnic group and cried out, "Lord, heal 'our' land and reveal 'our' destiny!" But at this point we still couldn't see beyond our own nation. Then as we matured further, we wanted to know what was on the heart of Heavenly Father, which was the third phase: "no self." We began to seek His heart and ask what He desired. Isaiah 66:1-2 reveals the yearning in His heart: "Where is My resting place?" It is not about my "little self," nor is about my "big self" on my own people anymore; but ultimately it is about "no self"—not about "me" but about God's heart. He longs for a resting place.

Jason powerfully expressed how I felt! Like him, my life and ministry were deeply transformed by this Journey. Among the early Gatherings, one of the greatest impact on my life was the "Consumed" Gathering in Edmonton. The Lord did a deep work of healing in my heart as an overseas Chinese. One of the key revelations I received was about my identity.

In May 1989, I had been working at Capital Airport as an intern before graduation. But our internship was halted

because of the student protests in Tiananmen Square. I wasn't interested in politics at all, but the dorm was empty so I went along with everyone to the Square. Even though I was only a by-stander there, I felt the same sense of lostness and pain of the entire generation of students. But I swallowed the pain and hopelessness and turned my hopes and dreams to a foreign land, looking for a new start for my life.

I had struggled with my identity for a long time. "Am I Chinese or Canadian?" Living overseas with language and cultural differences, I experienced a strong sense of loneliness and loss, even though I had already become an ordained minister in Canada. In retrospect, it was not because the Canadians around us did not accept me, but it was because I hadn't recognized the precious identity that God had given me. During the glorious worship time in the Gathering, I clearly heard the voice of the Father, "You are Chinese, and you are also Canadian, but above all, you are a citizen of My kingdom!" The moment I heard that, David "just happened" to ask us to hug each other. With tears and laughter, I got one hug after another from my newly-found Canadian family, who were super passionate. In His presence and His loving family, the Holy Spirit did a deep and quick work of healing and restoration beyond anything human hands could do. I will never forget those warm embraces! Canada is surely the womb of healing to me.

I wasn't sure how the Holy Spirit did it, but through the tears and hugs of the Canadian family, my heart was immediately melted by love, and my eyes were opened to see this nation the Lord had led me to, and I fell in love with her. I no longer felt that I was a sojourner in a foreign land. I knew this was where God wanted me to settle down, and I could call Canada my second home. Being a family member is totally different from being a guest. We are not here simply to take blessings from the land,

but to also become a blessing. I now love Canada as much as I love China. I believe this is a revelation the Father wants to give to all His beloved children who live outside of their homeland: that in His loving family, our spiritual eyes will be opened, and we may find our destiny in the nations where He has sent us.

What was even more amazing was that, shortly after this Gathering, I received a letter from the Canadian government, congratulating me that I was qualified to take the oath of citizenship! I knew I would not just get a Canadian passport, but also the true identity of a Canadian. I must say, I love my Canadian citizenship and I am proud to be a Canadian.

It was in this Gathering that Ruth from China was strongly drawn to the presence of God and was later urged by the Holy Spirit to invite David to China. It was so amazing that Ruth and I, a mainland Chinese and an overseas Chinese, were both captured by the glorious presence of the Lord, at the same time and in same place. Although we didn't have a chance to meet each other there, we both encountered God!

“I will take you home!”

After the “Consumed” Gathering was over, Ruth and Andrew came to Vancouver, and had a short visit with the Renewal Family. That was the first time I met Ruth. Even though she had only come to the Lord less than four years earlier, her spiritual life had grown rapidly, because under the circumstances in China, she had to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit without reservation. Her speed of growth highly encouraged me. I thought God had led me on a fast track, but here came someone who was running even faster! I was drawn to her absolute obedience to God. And when she shared about the destiny of China, my heart began to stir, and the deep pain that had been long hidden in my heart started to surface.

As Ruth talked about China, I suddenly thought of a book, J. Hudson Taylor: A Man in Christ. I remembered the first time I opened this book, how these words pierced my heart: “If I had a thousand pounds, China should have it; if I had a thousand lives, China should have them.” As I read these words in a foreign land, I broke down and wept uncontrollably. The Holy Spirit wanted to pry open my heart for China which I had closed for so long, but I wasn’t ready, so I hardened my heart and “closed the book,” determined not to touch this book again. But soon afterwards, I heard the song “Give Me a Heart for China” by Elder Chang from Taiwan, and my tears fell again without stopping. The Holy Spirit wanted to awaken my heart for China, but I had already put a lock on the door of my heart. I did not want to touch anything related to China.

So, when Ruth touched on China, it was painful for me to listen to her. But Ruth was not a book that I could simply choose to close! I couldn’t stop her from talking. Also, I was sitting in the middle of the room with many pastors, so I could not just get up and run out of the room either; all I could do was to let my tears trickle down my face. Under the guidance of Gideon, the Chinese pastors in the Renewal Family loved each other, and did not care where anyone came from. The Holy Spirit reminded me that day that I was the only person from China, while all the others were from Hong Kong, Taiwan, or Malaysia. So, when I was crying my heart out, probably no one knew why. But Andrew noticed I was weeping, and he came over and held me tightly with the same loving arms which had embraced many pastors from China. Suddenly I heard the voice of Heavenly Father, “One day I will take you home.”

On hearing this, I could not hold back my tears and I just wailed in his fatherly arms. His embrace brought my heart all

the way back to China. Even now, whenever I recall that moment, my heart still trembles. After that, I started calling him Papa Andrew.

What Heavenly Father said kept resonating in my heart: “One day I will take you home!” Seven years after I left China, I finally returned to the land that I had missed for so long. What I did not expect was that China had turned into an unfamiliar place.

Whenever I needed to cross the street, I would wait for the traffic light to turn green. My father would then drag me across the street, complaining, “What has gotten into your mind in all these years living abroad? Can’t you even cross the street? Hurry up, you’re in China, you’re not supposed to wait for a green light!” He dragged me along forcefully, as if trying to drag me back to China. I looked around and saw people arguing on the street, and peddlers shouting out loud. After years of quiet life in Canada, I did not take all the noise and confusion very well.

So, even though I was back physically, I had to bring my heart back to China as well.

### Welcome to China

In April 2012, David felt it was time to call the fathers of China to stand in unity. So he asked the leaders of the five major house church families in China and the next generation to come together and seek the face of the Lord. Ultimately the breakthrough in this Gathering made it possible for the two generations of China to stand on stage together in the Hong Kong Gathering, before ten thousand people, in July. But that wasn’t David’s plan at all; it was entirely the work of the Holy Spirit. At first Gideon really wanted to join David on this trip, as they were the best partners. But pastor Imiel prayed for Gideon and said that he should not go to this Gathering, despite its

significance. The whole team sought the Lord and reached the same conclusion: the Spirit of God did not allow him to go this time. Gideon obeyed right away.

For reasons I was not aware of, David decided to take me along with him on this important trip. Maybe it was because there were not many Chinese on the Homecoming Journey at the time, and I happened to be from China. I simply obeyed, and with great joy and trembling in my spirit, I went with David on this trip.

### A Newly Appointed Father

It was natural for Gideon to be a father. He discovered that the first ancestor in the Chiu family lineage was named Zao Fu, Chiu, which means “maker of fathers”! It was Gideon’s destiny to raise up fathers. No wonder whenever he embraces someone, he wins that person’s heart. But David had to go through a process to be a father. Like many spiritual fathers, he really struggled in transforming from a “coach” to a “father.”

Just one week before we went to China, the Holy Spirit initiated a very special Gathering in Canada. In retrospect, the purpose was obviously to call out the father heart in David. In that Gathering, David went through a revolutionary change, and agreed to rise up to be a father. As the three-day event was drawing to a close, a Canadian father suddenly stood up and said, “We want to recognize David as the father of Canada.” Everybody felt good about this, but David really struggled with it, even though the idea was not new to him; God had told him on many occasions, “You will become a father!”

After going through so many trials, betrayals, and heartbreaks in his life, being a father meant too much responsibility to David. He would have preferred to be a good coach who simply taught techniques, than be a father who had to pour out his heart. He

did not want to get hurt again.

But God did not let him go. When the Canadian father proposed that the family honor David as the father of Canada, David heard God say, “The best coach can only train up outstanding apprentices. Only a father can give birth to sons. If you don’t become a father, you can’t produce spiritual children. Can’t you see there are orphans everywhere who need a father?”

Instantly he was convinced. The Canadian family greatly honored him, blessed him, and thanked him. They laid hands on him and prayed for him, calling out the father’s heart from within him. The best gift Canada gave China was a newly born father, commissioned to China.

During our flight, David told me excitedly that after having been honored and blessed in Canada, he felt a divine shift and promotion in the spirit, and he could see himself as a father rather than only a coach. Wow! I wondered what would happen when this newborn father went to China? I was so happy for him and could not help getting excited, just like him.

Since this gathering had to be low-key and confidential, David asked me to bring nothing but a backpack so we wouldn’t look like we were travelers from abroad. I had to squeeze everything I needed for ten days into one backpack, which was an exciting challenge.

After we arrived in Hong Kong, we gave our cell phones to Pastor Eddie. He jokingly asked David, “If you get arrested in China, is there anything you want me to take care of for you?” David laughed out loud. “I have a wife and seven kids, so please take good care of them!” Then he turned to me and asked, “What about you?”

I answered light-heartedly, “I only have myself to feed! The church belongs to the Lord; He will take care of it. My only

concern is I haven't had the opportunity to take good care of my parents yet."

But just as I said that, I remembered something. The Holy Spirit reminded me of a spiritual daughter whom I deeply loved, who left me a few years ago. It was a source of tremendous pain, and I was so heartbroken that I had vowed never to be a spiritual mother again. But Holy Spirit had highlighted the pain, even though it was unknown to anyone. I repented immediately and told the Lord that if He gave me the chance to go back to Canada, I would take the initiative to contact her. Later when I returned to Vancouver, the first thing I did was to send an email to her and apologize for being judgmental. The moment I sent out the email, the heavenly Father restored the mother's heart to me! Things in the past didn't matter anymore, I only wanted to please the Father! Soon afterwards she wrote back and apologized for what she had done. Tears of thankfulness streamed down my face. I felt released in my heart, where for years I had felt stuck because of this painful incident. My heart suddenly expanded.

When David became a true father, just a simple question from him brought the anointing of breakthrough in my life, and I was willing to be a mother again. That was only the beginning. Later, I witnessed how a true father impacted two generations of Chinese leaders. He became very different from the "Pastor David" I had known before. He was no longer just a sharp coach, mentor, and commander. He became a loving father overnight.

### Only Fathers Can Prepare Fathers

After we arrived in China, David looked at me and said, "Welcome to China!" I looked at this grinning Egyptian and protested, "Why do you say that? I am a Chinese, and you're not."

Then he said, "I welcome you to China because I love China more than you do. You love China out of obligation, because

you're born Chinese; I love China because the Lord has given me His love for China!"

Immediately I felt ashamed. I had to admit that I was a Chinese who hid behind a Canadian passport. I felt like an outsider in my native land. What had happened to my feelings for her? At that time, the thought of China always reminded me of the book *The Ugly Chinese*. I had a lot of negative feelings and disappointments in my heart towards her, and my heart grew even colder. I was like an abandoned child who, though homesick, still kept a distance from my homeland. On the other hand, David really considered himself a son of Chinese, and wholeheartedly gave himself to China. He truly loved China more than I did. The Holy Spirit had not only given him a father's heart, but also a heart for China. So, I prayed to the Lord, "Please give me Your heart for China!"

With this prayer I went to the Gathering. During the three days there, we worshipped the Lord and deeply honored the fathers of China. But when the leaders of the younger generation first started to honor them as fathers and mothers. Like what Papa Liang had felt, they couldn't receive that because they didn't directly lead these younger ones to the Lord. How could they have shared the Gospel when they were locked up in prison for such a long time? Besides, these children had been walking with the Canadian fathers and received tremendous help from them; how did these children become their children? But the young people who seemed to have no direct connections to the Chinese fathers earnestly shared their hearts.

"Before you came, we were like fatherless children fumbling to find our way. It's true that the Lord nourished us through the fathers from Canada, who also taught us to especially honor you, our Chinese fathers, while we waited for you to come! Finally, we can meet you today! You are our fathers not because of what

you have done, but because of who you are—you are fathers! God heard your prayers in prison! We came to the Lord through Gospel radio and various other ways. You birthed us in the spirit. No matter what, we recognize you as the fathers of this land!"

So all the children just cried out, "Papa! Papa!" Then they knelt to wash the feet of the fathers with tears—these men who had gone through many trials and storms. The Holy Spirit then poured out the spirit of grace and supplication. Everyone in the room broke into tears and ended up embracing each other in one big huddle. The fathers were deeply moved by such love and honor. These generals, who had fought so many battles, took off their armor in God's presence, and started to share their weaknesses in tears and great humility:

"All these years, we have been hunted by the police and even been thrown into prison because of our faith, and our dignity as persons stripped away. But now, we find our dignity back.

"All along we only knew how to function as generals, and had no clue how to be fathers. At best, we were "orphan fathers." Because our own fathers were thrown in jail when we were young, we have never experienced a father's love. But we are so grateful that our next generation chooses to stand with us!

"We are spiritual orphans ourselves. We stumbled and fell time and time again, as we were finding our way and trying to blaze a trail. Nobody taught us how to lead the next generation. After all, we are merely 'farmer ministers'!"

It's true that these fathers never studied theology, but God Himself led them to establish churches and disciple believers with signs and wonders following them. They have a rich spiritual inheritance and have always treasured the calling for China passed down from their fathers—to bring the gospel back to Jerusalem. Now the baton must be passed on to the next generation. Our heavenly Father had brought great revivals to

China in the past; now He desperately wanted to reconnect the two generations so that the fire of revival could be passed down further. During that time, the family in North America was praying for our gathering and one intercessor heard the Father say, "This is a cultural revolution in the spirit!" Yes, in those three short days, the Holy Spirit moved powerfully and totally transformed the relationship between the two generations. It was a battle and required spiritual travail to give birth to fathers.

The lives of these veteran generals were instantly changed because of the deep sharing of hearts in those three days. One of the "new" fathers texted his daughter, "My daughter, how are you? How did your exam go?" His daughter was so shocked that she went to her mother right away and asked, "What happened to Dad? Why did he text me? Did something happen to him?" She had never experienced such gentle love from her father!

Another "new" father sent a message to his wife, "Thank you for everything you've done for me! I love you!" His wife was shocked, and she also wondered what had happened.

When two generations were perfectly reconnected, just like the promise in Malachi 4:5-6 says, the curse on the land was removed, and great blessings came upon it. Even the walls between the five major house church families in China fell, as we all declared in one accord: "We will lay down the banners of our individual church families and only uphold the banner of Jesus! We are no longer divided. We are family!"

### I Want to Come Home

I was overwhelmed as I witnessed the super high-speed transformation of China in the spiritual realm. During the Gathering, there was one breakthrough after another culminating in the washing of feet. The younger generation honored the spiritual fathers who had been imprisoned for the Lord. With

tears in their eyes, they urged the fathers to take up their role as fathers, as they knelt to wash their feet.

My mind was still in shock when they sat me down on a chair, together with the fathers. Because I had come with David from Canada, I was counted as one of these spiritual giants. I thought, “Who am I to be worthy of this honor?” When the hands of these precious ones, who had suffered for the Lord touched my feet, the love of God just cascaded upon me and brought me to tears.

Suddenly, I heard the heavenly Father whisper in an extremely gentle voice, “I let the family in China wash your feet, so as to wash away all the unforgiveness in your heart against your motherland, and to wash away the loneliness and numbness you have felt living overseas. I want to heal your heart in China.” I broke down in tears again, and the wall in my heart between me and China suddenly collapsed.

Over the years, I had cried in prayer for my heart, and many people prayed for me, and I had gone back to China several times, yet I had never experienced such major breakthrough in my spirit. When fathers stand in their place and receive honor from their children, a powerful anointing of breakthrough is released in the spiritual realm that breaks off heavy yokes (see Isaiah 10:27). That anointing is real.

I was still weeping and couldn’t help sharing my heart with Priscilla, a key leader from the next generation, who was sitting next to me: “The Lord showed me how cold I have been towards China. But when you guys honored me and washed my feet just now, all my past sorrows were washed away. Now I’m home!” She passed the microphone to me, so I could share with the whole group. “First of all, greetings to everybody on behalf of Gideon. He and David both love China so much that they would lay down their lives for China. This time Gideon couldn’t come, so I am here as a daughter standing on behalf of her father. I didn’t realize

my heavenly Father loved me so much that He would choose me to be a part of this historic moment! I was so disappointed with my country after the June 4th student movement that I chose to live like a stranger overseas. As the two generations of Christians in China recognized each other now, the curse has been broken, and heaven is open over us. Malachi 4: 5-6 came alive before my eyes! The power of the orphan spirit in me has been completely uprooted. The love of the family has melted my heart, and restored my first love for China. Years ago, I ran away from home and became an orphan; today I've really come home!"

"I let the family in China wash your feet, so as to wash away all the unforgiveness in your heart against your motherland, and to wash away the loneliness and numbness you have felt living overseas. I want to heal your heart in China."

After I said this, everybody came to embrace me and encourage me. It was so touching, and my heart was like a dry land nourished by rain after a long drought; I was deeply healed and comforted. The Holy Spirit reminded me of the warm embraces of the family in the Consumed Gathering in Canada six years earlier. The heavenly Father had continued to release His healing love, carrying me from the embrace of Canadian family to the embrace of Chinese family. What touched me most was the encouragements from the fathers of China, who were just newly born. They said to me,

"My child, you have to recognize that China is your motherland. Whatever happened was a family affair; you have to forgive your own mother!

"We all have gone through a lot too, but Jesus wants us to forgive, so we forgive. My child, let's choose to forgive together!"

“My child, even though we have to suffer for our faith, we still love our country. So do come home more often!”

These humble and warm words from earnest hearts touched me deeply. All these fathers who suffered for the Lord are my heroes. They suffered tremendously for their faith, yet they were still so gracious, and love their country so deeply, praying for the government and releasing blessing. What more could I say? They didn't hold any complaints or bitterness. Compared to them, what I experienced was nothing. How could I compare with these beautiful people of whom the world was not worthy (Heb 11:38)? I felt so ashamed and could hardly bear it. I thought, ah, if I could only dig a hole in the ground and hide myself.

I encountered Jesus while living overseas. He also gave me a loving spiritual home and spiritual parents there. But somehow, something was still missing. Now I had finally found that the missing part was the family and the fathers in China. When the fathers in China took their place, I finally had a home to return to. Even though I would not see them often, I knew in the spirit that my heart had returned to my motherland, and I didn't feel like an orphan anymore.

After the Gathering was over, we went to a restaurant for a meal. As we walked there, we noticed some pieces of broken tiles on the street. I was walking with Papa Liang, and he bent over and picked up a piece of broken tile and said to me seriously, “Thank you for coming all the way home to recognize us as fathers. Thank you for trusting us so much. I have to say, though I see myself as nothing but a piece of broken tile, I will cover you with my broken body!” I received that piece of broken tile like a treasure from this Chinese father, who had gone through so much, and took it all the way back to Vancouver. Whenever I look at that piece of broken tile, I know that I truly have fathers in China, and a home where I can always return.

## Seeking My Roots

I was once looking for homecoming in the spirit, but without knowing, I found myself on the way to a very personal homecoming experience as I followed this journey. What I did not expect was that after years of being a sojourner overseas, this journey actually brought me back to my home country, and even to my family hometown.

## My Family in China

Years ago, out of a sense of loss and disillusionment from the student movement I have mentioned, I bought a one-way ticket, and left my motherland and my loving parents. I returned home for the first time after seven years. The clamor of people quarreling on the streets, the sight of people spitting everywhere, the crowdedness in subways and cigarette smoke everywhere overwhelmed me. I thought, “Luckily, I don’t have to live here. I will be going back to Vancouver next week!” Although I was already a Christian, I had a subtle pride and sense of alienation in my heart.

“Homecoming” was the pure stream that brought me back to China again. The trust in the family is contagious. Often, knowing one family member will lead you to another trusted family. Once I contacted sister Mary in Guangzhou, who is the spiritual daughter of Gideon. Though I had never met her, she hosted my two spiritual daughters who were visiting Guangzhou and wanted to fellowship in the family there. Since we were all Gideon’s spiritual children, her whole family hosted them warmly and took good care of them. Only later did I find out that



*The piece of broken tile that Papa Liang handed me. Whenever I look at it, I am reminded that in China I have fathers and a home.*

she had just had a baby, and returned home from the hospital the day before.

May is another dear sister in the family, also very warm and hospitable. When I went to her city, she would invite me to stay in her master bedroom while she moved to a small room in the house. Every time I went to China, the family there would take me out for delicious food and rest, telling me, “You should enjoy yourself now that you’re home.” These sweet words would still echo in my heart after I returned to Vancouver.

### You Are Also from Fujian

Heavenly Father loves to surprise us with His love in a greater, higher, and deeper way. Gradually, He took me to another phase of being a daughter of China. Once I was chatting with Mama Rushi in the China team, and realized that she was a forerunner among the overseas Chinese who returned to China. She was from Fujian, so I told her that both of my parents are from Fujian too. She then said, “Doesn’t that make you a daughter of Fujian?”

I answered, “My parents are from there, but I was born in Beijing!” For some reason, I never felt I was from Fujian. The stereotype I had of people from Fujian was that they were loud spoken and quarrelsome; they were smugglers and illegal immigrants. They all had a bad reputation. Living overseas, I never joined things like Fujian Association. When people asked me about my ancestry, I would beat about the bush and say I was born in Beijing, grew up in Sichuan, went to college in Tianjin, then settled down in Shanghai. I just wouldn’t mention Fujian, which I somehow associated with shame. Even though I didn’t verbalize it, Mama Rushi saw I had an identity issue about being Fujianese.

She wisely told me about her experience. Her family was from Fujian, but her ancestors went abroad for a better life. After

she became a Christian, she was very zealous for the Lord, and He later sent her to plant a church in New York. But as she grew older, the Lord wanted her to go back to her native Fujian. The Lord said to her, "This was the land that I had allotted to your ancestors, but they gave it up and went abroad for their own interests." Yet God, being so faithful, still blessed them overseas. The Lord then asked her, "Do you have a sense of belonging here?" She wept and said, "Actually most of us feel like sojourners without a true sense of belonging. I am quite old now, Lord, what do You want me to do?"

The Lord said, "I want you to go there and watch over the land. The point is not necessarily to do something, but to stand there in the spirit. I have an inheritance in this land. In the future a lot of people longing for the Kingdom of God will come back here, and you shall prepare a home for them."

So she went back in obedience and stationed herself in Fujian, watching over the land. As she shared about her love for Fujian, her burden and her vision, God suddenly said to me, "You have an inheritance in Fujian too!"

I was shocked! That's right; I should have an inheritance in Fujian, but what exactly was it? It was not enough for me to be just a daughter of China; I needed to be a daughter of Fujian too. That started my amazing journey by which the Father brought this reluctant daughter of Fujian home.

Mama Rushi told me, "Joy, you are also a daughter of Fujian! The Lord may not call you to come back and live here like me, but you must recognize your roots to receive your destiny from your ancestors. Your heart has to return to the land of your ancestors in order to receive the anointing of the land. The Lord is releasing the mantle from the ancient spiritual well of Fujian to bless the nations through the sons and daughters of Fujian, especially the ministry of God's words from Watchman Nee, and

the fiery evangelistic anointing from Dr. John Song. And you are one of them!"

I seemed to understand what she said, but not fully yet. Patiently, the Lord continued to reveal more to me.

### So I Am a Daughter of Fujian

Actually, the Lord had told me in a dream several years ago that I would receive the inheritance of the people of Fujian, but I didn't understand that at the time. In the dream I was walking on a street of a small town in China, then I came to a building with a big sign on it: "Seminar by Brother Watchman Nee." I walked on with great excitement and saw another small sign: "Teaching by Watchman Nee in Person." Obviously, this couldn't be true, but in my dream I believed it and was really excited, until I was stopped at the door. The usher there said that I was wearing the wrong pair of glasses, and was not allowed to go in until I changed my glasses. I thought it was really odd, and when I woke up, I still couldn't understand the dream. But years later I could still remember the details of the dream clearly.

One time a Gathering for leaders in Fujian was suddenly cancelled. However, our purpose there was not just to have Gathering; hanging out together and just being with the family was the true essence of Gathering! We changed our plans and happily went to visit the former homes of Watchman Nee and Dr. John Song. Watchman Nee was a spiritual teacher whom I deeply respect. I am captivated by the divine insights he has shared in his books.

That visit turned out to be an awesome "Gathering"! In a dilapidated area in the countryside, we found the home and also the lecture hall of this man of God who had impacted the world. His podium was built at the lowest point of the lecture hall. You had to go down a flight of steps before you reached the podium.

David stood at that podium, at the lowest point of the room, and testified how Brother Nee's works inspired him in his early years. He said the reason Watchman Nee's life could be used so greatly by God was because he was willing to suffer for the Lord; through the brokenness, his life poured out fragrance. Before David finished his sharing, the anointing of the Holy Spirit came upon us powerfully. All forty of us were richly anointed and fell on our knees weeping. At that moment, a little bird flew in through a crack of the broken door, as if to confirm and comfort us that this seemingly abandoned ancient well would soon be restored and re-invigorated. Before we left, we held hands to commemorate this world class spiritual giant, a man from Fujian, China. We asked the Lord to remember his hometown, and thanked the Lord for raising him up from Fujian.

Then we went to Putian, Fujian to visit the former residence of Dr. John Song. It was in an isolated place beyond access by cars, so we had to get off the car and walk quite a distance to get there. Though it required some effort, we soon found that it was worth it all. His casket had been brought back from an outside region to his former home a few years earlier but somehow his burial had been postponed till the week after our arrival. As if it had been waiting for us, a family of God from far to come. As I touched the dusty casket, the Lord said to me, "The time will come when there will be many overseas Chinese who will give up their prestigious positions and high salaries, and respond to the call of God and return to this land, just like Dr. John Song did, to prepare the way for the Lord," He added, "Prepare yourself not to fear suffering or poverty."

I told the Lord, "If You call me to come back to China like Dr. John Song, I am willing! Lord, help me overcome complacency and the fear of hardship!"

During lunch that day, I excitedly shared with Gideon that I

really admired Watchman Nee's spiritual insights, and Dr. Song's fire for preaching the Gospel and the anointing of the Holy Spirit. One thing led to another, and I told him about the dream I had about Watchman Nee. He smiled and said to me, "So you are Fujianese."

I replied frankly, "Fujianese don't have good reputation, so I didn't like to be one of them." Then he spoke to me lovingly, "It is different now. The children of Fujian are blessed and glorious! Don't you want to own this rich spiritual inheritance of Watchman Nee and Dr. Song?"

It dawned on me that there is truly an abundant spiritual inheritance in Fujian. Of the three outstanding men of God in China: Wang Mingdao, John Song, and Watchman Nee, two are from Fujian. I immediately repented and started to embrace my identity as a daughter of Fujian.

Soon after this, out of the blue, I received a call from my good friend Nicole, asking me to pray for her ministry trip to Fujian. Nicole came to the United States from Taiwan as a teenager, and she started to serve in the church fervently. She once had very good job but wasn't satisfied; then she went to seminary, but wasn't satisfied either. Though she loved the Lord passionately, she was not really aware of her Chinese identity. In 2011, she answered God's call to move to Kansas City and join International House Of Prayer (IHOPKC) as an intercessory missionary. In 2012, she was invited to interpret for a Chinese speaker, and for the first time heard of B2J (back to Jerusalem) as the missional calling for the Chinese. Her identity as a Chinese was awoken. In 2013 she started the Chinese Forerunner Ministry School at IHOP University. We met in 2015 on a ministry trip in China, the Spirit of God linked our hearts together in an amazing way, and we became good friends.

Nicole called me before her trip to Fujian, telling me how

fierce the spiritual warfare was. While praying for her over the phone, I suddenly remembered I was a daughter of Fujian, so I should use this authority to welcome her! “As a daughter of Fujian, I welcome you in Jesus’ name! I declare that you are protected and welcomed in the spirit. The Lord be with you!”

After the prayer she suddenly remembered that although she grew up in Taiwan, her father was possibly from Fujian too. She confirmed it with her father, and immediately she accepted her identity as a daughter of Fujian. How amazing! Right after my identity as a daughter of Fujian was restored, I awakened another daughter of Fujian to stand in her place. I also shared with her a tip from Gideon: whenever we go to a new place to minister, we should first honor the local spiritual authority and ask them to bless and cover us and our ministry. Nicole did that when she went to Fujian, and the ministry trip turned out beautifully. From this incident, I realized that when we discover our identities in Him, many hidden treasures will be revealed.

Dear family, perhaps your hometown is far from perfect like mine, and you feel disappointed or ashamed of it, but if you will enter into the Lord’s heart, you will see His hidden treasure and mystery in every place. When the mystery is revealed, you will be as surprised as we were.

When I shared with Nicole about my visit to the former homes of Watchman Nee and Dr. John Song, she longed to go too, so we began to discuss making a trip home to seek our roots. Heavenly Father seemed to be eavesdropping on our conversation and made it happen very soon. During a Homecoming Gathering in China, we were supposed to break into regional groups for prayer. Coming from overseas, we used to find it hard to decide which regional group to go to because we loved the whole nation of China. Fortunately, Mama Rushi asked Nicole and me to join the Fujian group. After the prayer, she felt to invite us, two daughters

of Fujian, to go there to seek our roots. Our spirits confirmed this and we knew it was the Father's hand orchestrating our trip back to Fujian.

### The Ultimate Root

To my surprise, in this process of seeking my roots, God revealed to me an amazing truth about how my beloved Jesus feels about Israel.

Once I was walking on the sidewalk in front of my house, praying with Nicole for our trip to Fujian. When we prayed for the anointing of Watchman Nee and Dr. Song, I was surprised that the Lord shared His heart with me! Before that, I was amazed when David said he would sometimes hear God's voice while he was preaching. This time it happened to me while I was praying. I heard the Lord say: "You love to read Watchman Nee's books, but you can only gain some of his insights. If you want his spiritual inheritance, you have to receive him as a spiritual

father in the family. You have to accept all his successes and failures, and also embrace his hometown people, the people of Fujian." That was an amazing revelation. The Spirit of the Lord came upon me so powerfully that I had to stop in my tracks, pray in tears, and repent for my



*Two daughters of Fujian came home*

pride and my judgments against the people of Fujian, instead of loving and praying for them.

Then He pointed out something that really shocked me. The Lord continued to share His heart with me, even speaking about the root of Replacement Theology. He said: "If all you want from Jesus is His salvation and blessings, and do not want to embrace

His hometown family He loves —His fellow Jews—it's like a wife saying she loves her husband, but rejects his family. That will surely break his heart. Likewise, many churches broke My heart!"

Some people served the Lord fervently, and thought they really loved the Lord, yet they did not honor Jesus' family and Jewish ancestry. The tragic lesson from history is that by rejecting the Jewish roots of the Christian faith, some went on to despise, and even slaughter the Jewish people.

Obviously, the Lord was after much more than for me to just to seek my roots and embrace my identity as a daughter of Fujian. He wanted me to go back to the ultimate root of my faith. Jesus wanted His earthly Jewish family to be totally accepted. I could feel deeply God's anguish over the divided family of Abraham. I was overwhelmed and shocked that the Lord suddenly shared His pain with me that day.

As I stopped by the sidewalk near my house, I could not stop weeping as the Lord allowed me to touch the deep pain in His heart.

### Embracing my hometown

Before we went back to Fujian, the door to China had already opened for us. But it was as if we had only entered the living room, and not yet gone into the bedrooms. On the door to the bedroom was written "Fujian." Because of His new revelation and guidance, when Nicole and I later returned to Fujian, we went with brand new identities, feelings, and perceptions. We were not going there as speakers, but as family members.

Our first stop in Fujian was Mama Rushi's house. We had a great time together, enjoying good food and hearing her stories. Then pastor Aquila and his wife Priscilla brought a group of family members from Fuzhou, another city in Fujian Province, to welcome us. Together we went to Quanzhou, Nicole's hometown

and we went to the harbor there, which was the starting point of the ancient Maritime Silk Road. Together with the local family of God, we blessed our hometown in prayer. We also visited the former homes of Dr. John Song and Brother Watchmen Nee. Pastor Aquila is a spiritual son from Watchman Nee's stream, and he excitedly shared about life of brother Nee with us. Watchman Nee and Dr. Song became more than just names of two spiritual giants. Eventually, they became our spiritual fathers. Our hearts were filled with indescribable joy and thanksgiving. It's so true that spiritual parents aren't necessarily the ones who directly brought you the gospel, but we honor them for what they have done for our generation.

The family in Fujian loved us so much. They took us for traditional Fujian cuisine and treated us to a very nice hot spring hotel. The love from our hometown family melted my heart. And in a local Gathering, I shared my dream about brother Nee, including the part about the heavenly Father asking me to have new lenses, in order to truly receive the anointing from this spiritual giant. I repented publicly for my pride in refusing to be a Fujianese, and declared that I was proud to be a daughter of Fujian. What followed was interesting, and a little humorous; Aquila took me to an optical store and got me a new pair of prescription glasses.

### New Home, New Inheritance

The last day of our trip was a Sunday. Nicole and I woke up early, feeling sad that we had to leave. Nicole shared with me that we should call pastor Aquila and his wife Priscilla "Papa" and "Mama" instead of pastors, and I agreed. So with thankful hearts, we went to the Sunday service to honor them.

Before we shared the message, we shared our hearts: we had come home! We honored this homeland because it was the root

of our physical being God had given to us. We also honored the spiritual fathers in the land, and announced we would call them Papa and Mama of our hometown. What came next really surprised us. Aquila shared the prompting in his heart, telling how a few years earlier he went to Shanghai to visit his daughter. His heart ached when he found that she had to move from one rental apartment to another. He did not have a lot of money, but he prayed to find a home for her. Despite many difficulties, God amazingly fulfilled his desire and his daughter finally moved into a place of her own.

When he saw that we always stayed in hotels on our travels, the father's heart in him prompted him to prepare a home for these two daughters of Fujian. He said, "From now on, whenever you come home to Fujian, don't stay in hotels, stay at home. My home is your home." Then he gave each of us a key to his home. Wow—what a real homecoming!

I was in tears right away. Aquila did not know, during that time my parents were struggling about whether to sell their only house in China. As my sisters and I were living overseas, we really wanted them to live with us so that we could take care of them. We had been trying to convince them to sell their house and settle down in Canada with us, but they could not let go, insisting that they had to keep their home in China, so they wouldn't feel completely uprooted. While Aquila was sharing, Abba Father said to me, "Your roots are in China, and will never be uprooted. I have prepared for you a home in Fujian. I honor you as my handmaiden, you will lack nothing in my family."

As I stumbled along this homecoming journey, I was amazingly led step-by-step to my native home in Fujian. I was no longer a guest, but a family member! I found my root. Though I still live overseas, I know that I am a branch that is entirely connected to the root.

## The Way Home

Looking back, in all the years of living overseas, I was looking for a sense of belonging. Although I came to Jesus and found the best spiritual parents, I still had an inexplicable sense of restlessness in my heart. From the spiritual perspective, surely the ultimate destination of the Homecoming journey is the everlasting home in Heaven. And from the natural perspective, we shall have a specific home on earth. I went back to China with Gideon and David, but God's amazing grace gave me a real family to embrace there.

In the eyes of many people, overseas Chinese seem to have a sense of superiority, but actually we are often strong outwardly but empty inside. Although we enjoy a comfortable life, deep inside we struggle with our identities: "Who are we? Are we Chinese?" If we don't really deal with this issue of our root and identify ourselves with the bloodline and ethnicity that are given and designed by our Creator, there will always be a sense of isolation and inner loneliness. We need to open up our hearts completely and admit that we are lonely and need family. We need to take down our masks of superiority, run towards our motherland, and share the joint destiny He has given us from the beginning of creation.

Jesus Himself is our best example. He was the Word who became flesh. And He was not a sojourner without family or ancestry. He was a Jew, and a Jew from Nazareth. He knew where He came from; He had a real sense of belonging "on earth as in Heaven." Similarly, we need to agree with God's chosen calling for us, settle into the race in which He birthed us, and embrace real family members. The orphan spirit tries to hinder us from entering the new wineskin of family in the new season. As a result, we may be wandering in the air, travelling from nation to nation, and excitedly going from one conference or event to

another without being anchored in an authentic home. If we do not have real relationship with real people, then even if we have a strong anointing, prophetic insight, and rich knowledge, we will still be orphans and sojourners, and still be “homeless” in the spirit.

Abba Father has been very merciful to me. He granted me spiritual fathers who accompanied me into this Homecoming Journey; meanwhile, He took me into my personal “Homecoming Journey” at the same time. I wholeheartedly embraced my family of origin, my bloodline, and home country, which He had planned for me from the beginning of creation. It brought me such an unprecedented sense of security and bliss. I pray for every one of you who read this book: May the Lord who created you and me, also lead you into your own unique Homecoming Journey of knowing your root of identity.



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## Chinese Esther: Awake and Arise!





## Vancouver: Homecoming in our own city

“I WISH WE could have Homecoming Gathering every weekend!” A young brother expressed his longing when we shared hearts in Nicole’s home in Kansas City.

I replied, “Yes, it’s possible! Homecoming is not about waiting for the next Gathering somewhere afar; neither does it have to do with a big meeting. All you need is a group of people seeking the Lord together. Then you can have Homecoming in your city” As I spoke, my heart was thinking of Vancouver, the city I loved. I am so blessed that every weekend in my home church and in my city, I can experience Homecoming.

### Vancouver Renewal Family

As Homecoming Gatherings began spreading to many places, especially among the Chinese in Asia, the Lord has also prepared a remnant on the other side of the Pacific who seek His face. What He has done in Vancouver, Canada is a microcosm of His work among the Chinese globally. I am so thankful and privileged to be part of it. But it is not surprising that our Father God has a special favour and calling for this birthplace of the Homecoming journey.

In 1996, the Lord gathered a group of Vancouver pastors to walk together in the Renewal Family, under Pastor Gideon's leadership. They were willing to overcome the barriers of different backgrounds, languages, ages, and denominations. They laid down their own ministries and came together on a regular basis to seek the Lord, share hearts, support each other, and pray. And our greatest joy is to see our next generation loving each other and walking with us. Two generations walking together is indeed a beautiful legacy that we have in Vancouver.<sup>1</sup>



(Left) *The core team of the Renewal Family covenanted to walk together in the city*

(Right) *We get together for good food and good fun all the time;  
this time in Papa Gideon's home*

### First Chinese Gathering (September 2009, Vancouver)

As we sought the Lord in a Renewal Family gathering in early 2009, He asked us to host the first Chinese gathering during Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. The theme was "Chinese Walking Together with One Heart." At the time, we thought this gathering was just for Vancouver, and did not realize God was going to use it to initiate something big! During the gathering, the Lord revealed to Pastor Nancy Chen the destiny of Chinese hidden in the Chinese character, "中" (meaning "center" or "middle," which is the first word for China "中国" meaning

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<sup>1</sup> See Renewal Family website: <http://www.renewalfamily.org/v2/index-en.html>

“middle nation”). This character resembles the picture of a Chinese man standing with hands on his waist, one arm linking the descendants of Isaac, the other arm linking the descendants of Ishmael, and bringing them back home together, not just to the home of their forefather Abraham, but most importantly, to the home of Heavenly Father.

It was surprising to know, right after the Chinese gathering in Vancouver, across the Pacific Ocean in Hong Kong, God powerfully visited brother Allen Ha, the former CEO of Hong Kong Asia World-Expo, and gave him a vision of the two brothers. It was so amazing to see how the Holy Spirit confirmed His heart for the Chinese people through revelation given to Chinese in Asia, as well as Chinese in Canada. Brother Ha shared the following when I interviewed him:

“In October 2009, after the Feast of Tabernacles, the third day after my spinal surgery, I fell into a trance for almost one-and-a-half hours. My spirit rose up and saw Father God joyfully handing keys to His children, knowing His heart’s desire was fulfilled! I heard a song that sounded like China’s national anthem, ‘Now is the time to arise, arise! Now is the time for the Chinese family to go on stage and show the world their master production of FAMILY!’ When the Chinese presented FAMILY, Father God would redeem everything the enemy has stolen since the time of Genesis! Every member of the family knew when it was their turn to go on stage and what their role was. When everyone came in at the right time, and said the right lines, the Kingdom of God began to advance and there was light.

“As the big Chinese production was being acted out, other nations began to join in. Two brothers were called to come home from far away. When the two brothers appeared, Father God opened His arms...the angels were also called into the big family

reunion, culminating in the reunion of Adam and Eve! Then my spirit returned from the trance.”

He said he wasn’t sure who the two brothers were, but when they reconciled and returned home, the original broken relationship in humankind between Adam and Eve will be healed. Brother Ha was very scared at the time and asked his spiritual father Gideon to pray for and cover him. Gideon then pointed out that the two brothers could very well be Abraham’s two sons in the revelation of the character “中”, received during the Vancouver Chinese gathering. Through the maturity and emergence of the Chinese family, the two brothers will return to the heart of Abraham and the heart of Father God. (A side note: In a pre-gathering to prepare the first gathering in Hong Kong in 2010, Brother Ha shared this vision, and everyone agreed to name the first Hong Kong gathering “Homecoming” Gathering. The term “Homecoming” has been used ever since.)

In the 2009 Chinese Gathering in Vancouver, the glory of God’s presence was most memorable. There were about thirty minutes during worship when God led us into a deep place of rest and complete silence. Even the little children were quiet. This stirred David’s heart and he said to Gideon, “This is not fair. This is only the first Chinese gathering, and God’s presence is so deep! It has taken a hundred gatherings all across Canada for us to reach this level of depth. There is such favour on the Chinese.” God confirmed once again through this “holy jealousy” in David that He was doing a quick work among the Chinese because He had chosen the Chinese.

Not only did the Chinese have favour, but the favour continued to be passed on. David pointed out that it was the first Chinese gathering in Vancouver in 2009 that prepared the way for the first global Chinese gathering that took place in

Hong Kong in 2010. Gideon also said that the journey in China began in Vancouver because God wanted to especially honor the Renewal Family pastors who laid down their churches and sought the Lord together for some twenty years. So, we could say it was the gathering of overseas Chinese that activated the Chinese gatherings in Asia, particularly the series of Homecoming gatherings in Hong Kong.

#### 1111 Gathering (November 10-12, 2011, Vancouver)

Gideon always encourages the Renewal Family to not despise what God wants to do through this small group. On March 11, 2011, a huge tsunami hit Japan. As the Renewal Family sought the Lord, we felt the tsunami was an end-time alarm sent by the Lord, and that the church needed to urgently align to His heart. The “eleventh hour” originates in Matthew 20:6-9, and became an English idiom meaning “the last minute.” Eleven stands for “alignment” and the “last minute.”

The Lord spoke to us that we needed to gather in Vancouver in 2011. As we sought Him, our hearts were still arrested by the date of the alarm: March 11 (3/11)—three elevens! So we marked November 11, 2011 (11/11/11) for a Gathering. The Lord confirmed this through Imiel, saying, “This is the eleventh hour, from eleven to twelve, from divine alignment to divine government. This is a critical moment when I will gather the churches of the east and the west, to prepare them to receive what is coming.”

I mentioned earlier that David and the Canadian team were experiencing a very difficult time then, but he did not draw back or have any reservations because of that. He fully supported and owned this gathering initiated by the Chinese. The Lord used the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25: 1-6 to give him further revelation regarding the eleventh hour, telling him that not only

do we need to be wise virgins, but we need to be the midnight criers, awakening those who are asleep. As we look back, 2011 was indeed the year of alignment, and 2012 was truly the year of government. The theme of the Homecoming Gathering in Hong Kong from June 8-11, 2011 was “One Heart One Way” (see Jeremiah 32:39). We need to walk together and have the same heart, and we need to have the same heart before we can walk the same way. God was powerfully present as 12,000 people from thirty nations stood together to make a covenant to align with God and with each other in Christ.

In retrospect, we see the Holy Spirit was swiftly preparing such a well-aligned Chinese body because He had purposed for us to receive the key from the western church in 2012. The Holy Spirit thus confirmed to our little group that we had heard His voice correctly as He led us from the alignment of eleven to the government of twelve. We must humbly acknowledge that as long as there is a small remnant willing to gather and seek His face, even with limited unity, we can fulfill the great things on His heart, above all that we can ask or imagine.

### Vancouver City Prayer Altar

One Tuesday evening at the end of 2013, I was at the Church of Zion prayer meeting as usual. That day, we were praying especially for Gideon’s ministry in Malaysia and China, and my heart was stirred again. The Holy Spirit spoke to me, “I am able to do great things when a church is after My heart like this, serving My kingdom on her knees and upholding the Homecoming gatherings in prayer. Now imagine if it is not just one Church of Zion, but the whole city of Vancouver rising up to seek my heart corporately and to intercede for the Kingdom. How much more will they bless My Kingdom! Can Vancouver become a city after My heart? Can Vancouver travail and intercede for My

Kingdom like this? Can Vancouver become a City of Zion, My resting place?”

I cried and responded to His call, “Yes Lord, I am willing! May we all be willing!”

After a period of prayer and with the support of the fathers, I shared the vision of establishing a City Prayer Altar with the Renewal Family, and everyone agreed. The Lord was pleased for us to come into deeper unity through prayer and to stand as city elders to release blessing and prayer over our city with apostolic authority. We broke the myth that “pastors are not intercessors,” and followed the example of our Lord Jesus who is the great Shepherd and our most faithful Intercessor (see Hebrews 7:25). The Lord revealed to me that the apostolic authority of pastors and the prophetic insight of intercessors are indispensable foundations for the prayer altar. Twelve pastors and intercessors met in my home for the first leaders’ meeting for the City Prayer Altar. And David “happened” to be in Israel, and he “happened” to call Mama May and Mama Lucy while we were gathering and asked for prayer! We were tremendously excited to receive this special assignment, and to know that our City Prayer Altar had to do with Israel and the End Times from the very beginning.

#### Awaken the Dawn and Altar in the Cloud

As I attended Homecoming Gatherings in different places, I had a desire that God would find His resting place not only in the nations but also in our own cities. This is because the visible kingdom beyond the local church is the city. The seven letters to the early church that Apostle John received from the Lord were written to seven cities. When believers in the same city love one another, the spiritual atmosphere in that city will be shifted, and people come to the Lord. This may be the most effective strategy to bring in the end time harvest.

At the end of 2016, David released a call for the global family to “Awaken the Dawn” during the eight days of Hanukkah (see Job 38:12, Psalm 110). We immediately responded with joy. Pastors from different churches in our city took turns leading the intercessors in the city in online prayer meetings to Awaken the Dawn every morning at five am. The eight days of Hanukkah ended, but nobody wanted to stop. We sought the Lord and He said that He was pleased with this prayer altar. Since we used Zoom, this virtual altar is called “altar in the cloud.” For the fire on the altar should not go out, so we have continued to awaken the dawn every morning, and the fire is burning even stronger. Since 2017, we have added “Father’s Heart Bible Altar” in mornings and evenings, where we read the Bible and seek Father’s heart together, while His words become the foundation of the lives of the intercessors. In March 2020, we added a noontime Worship Altar during the pandemic. Since this altar from the womb of Homecoming carried the spirit of family, it has been more than a prayer altar because of the strong presence of Abba Father. Being online, we are not limited by time and space. People from different places and nations have joined us. We stand together in love and pray for the Kingdom in the spirit; many lives have dramatically been healed, renewed, and transformed just by being together in love. The prayer altar eventually transformed to be a FAMILY of prayers in the cloud. That is our weapon in the battlefield: being family! We also encouraged and supported people in other cities to build their own family altar of prayers in the cloud.

At the end of 2016, soon after we started the prayer altar in the cloud, God began to put the burden to gather the Chinese in Canada and overseas on our hearts. He clearly instructed us to host the “Chinese Esther, Awake and Arise!” Gathering in November 2017. Why was the gathering called “Chinese Esther”?

### The Revelation of 414

“David, it’s not fair! You and Gideon spent so much time helping China to come home, but the Chinese in our own city of Vancouver have not yet come home!” One day Nancy Chen and I confronted David with a rare boldness.

“China is very hungry for the Lord; what about overseas Chinese?” David challenged in return.

We replied passionately, “Overseas Chinese are very hungry too; we want more!”

That was in 2008. Initially Nancy and I were only accompanying David and Gideon to a leadership gathering in China, but when we saw how eager the Chinese family was to receive the Homecoming legacy from Canada, a “holy jealousy” was aroused in both of us. So we went to reason with David. As an overseas Chinese walking with the China team for years, I saw with my own eyes how quickly God led the Chinese family forward. I was greatly inspired but somehow with a dissatisfaction in my spirit: what was the Lord’s special calling and mission for our overseas Chinese?

From the beginning of 2016 I kept seeing 414. Sometimes it was the time on the clock, sometimes it was a car licence plate with 414. I took these incidents to heart. In February the same year, I was invited by my good friend Rania to represent the Chinese and attend an Arab women’s conference, “Deborah Arise,” in Israel. Rania is an Arab bride of Christ who loves Israel and leads a house of prayer in Nazareth, where she lives. We met in the 1111 Gathering in 2011 and became covenant friends. The Holy Spirit inspired her to prepare new Arab names for all participants, and she wrote them in Arabic on white stones. I was overjoyed when I randomly picked up one stone, and asked Rania to translate for me. She smiled and said “Esther”!

At that moment, the mystery of 414 was revealed to me. The Lord clearly directed me to read Esther 4:14 “And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?” I was speechless when my beloved Jesus called me to be His Esther from His own hometown. Yet I knew it was not just for me, but for all the overseas Chinese I had been carrying in my heart. Our destiny is to bring the gospel back to Jerusalem. It is time for us to arise. My mind could not fully comprehend everything, but my spirit was deeply convinced. I kept this in my heart.

At the beginning of 2017, I received an invitation to attend a small leadership gathering in China. Unfortunately, I had already bought a ticket to another place. Also, that time “happened” to coincide with our Vancouver city Gathering. But following the example of my fathers, I dared not make a decision based on convenience; but instead sought the Lord. I asked Papa Imiel for prayer and confirmation regarding this trip, and he said, “You must go to China because the Lord has something important for you to accomplish. You must also attend the Vancouver city gathering because that is very important too!”

What! That meant that I had to purchase a whole new ticket just to attend one day of the China gathering. “Paying the price” was not a new lesson to me as I followed my spiritual fathers for many years, but the price should be paid rightly for His purpose alone.



*Esther, the new name  
I received in Israel, and  
Esther 7:2-3, written  
on the white stone*

In that Vancouver city gathering, the Lord granted us amazing oneness as I briefly shared about Esther calling for overseas Chinese; we were all in agreement and willing to rise up for the Lord like Queen Esther. At the end, everyone laid hands on me and sent me to China. “Go, represent overseas Chinese and stand in your place!”

But I still had no clue what the “something important” was that required me to pay double-priced airfare, when I flew to China. I arrived in China and woke up at exactly 4:14 a.m. The Lord again instructed me to read the book of Esther and gave me clear understanding. I shared what I received with the China family that morning in our pre-meeting. We decided to do a prophetic act in the Gathering to express the alignment of mainland and overseas Chinese. Priscilla represented Chinese leaders, stood in the middle, while Cindy (another Pastor from Vancouver) and I stood by her on both sides representing overseas Chinese; just as Esther and Mordecai stood as one; and also as Aaron and Hur lifted up Moses’s arms. The three of us were surrounded by multiple circles of leaders from all over China, like wheels within wheels.

After walking all these years with China’s family, we suddenly came into an unprecedented oneness of heart, and I found my regiment and my position. We are one family and one army in the spirit. I heard the Father say, “I am deploying My Chinese army; overseas Chinese must come home and report for duty!” The following is the revelation the Lord gave me that morning when He woke me up on 4:14 a.m.

### For Such a Time as This

The Lord reminded me of some recent events, where He helped me to observe the joint force of the religious spirit and the political spirit. After the inauguration of President Trump

as US president on February 24, 2017, witches around the world gathered to curse him. The opposition he faced was not just from the political world, but also from the religious and spiritual realm. In March 2017, evangelist Franklin Graham was invited to Vancouver to preach the gospel. Some said that his belief was too absolute and would cause disunity in the churches. This matter was eventually brought to the attention of the mayor who ended up meeting with church leaders and proposed to change the speaker. The internal affairs of the churches hooked up with politics.

These things alerted me that the political spirit colluded with the religious spirit, attempting to hinder the coming of God's Kingdom. With the resurgence of anti-semitism everywhere, the Lord reminded me that there was a time in history very similar to the present, and it was the time of Esther. At that time, King Ahasuerus was completely controlled by Haman, who hated the Jews. He wore the King's signet ring and attempted to annihilate the Jewish people.

How did his scheme almost succeed? Through gaining favour from the king! The political spirit and the religious spirit came into an evil alliance and unity which gave him authority to persecute God's people. In fact, it was the same evil unity of the political spirit (represented by Pilate) and the religious spirit (represented by the Pharisees) that nailed Jesus to the cross.

So how can this evil unity be broken? The Holy Spirit showed me that the book of Esther revealed the secret to turning defeat into victory, which is through another unity, a godly unity, the unity of Esther and Mordecai. This unity raised the Jewish nation from death, and this strategy of turning defeat into victory is still applicable today.

The Holy Spirit continued to show me that another rendition of this transformational strategy is found in Malachi 4:5-6, which

has been powerfully anointed by the Spirit of God in the End Times. When two generations align with each other and walk together in unity, the curse over the land is broken.

Esther and Mordecai were true family who loved each other deeply. Esther honoured and obeyed Mordecai, even after she became queen. But why hadn't they come into their destinies yet? Queen Esther had not been summoned by the King for thirty days and was in danger of falling out of favour. As for Mordecai, though he saved the king's life, he was still outside the palace and not remembered. The most frightening thing was that the Jews were facing imminent genocide! Apparently, relational unity was not enough. So what is the kind of unity in the Father's heart that can break the curse?

The Lord showed me that the kind of unity required in Malachi 4:5-6 comprises three levels of increasing alignment, as displayed in Esther's story. First, it is the unity in family relationship between Esther and Mordecai, which is about alignment of identity. Second, it is the unity of Esther and her own people, which is about alignment of mission. Third, it is the unity of Esther and the Jewish people, which is about alignment of destiny.

### 1. Unity in family relationship between Esther and Mordecai: Alignment of identity

Mordecai was Esther's foster father as well as her spiritual father. Esther needed first to align with her identity as a Jew. If Esther was not willing to give up her comfortable position in the palace, and would continue to hide her Jewish identity, then her royal position would have been useless and she would have had no part in rescuing her people. We need to align with our natural and spiritual fathers, regardless of their geographic locations, positions, and talents. The generation born in China may not struggle with their identity as Chinese, but the following

generation, especially those born overseas, find it to be a common struggle. One time, I talked about this identity issue with a very anointed young American-born Chinese pastor, and I asked him: “Do you see yourself as a Chinese?” He looked perplexed and said, ”This is a question I haven’t been able to answer; I don’t know if I am Chinese.”

## 2. Unity between Esther and her own people: Alignment of mission

Not only do the two generations need to have good personal relationship but they also need to have the same call to mission. Mordecai’s love for Esther transcended human emotions. The survival of the Jewish people was at stake, and he challenged Esther to rise out of her comfort zoom.

“Esther” was her given Persian name. Her original Hebrew name was “Hadassah” (see Esther 2:7), which meant myrtle. Hadassah’s name has a beautiful prophetic meaning: Myrtle is a common evergreen shrub in Israel and its leaves have healing properties. In the Old Testament, Bible passages about myrtle refer to the Lord’s redemption and restoration of Israel; instead of brier there will be myrtle and the curse will be removed (see Isaiah 55:13, 41:19; Zechariah 1:8, 10-11). This was exactly the hidden mission God had for Queen Esther!

Esther needed to hear the call to mission. Though she was endowed with spiritual authority, she needed Mordecai to activate her royal position. Mordecai challenged her that if she remained silent, she and her father’s house would surely perish. Esther was an orphan and her father’s house was that of Mordecai. Mordecai was actually saying to her, “We will either be saved together or die together. Our destiny is tied together.” She was stirred by this mission and immediately received Mordecai’s anointing of boldness: “If I die, I die!” Similarly, the destiny of overseas Chinese has already been knitted in the DNA of all Chinese

people before the creation of the world (see Ephesians 1:4). We have the same Chinese bloodline. Our destiny is tied together with our motherland.

### 3. Unity between Esther and the Jewish people: Alignment of destiny.

Esther was Jewish, yet it's easy for us to overlook an important fact: Esther was not just fighting for her own family; ultimately, she was fighting for the survival of all Jews. She was not part of an ordinary people, but rather God's chosen people. Heavenly Father revealed to me that His ultimate purpose in raising up the Chinese Esther is to destroy the end time spirit of Haman, which is the spirit behind modern Islam.

The rise of the Chinese Esther is directly related to bringing the gospel back to Jerusalem. May we understand our Father's heart and stand with His people Israel. Praying for the Jewish people is an important calling of the Chinese Esther. This is the Father's heart: when the fullness of the Gentiles comes, all Israel will be saved (see Romans 11:25-26). With the launching of the "One Belt One Road" initiative, a brand-new "silk road" is unfolding before us! As early as the 1940s, China's spiritual predecessors already received from God the mission to bring the gospel back to Jerusalem through the silk road.

#### The Anointing of China from Two Convergent Streams

"Lord, how do overseas Chinese enter into your end time plan? We have not experienced persecution; how can we contribute to bring the gospel back to Jerusalem?"

For several years, I had been asking the Lord this question with a heart of reverence.

One day as I was seeking the Lord about this again, He reminded me of a conversation I had in China with some sisters who loved the Lord. They asked me to share how I came to the

Lord overseas. I recounted how the Lord saved me from a major car accident in the USA, and how I prayed the sinner's prayer and asked him into my life under the wheels of the truck! Through this accident He pulled me out of the maelstrom of the world, and I gave my life and heart to Him. At that time, I did not think my testimony was anything compared to their testimonies of suffering. But they all burst into tears, surrounded me and cried out to the Lord, weeping for their children in China that they would not be captured by the world and the spirit of mammon.

Their prayers still burn in my heart. "O Lord, thank you for choosing Your handmaiden, enabling her to rise up for You and love You where there is no persecution. O Lord, save our children like you saved your handmaiden, circumcise their hearts so they no longer love this world!" The faces of those precious sisters were still on my mind when the Lord suddenly spoke to me:

"In the journey back to Jerusalem, there is a dual power of darkness. Apart from the fear of persecution and death that David often speaks about, there is also the temptation of the world and complacency. These can only be overcome with the convergence of anointings of China as well as of the overseas Chinese!"

I asked the Lord for confirmation from His Word. He pointed out that in the Old Testament, His people also had to overcome two strongholds when they came out of Egypt: first, the pursuit of Pharaoh (the power of persecution and death), and second, the temptation of the meat pot (the power of the world and complacency). In the New Testament, the seven churches in Chapters 2-3 of Revelation also had to face two kinds of challenges: first, persecution and death (e.g. the church of Smyrna and the church of Philadelphia) and second, the world and compromise (e.g. the church of Pergamum and the church of Laodicea). Overcoming the spirit of persecution requires the

anointing that has no fear of persecution and death (see Rev 12:11) and defeating the spirit of Babylon requires the anointing that overcomes the world (see 1John 2:15).

I have seen believers from China who lost their fire and zeal for the Lord in the life of ease overseas when they came to North America and Europe. It is not easy to love the Lord in comfortable environments. I have also seen overseas Christians who stopped meeting together when they returned to China because of persecution. This is why it is so important for the overseas Chinese Esther to align with her Mordecai in China. We must mutually recognize, in the spirit, the positions and mantles that the Lord has given to us. I suddenly realized the reasons the Lord chose the Chinese for the final race is because we have dual victorious anointings from the two convergent streams: Fear not persecution; and love not the world! The persecuted Chinese bride has overcome the spirit of Egypt, while in the comfortable overseas world, the Lord has prepared a great company of His overseas Chinese bride who, like Esther, has been set free from worldly temptation and overcome the spirit of Babylon.

Surely, overseas Chinese also experience persecution, and those in China face worldly temptations too. What I want to emphasise is that the Chinese as one body shall come into deeper love and unity, and together we can enter into the destiny and calling God has for us!

### Three Critical Shifts

This is the time that the Lord has put the Chinese in the leadership role, so overseas Chinese shall also arise in obedience, entering into what the Father has planned for this hour. We have to adjust our roles accordingly, agreeing with the Father's sovereign choice. Through the above revelation of the three alignments of Esther, I see that overseas Chinese need to shift in

three important areas:

1. Alignment of Identity: Shifting from Guest to Family

We no longer hide behind foreign passports and see ourselves only as guests in China. We must embrace our God-given Chinese identity and bloodline. It is our family root. If we are not family we have no inheritance in China. Regardless of our success overseas, we need to return home, and be sons and daughters of China.

2. Alignment of Mission: Shifting from Observers to Companions

We won't allow the physical distance of being overseas cause a sense of separation. We will be actively engaged with our family in China and maintain our walk together in the spirit. Esther also means "star". We need to recognize that it is the hand of God who has placed the Chinese Esthers apostolically and prophetically in the nations. Little sparks can start a prairie fire! All our resources: connections, relationships, abilities, and wealth in the nations are not for our own benefit, but to prepare for the whole Chinese body to enter into the end-time destiny for His kingdom.

3. Alignment of destiny: Shifting from Neglecting Israel to Honouring Israel

When the west gave the keys to China, David emphasised that China has to remove the mistake and contamination of replacement theology and keep "the pure gospel." The greatest stain in western theology is its attempt to have the church replace Israel. We need to know God's love and predestination for Israel and align with His heart for Israel. Not only should we pray and stand with God's people, but also, we shall become the true family of Israel in the End Times, as two become one (see Ephesians 2), just as the gentile Ruth covenanted with her Jewish

mother-in-law Naomi. God has raised up the Chinese, which is the largest group of believers today, and given us a supernatural love for the Jewish people. Together with the other gentile people groups, we are to become one new man with the Jewish people, preparing the way for the coming Lord Jesus.

### Rising up for the Lord in the Foreign Land

If overseas Chinese do not embrace our calling and destiny, our dual identity may confuse us, and we do not know who we are. But when we come into our destiny, our dual identity becomes double anointings. In the Bible, there are many besides Esther who came into their destiny in foreign lands—Joseph, Moses, Daniel, Nehemiah. As overseas Chinese, we should arise in the land the Lord located us, and also be responsible to bring our next generation to enter into the glorious destiny and inheritance the Father has preordained for overseas Chinese as well. Together with our children, we were brought to the nations; we learned their languages and hold their passports; some of us have entered high positions in the “seven mountains” of government, business, etc, and we have joined the mainstream of society in the nations we emigrated to. However, our “royal positions” are not for our sake, but for the whole Chinese body to arise. Chinese family members do not need to be proficient in English or French or other languages, and they do not to build relationships from scratch, because they will be connected to the world once their Chinese children in the nations are awakened.

As we rise up and welcome the Chinese family in every nation, we become the hosts that Father has prepared for the whole Chinese family to bridge different people groups and lead the nations to fulfill the dream of our Father.

## Chinese Esther, Awake and Arise!

So, Heavenly Father continued to reveal His heart to us. He knew the hidden confusion in the hearts of overseas Chinese sojourners, and tenderly called us to come home. In January 2017, He again spoke to Renewal Family to gather Chinese leaders to seek His face in Vancouver. After nine months of prayer, seeking, waiting, and preparation, much like a spiritual pregnancy, we held the “Chinese Esther, Awake and Arise!” Gathering on November 10-12, 2017.

Holy Spirit used Zechariah 10:8-9 to “whistle” from Vancouver to gather the overseas Chinese body “scattered among the nations.” Amazingly, this was the same Scripture that released the first Gathering in Canada in 1995. And Zechariah 10:9 on speaks about Egypt and the Middle East. In fact, November 11, 2017 was the date originally set for a Gathering in Egypt, but it was postponed due to turmoil. Though we had no prior discussion, Holy Spirit moved both the overseas family and the family in China separately to call Gatherings at exactly the same weekend of November 11. This was the work of God in the Chinese Body of Christ. We declared in the spirit realm that no power could hinder God’s plans in Egypt for the End Times, and that the Chinese in China and abroad were to stand together in the gap to fulfill what in His heart.

2017 was the fifty-fifth year the two founding couples of the Church of Zion had walked in covenant relationship together. As we prepared for the Gathering, we sensed that when two generations of overseas Chinese leaders came together to align with each other, God would birth the destiny of the overseas Chinese among us, and He would extend His mighty scepter from Zion again (Psalm 110:2).

Because time was short and 11/11 was a propitious date,

people picked it for weddings or conferences, it was supposed to be hard to book a venue. But we made declarations in the Awaken the Dawn prayer time, and we easily found a beautiful East Indian wedding venue called Aria. Esther was queen of Persia—which included India. More interestingly, the rental price we finally agreed on was \$11,000 and the manager would not budge another cent. I could not help laughing with Pastors Daniel and Seafaa who went with me. The Lord was humorous; even the rental cost confirmed the 11/11 date of our Gathering. We knew it had to be the Lord!



*In His glorious presence, the Holy Spirit led us to prostrate ourselves to worship the Lord. Less than a month after this, Pastor David called for Christians to take this posture of “prostration” back for our God. Together with our Chinese family and Egyptian family we responded, prostrating to worship Him!*

*See page 278 “The Door Pushed Open by the Chinese Again.”*

### North American Chinese Family Journey

The Lord invited His chosen ones in His family to come to this 1111 Gathering. What surprised us was that out of the 1,000 people who attended, a quarter of them came from the US. As mentioned before, we were overjoyed to find that our China family was gathering at the same time, so we made an appointment to meet online at 11:00 a.m. on November 11 (China time). Chinese Esther and Chinese Mordecai could bless

each other and declare alignment in the spirit. It was awesome!

In February 2018, just as we were seeking the Lord regarding the next step after the 1111 Gathering, the call of the Chinese Mordecai came. Pastor Priscilla, a leader in China, contacted Nicole and me, and felt in the spirit that it was time for the North American Chinese to come home. This echoed the prophecy of pastor Imiel at the 1111 Gathering, that this Gathering would initiate a series of overseas Chinese gatherings.<sup>2</sup> After sharing and confirming this with the fathers, we summoned North American Chinese leaders whom He had chosen and who had attended the 1111 Gathering, for they were the precious seeds who listened and obeyed Him. This critical mass of Chinese leaders met in Gideon's home in Vancouver from April 17-19, 2018, to seek His heart, and we had exactly seventeen people. The number seventeen was a sign of unity (John 17) to us, and we were filled with joy.

The Lord spoke to us that there would be a series of gatherings from the west coast to the east coast. And it happened just as He said. In June 2018, we had a gathering in Fremont on the



(Left) At 11:00am on November 11 (China time) the overseas family and the Chinese family met online and sent each other our blessings. Esther and Mordecai declared alignment in the spirit.

(Right) North American family dance and worship with all their might in the presence of the Lord, both on and off the stage.

west coast; in September we had the “Convergence” Gathering in IHOP, Kansas City, in the central US. We also had a gathering in Austin, Texas in the southern US, and in December we had a gathering in Egg Harbor on the east coast. Each Gathering was surprisingly wonderful, especially the “Convergence” Gathering in Kansas City, which witnessed the convergence of the two

streams from “Homecoming” and IHOPKC. IHOPKC was so impacted that it entered a new season of “reset” (see “Invading IHOP” in Nicole’s book *Destiny of the End-Times Chinese*). The east coast gathering particularly blessed the First Nations of North America. The Chinese Esther had begun to impact the “Persia” where we lived.



*First gathering of the North America Chinese leaders in Papa Gideon's home.  
There were exactly 17 of us and that filled us with joy*

### The dual identity of Overseas Chinese

Holy Spirit is unveiling the identity of overseas Chinese this season, for the time has come. Holding a Canadian passport, I went through a period of questioning my identity: “Am I Chinese or Canadian?” If we do not know our identity, we will not know our destiny!

So, how do we know our identity? What defines us as Chinese?

This is a crucial issue for overseas Chinese. Some will define whether we are Chinese or not by region (do I live in China?), or by political affiliation (which party do I belong to?), or by cultural identity (do I understand Chinese culture?). But the most powerful definition of identity comes from God’s perspective in the Bible.

We may understand the biblical view of identity by observing how God defines His Jewish people. The Jewish people are scattered all over the world, but they are still Jews. Regardless of whether they have assimilated into the local culture of foreign lands, God sees them as Jews, and wants them to return and rebuild their homeland. God sees our identity according to the bloodline He gave us, and not based on our locality, our passport, or our cultural identity. Queen Esther had dual identity. She was a citizen of Persia and a Jewish descendant. Both identities were useful in later days. She had the legal right to campaign for the Queen of Persia and gain the royal position for His purpose. At the same time, she could rise up to intercede for her own people and save the Jewish nation. Similarly, the Chinese Esther has dual identity that points to dual mission.

On the first day of the “Chinese Esther, Awake and Arise!” Gathering, David spoke on the biblical view of identity, strongly emphasising the importance of the Chinese identity:

“No matter where I live, I am Egyptian because my bloodline is Egyptian. When I read Isaiah 19, I receive the promises there regarding Egypt, and all the prophecies about Egypt belong to me. My daughter Rachel is 22 years old, she went to Egypt the first time recently, and she said: ‘Now I know who I am!’ She became alive by embracing her bloodline, and received all the inheritance of Egypt. In the same way, no matter where you live, you are Chinese, you must receive the inheritance of the Chinese. Don’t let the enemy steal your inheritance!

“I want to say to all the overseas Chinese, this is the time for you to receive your inheritance! It is not an accident that you live overseas. The Lord wants you to rise up as Chinese in the nations! Now is the time God wants to use you, because the next wave of His work must be carried by the eastern church,

especially the Chinese. Now is the time for the Chinese, so no matter where you are, you must embrace the inheritance of the Chinese!"

### We Want Our Inheritance!

On the last day at the 1111 Gathering, we connected with the mainland Chinese family and saw each other online. We faced the east and proclaimed to the mainland family, "We represent the overseas Chinese to receive what God has done in China, which is also our portion and inheritance!" God has given the key to open the nations to the Chinese, so as we embrace our Chinese bloodline, we open the doors of the nations together. The nations are waiting for the Chinese to arise. In Homecoming Gatherings, the Chinese brought breakthroughs wherever they went; Japan broke through, Korea broke through. God also used the Chinese to touch the deep root of division between the Jews and Arabs.<sup>3</sup> In the Middle East, Chinese are the most welcomed people group. This is God's favour, and it is not for the Chinese but for His kingdom's sake. May we become a seed of unity in His hands to bless His family across the earth!

God chose our bloodline to be the source of hope to every nation we enter. We do not earn this inheritance through our striving and efforts, but receive it by simply acknowledging our Chinese identity. When we stand in the right position, God's anointing, power, and destiny will fall upon us to fulfill His will. The Chinese will lead the nations not by loudspeakers on stage, but intercessions on our knees. Let us fully receive the precious legacy of tenacity in hardship and travailing prayers from our family in China, and fight the good fight in the spirit.

As David was adopted by Grandma Chiu (Gideon's mom), he

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3 Archives of some past gatherings can be accessed at <https://www.watchmen.org>

really saw himself as a Chinese son. He led us to declare and to receive the legacy from China at the end. I would like to invite any of overseas Chinese family who are reading this book now to think about this: Do you really recognize yourself a Chinese? If you have not embraced your Chinese bloodline in the past, I invite you now to join us in the spirit, and raise your hands to declare together with David too:



*The Chinese family are the backbone of the Homecoming Gatherings*

(Left) Dance team of Chinese from various regions leading worship in a Korea Gathering

(Right) During a Korea Gathering, Chinese and the global family together declared: North Korea, let my people go!

Lord, I am Chinese! I will lay hold of my inheritance! I won't give up my inheritance! I want to receive the inheritance from my family in China who are not afraid of persecution and hardship, and who travail in prayer! Apart from the inheritance from my bloodline, I also have inheritance from the country where I live, and the inheritance from my personal calling! I receive all the inheritances God blessed me when He created me, so that I may serve Him with all might and power!

More resources:

1. Renewal Family website: <http://www.renewalfamily.org/v1/index-en.html>
2. <http://www.renewalfamily.org/EstherArise1111/en/prophetic.html>
3. You can watch archives of some past gatherings in <https://watchmen.org>



9

## Endless Journey





## A Journey that Starts With the Destination

“DAD, YOU SEEM to be someone who walked out of the Bible,” Gideon’s daughter Mariam once said to him in admiration.

That was also how I felt when Gideon shared how in the beginning of this journey, a team of seven experienced miracles in Egypt and Israel related to Isaiah 19. Gideon is not only Chinese; he also has Jewish lineage. His walking with David not only represents Chinese and Egyptians walking together, but also Jews and Arabs walking together, which is One New Man walking together. What they experienced was awesome.

### Pillar on the Egyptian border

One day, Gideon was reading Isaiah 19 in his prayer room. When he read verses 18-20, it was as if he saw Egyptians come out from the Bible and run towards him. Heavenly Father told him that the two Egyptians He led into his life, David and Imiel, were related to this Bible passage, and they were important vessels in God’s end time plan.

*“In that day five cities in Egypt will speak the language of Canaan and swear allegiance to the Lord Almighty. One of them will be called the City of the Sun. In that day there will be an altar to the Lord in the heart of Egypt, and a monument to the Lord at its*

*border. It will be a sign and witness to the Lord Almighty in the land of Egypt” (Isaiah 19: 18-20).*

Later, Gideon learned that the City of Sun (now a suburb of Cairo, also called City of Destruction) turned out to be where both David and Imiel grew up. Abba Father asked him to protect them at any cost, even losing his church. He said yes to the Father, without knowing the high cost he would have to pay. On the following Sunday, Gideon shared his insight as the Lord commanded. But many people did not understand, and the voice of opposition caused confusion in the church. They asked why the senior pastor should lay down “normal” pastoral ministry to walk with an Egyptian and travel everywhere to share so-called “Kingdom messages”? Some people were skeptical, and some left the church in confusion. Just as the Lord had told him, it came almost to the point of losing the church. But he trusted the promise of God and determined to walk with David. The Lord was pleased with them, and signs and wonders followed as they walked together.

At that time, the Egyptian couple, David and Ruth, were added to the Chinese quartet of Church of Zion (Gideon and May, and Daniel and Lucy), and they sought the Lord together. One day, May received Matthew 28:10 from the Lord, “Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.” Everyone confirmed that the Lord wanted three couples to go to Israel, so they obeyed and went. At the time, David’s third son Ben had been born a few weeks earlier, and he went with them in their arms. Every morning they asked the Lord where they should visit. One morning, when May read Isaiah 19:19, which talked about a pillar on the Egyptian border. David came up with the idea that they should go from Israel to look for that pillar on the Egyptian border. They did not have a car, but

that day it just “happened” someone could lend them a seven-seat car.

On December 4, 1997, the Holy Spirit brought the seven of them from Israel to the Egyptian border. Because the car had an Israeli license plate, the officer at the Egyptian border refused to let them in, and said to David, jokingly, “Unless you are an ambassador.”

David blurted out, “I am an ambassador!” He was referring to being an ambassador of Heaven. Then a miracle happened: The officer didn’t say anything, and gave him an ambassador’s license without asking for any documents! With this special

miracle license, they went unimpeded all the way to the pillar on the Egyptian border. There was no one around, so they loudly proclaimed the promises of Isaiah 19 right at the pillar.



*Papa Gideon by the pillar on the Egyptian border*

They then returned to Israel and went to the Eastern Gate of Jerusalem. Ordinarily, the Eastern Gate is closed, since the Jews believe it will be open only when the

Messiah comes (Zech. 14: 4). Something amazing happened again: The gate was open with no one on guard. Surely it was an angel that opened the door. So they went in, and proclaimed Jesus’s return inside the Gate.

As they stood at the Eastern Gate to make proclamations, the Holy Spirit suddenly moved David to prostrate himself. The Biblical posture of prostrating ourselves in worship is to be done only unto our Most High God, but it has been used by Muslims

to worship Allah. It was stolen by the enemy in the past, but now God wanted to take it back. With his baby son in his arms, David fell to the ground. The Lord said to him, "You must stay prostrated till you hear the trumpet sound." How would they hear the sound of trumpet if they didn't bring one with them? But he knelt obediently, and after a long period, another miracle happened: they heard the sound of a trumpet. They knew it was an angel blowing it, so they all stood up. As soon as they were finished, someone came and, surprised to see them there, told them to leave immediately. They had completed the Lord's work, so they walked out from the Eastern Gate joyfully.

### God's Fingers

Throughout the years of the journey, there have been many amazing things that indicate God's direct intervention and assure us that He is among us. Gideon always pays special attention to important dates; this trait has been gradually passed on to his spiritual children. In the days of His soon coming, the Lord has released the anointing of Issachar to His church so they understand the times and know what they should do (1 Chronicles 12:32), and they are able to discern the proper time and procedure (Eccl. 8: 5). Surprisingly, the dates of the Gatherings show the awesome fingerprints of God's work. Here are two examples: November 11 and December 4.



*Papa Gideon and Mama May proclaiming at the Eastern Gate in Jerusalem*

### November 11

In the past, there have been several 1111 Gatherings held in different years and regions. And looking back, we found that all of them had to do with theme of ALIGNMENT: with God's heart, with God's people Israel, and with each other as God's family.

November 11, 1998: As Canadian leaders repented for rejecting the Jewish refugees on St. Louis and anti-Antisemitism, Canada realigned with Israel and was set on track towards her destiny.

November 11, 2011: Initiated by the Renewal Family in Vancouver, and later became a national Gathering in Canada. At the same time of this Gathering, Ruth's church and factory building in China was demolished due to persecution, so we stood with her in the spirit during her hardship. And the Holy Spirit brought out the end-time calling of China with Israel and Middle East.

November 11, 2017: "Chinese Esther, Awake and Arise!" in Vancouver. Special emphasis was placed on aligning overseas Chinese with the identity and destiny of Chinese bloodline. It was designated for Egypt Gathering yet being cancelled due to the unstable political situation, but coincidentally, the Chinese in China and overseas, both felt to gather and stand on this date for His end time purpose.

November 11, 2018: Pastor Nathanael Chow, one of the key fathers called this Gathering in Taiwan, said in the promotion video: "This Gathering is to align the womb of Taiwan with womb of Israel!" The Chinese family in Asia made a covenant to walk together, to align with His heart to enter our end time destiny together.

## December 4

As I was about to finish the draft of the book, the Holy Spirit reminded me to pay attention to December 4. Several important things happened on this date; we saw another wonderful fingerprint of God.

When I excitedly told Gideon about my new discovery, I thought he already knew it. To my surprise, he and May did not, and as a result, they were even more excited than I was. This at least proved that the date was definitely not pre-planned by men. So I just humbly recorded the following facts, and honestly I still don't understand the whole mystery. May the Holy Spirit continue to reveal His awesome purpose in this.

December 4, 1997: The Holy Spirit led David and Gideon with a team of seven to Israel and Egypt, and they proclaimed Isaiah 19 at the pillar in Egypt and at the Eastern Gate in Israel, that God's promises would be fulfilled.

December 4, 2007: On the same day ten years later, Canada's apostle of prayer, Pastor Bob Birch, was taken home by the Lord. When his eighty-eight spiritual sons, including Gideon, cried out "My father, my father!" the spirit of Elijah fell upon these fathers of Watchmen for the Nations in Canada, and they received the mantle of fatherhood.

December 4, 2012: the same day fifteen years later, the Lord woke up Gideon at 5:55 a.m. in Vietnam. Interestingly, even though it was December 5 in Vietnam, he still read the daily Bible portion according to Vancouver time, which was December fourth. The Lord used the Bible verses of the day, Ephesians 3:9-10, to let him know that there were still things on God's heart that He had yet to reveal; for He loves us to search His heart. King David's three warriors understood his unexpressed desire and fulfilled it (see 1 Chron 11:17-18). Similarly, Jesus longs for His churches to earnestly seek the will of the Father—even the

mysteries that He did not reveal in the past seasons—so that He can unleash unprecedented authority and glory through His church, beyond all we have ever known. At that time, Gideon was facing the distrust of local leaders in Vietnam, and this important revelation about His end-time churches helped him to overcome the challenges. It became one of his favorite passages to preach on.

December 4, 2017: the same day twenty years later, David, Gideon, and the original team of seven attended the pre-meeting of the “Blessed” Egyptian Gathering. The fathers and mothers in the original team, who went to visit the pillar in Egypt in 1997, were Chinese and Egyptians; twenty years later, they brought 500 leaders from more than 30 countries back to Egypt, and the majority, again, were Chinese and Egyptians. Their initial trip in 1997 activated the Homecoming Journey in the prophet’s chamber and prepared the way in the spirit for the victory of Egyptian Gatherings, with bigger breakthroughs and greater victories!



*After twenty years, the Zion quartet returned to Egypt. In the middle are Zion’s Egyptian missionaries, Medhat and Hoda.*

### The Door pushed Open by the Chinese Again!

The “Blessed” Gathering was to bless Egypt to enter her end-time destiny: together with Israel and Assyria, she was to be a blessing on the earth as described in Isaiah 19: 24-25. We gathered in a place called Shee-Hyt, which means “the measure of hearts.” In the Gathering, the Holy Spirit again worked on

two generations, and they turned their hearts towards each other (Mal. 4: 6). Pastor Asher, a Jewish father, said that the desert fathers had prayed for Egypt for hundreds of years in this historical “well,” and he declared that the time for Egypt to turn around was coming.



*Egypt Gathering 2017*

(Above) At the end of the gathering there was a dome-shaped cloud hovering over the venue, a sign of God's faithful protection and His delight

(Right) Jewish Pastor Asher together with the Arab pastors leading communion



There were several terrorist incidents during that time, so only 1,000 people were allowed to participate. Of all the international family who went, more than half were Chinese—mostly from China. We stood with the Egyptians and made covenant with each other. An Egyptian leader received the prophecy about the connection between Egyptians and Chinese and told us: “You may not need us, but we need you; let us walk together and see great things that God is going to do!”

The Chinese leaders warmly responded, “Let us fight a glorious fight together!”

During the Gathering, David asked us to prostrate ourselves to worship the Lord, the same prophetic gesture that God asked him to do at the Eastern Gate in Israel in 1997. Twenty years later, in his own country of Egypt, 1,000 people prostrated themselves in worship, giving glory to our Almighty God. This posture of worship had been stolen by the enemy in the past; now we again took it back.



(Left) Egypt Gathering in 2017. The global family together with the Egypt family once again prostrated to worship the Lord.

(Right) Chinese leadership gathering in 2018. Chinese family prostrated to worship the Lord.

When we all fell face down on the ground, God's presence came powerfully. Something significant happened at that time, as described in *Destiny of the End-Times Chinese*:

...the Egyptians were filled with excitement and gratitude at the arrival of the Chinese. This particular gathering gave birth to a very special event. During this gathering, the descendants of Ishmael and the descendants of Isaac stood onstage together, took communion and proclaimed that together they are the united body of Christ.

It was nearly unthinkable for something like this to happen. First, a large percentage of the Egyptians at this Gathering presumably believed in replacement theology. They felt that Israel had been replaced by the church and therefore no longer had a special role. Second, because

of the ancient feud between these two people groups, for Egyptians to accept *Israel* and the *Jewish people* was considered treacherous and a serious offense. As the Egyptian leaders honored the Jewish leaders onstage and even let them lead communion and prayer, this released a prophetic act based on Isaiah 19, which involved the same three countries represented—Egypt, Assyria, and Israel came together to hold hands and proclaim that the highway of Isaiah was officially open that day. I believe a great shaking occurred in the spiritual realm that day, and we must acknowledge that the door to Egypt was opened by the Chinese people!<sup>1</sup>

### Israel is God's Plumb line

When reflecting on all the things that happened on December 4, I had some thoughts to share here. When God brought the team of seven to Israel and Egypt in 1997, it was actually the beginning of a journey of destiny, “for such a time as this.” As recorded earlier, the first Canadian Gathering in 1995 was very successful, but shortly after the second Gathering in 1996, the leadership team was severely attacked by the enemy and, sadly, divided. David and the team decided to cease all Gatherings until the Lord revealed that the root problem was anti-Antisemitism. The Journey could only continue after Canada repented and turned the situation around. So, the Gatherings started to get on the right track after its alignment with Israel.

At the end of 1997, the Father brought the team of seven to two important strategic locations at the Eastern Gate of Jerusalem and the pillar by the Egyptian border. I asked the team what they declared there, and they only remembered two things: Isaiah 19

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<sup>1</sup> Nicole Jisi, *Destiny of the End-Times Chinese* (Fredericksburg, VA: Inscribe Press, 2020), 102-103. Translated from original Chinese.

and Jesus' return. I believe that they declared something "key" as well—not with words, but with action—that God had given them the key of the house of David: what they opened no one could shut (Isaiah 22:22). They opened the door of impossibility for the forthcoming journey by crossing the Egyptian border, as well as entering the Eastern Gate of Jerusalem.

Israel is God's plumbline. Fifteen years later, God used this plumbline to release His key in the 2012 Homecoming Gathering. Pastor Chuck Pierce brought a key from the West, but initially he did not know who it was for. David keenly discerned that this was the moment for the Chinese churches to arise and lead, so the key should be presented to them. Some people asked him



*Papa David prostrated himself at the Eastern Gate, with his son in his arms. Next to them was Mama Ruth.*

why God gave the key to the Chinese. David said that it was because the Western church accepted replacement theology, lost its love for Israel, and so lost its influence in the world. However, Chinese Christians love both Jews and Arabs, so God raised up the Chinese church to lead the body of Christ in the new season.

At this point we can say that, from the beginning, this journey has been tied directly to Jerusalem and Isaiah 19. The Father ordained the footsteps of the fathers of the Zion family, so they had already stepped toward this destination at the beginning of the journey. Isn't taking the gospel back to Jerusalem the destiny of the Chinese church? Isa 42: 9 says: "And new things I declare; before they spring into being, I announce them to you." Exactly!

before it happened, they declared what the Lord was about to do in advance. Chinese need to align with God's people Israel; that is why we received the key of the house of David to enter the glorious end-time destiny of China.

We can say that the beginning of this journey already pointed to the destination. The Lord sent David, Gideon, and the team of seven to Israel and Egypt in a prophetic trip. Looking back, isn't this Homecoming Journey the modern version of the "Back to Jerusalem Movement" (B2J)? That is exactly what Chinese forerunners were commissioned by the Lord long ago regarding the ultimate mission of the Chinese and their destiny in His end-time plan.

### Homecoming Journey and B2J

Many have heard the term B2J and knew that Chinese were called to take the gospel back to Jerusalem. But what does it really mean? David shared his wisdom in this regard. As Chinese are to bring the Gospel to the Middle East, the Lord is also commissioning Chinese to lead the nations into end-time Kingdom convergence: churches around the world need travel to "Back to Jerusalem" in the spirit. Over the past 2,000 years, western churches led the body of Christ, and brought the gospel from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth (Acts 1: 8). In the last days, the Lord will use the Chinese to lead the global church to return to Jerusalem from the ends of the earth.

In 1942, Pastor Mark Ma received the call of B2J. God told him that the gospel began in Jerusalem, passed through Europe and America to reach the east, and now China should bring the gospel from Gansu (one province in China) westward until Jerusalem. Pastor Mark responded, "Lord, who are we to carry such a great responsibility?"

The Lord replied, "I will show My power through those who

have no strength!” The Lord told him that western missionaries brought the gospel to China, but did not open the door to western Asia; it was the inheritance kept especially for the Chinese churches, so that when Jesus returns, China would not be too poor!<sup>2</sup>

The Chinese spiritual pioneers gladly received the mission to take the gospel westward. The Lord made it very clear that He chose the Chinese because He wanted to use our weakness to manifest His power.



(Left) Chinese family witnessed the unity among Israeli and Arab leaders



(Right) In the same gathering, Jewish Pastor Asher was being surrounded by a group of Israel-loving Arab brothers declaring to be the protectors of Israel.

What was the weakness of the Chinese? Surely we had many weaknesses, but the biggest weakness of our people was disunity. We were fragmented and divided despite our large population, so we were ridiculed as “scattered sands.” In those days, the Northwest Spiritual Band did not fulfill the B2J mission because of disunity. One of the first generation of apostles in the movement, Simon Zhao, wrote to Pastor Fred Hsu in the US, saying that Kashgar was home to the Northwest Spiritual

<sup>2</sup> Paul Hattaway, *Back to Jerusalem*, (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 26

Band, but when he wanted to return to Kashgar thirty-eight years later, he was hindered by his own old colleagues. Although he experienced great persecution for the B2J mission throughout his life, it did not prevent him from moving forward with the vision. What stopped him was the “internal” problem of disunity and division.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, as we take up the baton to fulfill the B2J vision in the new season, the most important thing, as well as the most needed breakthrough, is our UNITY! As matter of fact, what the Chinese Bride has gained most from the Homecoming Journey is true UNITY and ONENESS. Historically, the enemy constantly attacked our unity so that we kept being scattered sands, but this curse has been broken by the strong anointing of family.

In the global Chinese Gathering in July 2019 in Hong Kong, Chinese from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Macao, and overseas proclaimed together before the representatives of the nations: “We are one”! We have transitioned from being divided in the past, and now we are a “five in one” loving family.

Once in my prayer time, I saw this “five in one” Chinese family like the five fingers of a hand—each different, yet indispensable to the whole. When our hands are open, we embrace the nations together; when we clench our fists, we fight against the enemies together!

Yes, the Chinese are populous and powerful, and not only have we “multiplied,” but we have also “filled the earth” by God’s grace.

Gideon likes to use the metaphor of rainbow. People usually only see the top half of a rainbow, without seeing the bottom half, as it is hidden from human eyes. Similarly, the secret things

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<sup>3</sup> Nicole Tsai, *Destiny of the End-Times Chinese*, (Fredericksburg, VA: Inscribe Press, 2020), 164. Translated from original Chinese.

belong to God (see Deuteronomy 29:29), and spiritual men can understand only when God reveals His mysteries. Now we have come to understand that God created so many Chinese and placed us everywhere, not as scattered sands, but a people united for His beautiful purpose. He has apostolically and prophetically located the Chinese all over the world, and that is His wise and strategic display of His end-time army.

How amazing and unfathomable is God's wisdom!

### Zion is the Goal

Church of Zion, the womb that gave birth to the



*In a small leadership gathering, the representatives from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Macau, and the overseas each held a Chinese knot symbolizing unity of the hearts, just like a family.*

Homecoming movement, has been called "kingdom church," "seed church," "model church," and so on by many prophets. However, we may miss the message God wants to release through this "home of Homecoming" if our concepts of evangelism and missions are not renewed, and even revolutionized, especially in

the new season. As Church of Zion always sought the Lord, she became quite unique because of God's fresh guidance. Yet she still faced challenges. For example, some said that Church of Zion does not evangelize. But as early as 2001, Pastor Imiel, our prophet in the house, made three prophecies to Zion that clearly spoke of the end-time missionary calling of this church:

"You are a missionary body sent for all nations ..... to win the Jews into my kingdom .....I will surprise you when you will see multitudes of Jewish people coming to my kingdom." (February 18)

“I will cause this church to be an evangelistic church. The most important and precious thing, not yet disclosed, is that this church will be as I have ordained for it, a missionary one. This is her main calling. But the Lord said, I will release you in a very unexpected way!” (March 25)

“I will raise up those who are willing to raise the banners, not just for the city, but also for the country, and for global missions. The Lord said that the journey has just begun.” (August 5)<sup>4</sup>

Though she doesn't evangelize in the traditional sense, the main calling of Church of Zion is actually evangelism and missions. This is the awesome wisdom of God. On August 16, 2009, Stacy Campbell, a visiting prophet, prophesied to Gideon during Zion's Sunday worship service, and further confirmed that this missionary strategy came from the wisdom of God:

The church is named Zion, Church of Zion. Zion was the dwelling place of God and all the nations will stream to Zion! I feel like the Lord said, you are named by My Holy Spirit because you have created a dwelling place for Me. And now I am sending you into all the world to disciple nations of what it is like to create a dwelling place for Me. And I feel like Zion, you are going to take what you've learned here in Zion out to so many people. You told me that you were meeting all these leaders of China, and the back to Jerusalem movement. And I feel like the Lord said because they need to learn how to create a dwelling place for God where His tabernacle will be among men. The criteria for His tabernacle amongst men is that they dwell in unity because He cannot live there when the brothers are divided.

And I just really feel that God is going to give you key insights. You know the bible says Jesus disarms principalities and powers. He disarmed it. I feel like Gideon and May, that you are going

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<sup>4</sup> *Prophetic words, teachings and reflections* (Booklet published on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Church of Zion, 2002). 7-9.

to come to many times difficult crossroads where there's going to be people absolutely locked in disagreement. And the Lord is going to give you either the action or the word of knowledge or the way to disarm the principality or the power that will actually dissolve the disagreement and it will be supernatural. And the reason you have suffered so much, because I see many stripes on your back, is that you had to learn how to overcome some of these principalities and powers. And God has taught you keys so that you will be actually able to bring nations together. And I feel like that God's going to send you more and more and more to disciple nations. And the greatest years of your life are ahead of you. Father, we want to bless these emissaries, ambassadors of Christ, these ministers, Lord, of reconciliation, but reconciliation is not the goal. Zion is the goal — the dwelling place of God on the earth and in heaven is the goal! Remember Zion, remember Zion.

When the Lord called David out of the medical profession, it was not to build another church, but to prepare the bride for the Lord, to prepare a dwelling place for Him. He never disobeyed the vision from heaven. So could the Homecoming Journey, that commenced from Church of Zion, be God's "unexpected" way as prophesied years ago?

In addition to renewing the concept of missions, we also need to rethink what the "gospel" truly is in the Father's heart. The gospel is not just in the future tense; instead it's good news in the present. Jesus IS our unity. When united with the Lord, we have the unity that He has "finished" on the cross. In Christ, we are already with the Lord in heavenly realms (Ephesians 2: 6, Gal. 2:20) where our spirits live now.

The Lord instituted a new way of missions through the Homecoming Journey. In the storms and shakings of the last days, people long for true love and family connections. Father

has poured out His oil of love upon us, so we can love the lost ones into His house (John 13: 34-35). They will step into their own homecoming journey towards their heavenly home. I believe this is the end-time missions strategy: the new command of love in action.

We used to think that missions in the Middle East meant sending missionaries there, learning the local language and then preaching Jesus. This kind of missions strategy is very costly, but not very effective. My good friend Ding is a pioneer working in the front lines of Chinese missions; she is also one of the core leaders of the Homecoming team in China. She told me that her missionary organization has completely “switched tracks” from the battlefield model to the family model, from co-workers to family members. She invited the China Homecoming team to impart the anointing of family to the hundreds of missionaries in their missionary retreat in 2019, and to bring the Homecoming DNA to the mission fields. She said, “Our focus now is to build families and relationships, because all the elite soldiers need to be nurtured in the family first. Love is our goal!”

Ding’s missionary team includes a Chinese missionary couple serving in Egypt, Sally and Peter (pseudonyms). The letters we received from Sally recorded their difficulties in finding jobs, learning languages, applying for visas, and sending kids to school. Once Peter was driving on a desert road and was so tired that he fell asleep. He was awakened by the Father in the split second before the car almost rolled over into a deep ditch. Time and again they experienced the Father’s protection.

Sally told me that although the family still faced the challenges in front-line missions, things have changed since they adopted the culture of family in the Homecoming Journey. Recently she gave birth to a baby, and when the local Muslim women came to visit, they were surprised to see Peter cooking and sweeping the

floor, because it was something Egyptian men would never do for their wives! A simple display of love in action opened their hearts and started a dialogue on life and faith. Sally said, “Now we just simply live among them, love each other, and show the love of God in our home.” Yes, the most important thing is to live it out. In the midst of loving each other, the door of missions is opened naturally.

Looking back from the first gathering in 1995 to the present, the Homecoming Journey went from Canada to Asia, Europe, and the Middle East, reaching more than forty countries and bringing great blessings to the family of God around the world. When we look back on these prophecies, we start to understand that there is a prophetic calling in this Homecoming womb of Church of Zion. As mentioned earlier, although she is imperfect, broken, and not the only expression of the end-time church in God’s heart, she is indeed a prophetic picture of a church that exists to prepare a dwelling place for God on earth.

January 2020, in a BC Gathering in Glad Tidings Church in Vancouver, Pastor Marc DuPont emphasized the beautiful heritage of Chinese hospitality. He said that this is closely related to the Chinese mission of bringing the Gospel back to Jerusalem:

God has given different gifts and characteristics to people of different ethnicities. Apart from deep intercession, the Chinese are also one of the most hospitable peoples! History has come to the point to focus on the Middle East. Hebrew culture emphasizes hospitality; the early church prayed and took communion at home. Psalm 68: 5-6 says that God sets the lonely in families. In fact, we need hospitality at home and the genuine sharing of life, more than miracles and prophetic words. Asian and Chinese churches can provide this unique part in the body.

The Chinese indeed have this anointing of love, home, and hospitality. However, the enemy tried to destroy the family

and stole the culture of hospitality through successive political movements. Now is the season for restoration!

In the natural realm, a bride is married from her home. Spiritually, I believe the bride of Christ needs to be prepared at home too. The Chinese bride has tasted the harmony of family and the authority of unity; now she is not only a prepared bride, but she is a bride that prepares the bride from other nations for the Lord.

Beloved overseas Chinese family, may we prepare warm and loving families around the world for the Lord, so the “little sisters” (Song of Songs 8:8) may find homes to grow into a mature bride, as we wait together for our Bridegroom Jesus to come!

### The Eternal Feast of Tabernacles

In January 2020, at Gideon’s home, David shared at a Zion leadership gathering that B2J is not only an evangelistic movement, but also related to the Feast of Tabernacles and the dwelling place of God. The Chinese will experience the indwelling presence of God, and He will “tabernacle” among the Chinese. Because the Chinese are all over the world and have a strong influence, they can connect many nations. They will not only bring the gospel, but also the tabernacle of God and the presence of God to the nations. They will inspire the nations to worship the Lord in Jerusalem: “Let us worship the Lord together!” This is the true meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles, the dwelling place of God.

Meditating upon David’s revelation about B2J and the Feast of Tabernacles, I started to think about the three annual Jewish Feasts, which remind us of our covenant with the Lord. Passover typified the redemption of the Son, and Pentecost typified the coming of the Holy Spirit. The first two Feasts have already been fulfilled as Jesus is the Lamb of Passover, and the Holy Spirit has come on Pentecost.

Then, does the Feast of Tabernacles await to celebrate our dwelling with the Heavenly Father forever? Jesus said He is the way, so He is not the ultimate destination! He wants to bring many sons into the glory of the Father. The Father will dwell with us forever, and His dwelling place will be among the people (see Revelation 21: 3)! It suddenly occurred to me: isn't the Father's house the ultimate destination of this Homecoming Journey? The eternal Feast of Tabernacles?

What is the ultimate significance of the Feast of Tabernacles? God will dwell among the people and will be with us forever! This Homecoming Journey is ultimately a journey from Earth to Heaven, coming up to the Lord (see Revelation 4:1).

In the spirit, I saw the Chinese Esthers who are scattered all over the world began to wake up like stars (the meaning of Esther), more and more in the dark night. Then wherever the Homecoming Journey goes by, those individual stars start to connect by the circuit of love, and an “electric current” of the Father’s love flows through them with mighty power, until they become shining bright lamps of love filling the earth.

I then saw the lamps of love everywhere becoming a huge net in the nations, and Chinese are the knots linking firmly all the lonely and detached strands with love. Wherever there are Chinese, there are connections of love! The Lord will empower the Chinese with anointings of His strong love, and they will become ambassadors of love to the nations, not only to bring two sons of Abraham home, but also the nations home.

At last, I saw this net of love became a fishing net of love in the hands of God, prepared for the greatest harvest of souls. There were no holes or disconnections in this net, because of the firm knots of deep love. As recorded in the Gospel of John, when the resurrected Lord asked the disciples to bring their catch, even though the net was full of fish, yet it was not torn (see John 21:

10-11). In this great harvest of the End Times, none of Abba's precious children will be left out. They will all come home!

Through the assignment of writing this book, I have had the chance to stand on the shoulders of spiritual giants around me and have been able to see a little more and a little farther. And I can't help but be amazed by this journey of Homecoming. I believe the Chinese will witness the homecoming of the two sons of Abraham, and will eventually see "Adam and Eve" being reconciled with each other and with the Father, as we experience a restoration of the joy we experienced in the Garden of Eden when God and men dwelt together!

Therefore, we can trace this Homecoming Journey all the way back to Genesis—from the Garden of Eden in Genesis to the New Jerusalem in Revelation, with the saints through the ages joining us to become "one" in the spirit. And as we walk this way home, we find ourselves on the path Heavenward, from the earthly home to the heavenly home. Like the prophetic painting of my friend Jean Long on the cover of the book, we enter together into the "Wedding of the Lamb"!

I have found that the person who best described the eternal destination of this Journey is one of my favorite saints. Brother Lawrence lived in the seventeenth century and was an extraordinary lover of Jesus. Let me expand the "I" in his writing to "we," for I believe the bride of Christ, far or near, ancient or present, are singing the same song of desire for our Bridegroom Jesus, in the same Journey of Homecoming:

Oh the goal of our love, what is more joyful than meeting  
You face to face! Every day we wait for you to bring us  
to Your side, and our hearts have already gone to You...  
Although we are walking on the road in the desert, we are  
happier each day, because of the thought of seeing You,  
knowing that day is drawing nearer.

We know that You too are eager to meet us in the glory at the other side! Of all the songs offered to You, in heaven and on earth, what is Your favorite one? Isn't it the song from Your lovers on the road in the desert, coming closer and closer to You!<sup>5</sup>



# Afterword

## Interview with David Demian

WHAT REALLY IS the journey of Homecoming? As I came to the end of writing this book, I was still not sure if I had truly expressed the key points of the journey. Thankfully, I had a chance to sit down and chat with David for a long time, and when I knew his answer for the question, I felt released. He did not want to give a man-made label to this journey which has been led by the Holy Spirit.

### God Uses Imperfect Men

“God uses human beings to fulfill His will on earth, but people are not pure, complete, or perfect. There are different dimensions to the move of God. A move of God has to come through vessels that are not perfect. Otherwise, He would send angels but that is not his heart. He uses human beings. Part of the test is: if something is a pure move of God, then all you can do is allow it to change you. People usually thought we should first be changed, then have a move of God, which is true. Yet I feel more importantly that we shall prepared to be changed in the move of God, in His presence, because a lot of our weaknesses are not clear to us until the Holy Spirit comes, and suddenly we realize our weaknesses.

“Remember in Isaiah 6; Isaiah ‘saw the Lord high and lifted

up, the train of His robe filled the temple'; and suddenly he discovered: 'Woe to me... I am a man with unclean lips living with people of unclean lips.' It was not Isaiah's cleanness that brought God's presence; but when he saw His presence, Isaiah was overwhelmed with his uncleanness. That was when the Lord sent an angel with the coal from the altar to touch his lips. That was when the Lord asked him, 'Who do I send?' The presence in the move of God draws us nearer to the fire to be more purified. If we resist it or attempt to control it, the movement dies. People think God is looking for men to help him organize the movement, yet He is looking for men to help Him maintain it, not to organize it. He knows what to do. He is looking for a host, not a leader. He is looking for those who host His presence, not lead His presence.

### A Journey without Labels

"What's the main heart for this movement? Bottom line, it is preparing the bride for the Bridegroom. It's not only about the family, although family is a part. It is not about this or that. All the different expressions and responses are pieces for one thing. God wants to prepare us from different angles. For example, He might say: 'If you're going to prepare your heart, I want you to reconcile with this, I want you to repent for this, I want you to pray for this, I want you to do this prophetic act...' All these are steps that the Lord leads us into, but we never initiate them. Our heart is: How do we prepare the bride for you, O Lord? We keep asking Him, and aligning with Him. 'Lord, do you want us to do this?' 'What is the next step?'

"We are not a reconciliation movement; we are not a prayer movement; we are not a prophetic movement. We are all of them, but we are none of them.

"People always want to label you. Once they label you, then they define you. Once you are defined, you are limited, and it's

hard for people to be free to follow the Holy Spirit.

“What is a title? It’s a definition of who you are. That’s why people ask, trying to define you, ‘What’s your job?’ ‘What’s your title?’ ‘What do you do?’ The culture is always like that. People look for common threads, such as ‘Where do you go to school?’ ‘What do you do for a living?’ They are trying to find a common point to relate to each other, to define a person and to define themselves. This comes from not knowing each other in the spirit. They are trying to find the natural thing to connect.

“In my heart, I always rebel against this type of human understanding. When the Lord moves, the glory is going to fall, but we are not to touch it. Because it is not our place. Our place is not to touch the glory of God. That’s why He was angry with Uzzah. He had a good heart, trying to protect the ark of the covenant. But trying to protect the vision can be an attempt to control it.

“That is why it’s very hard for people to define our movement. What is Homecoming? We talk about family, but that’s only one aspect of what we talk about. It’s hard for people to see you undefined, so they try to define you. They feel a need to find some way to relate, to lay hold of what they do not understand. An undefined thing has no frame. It’s loose; that’s very scary. People are not used to it, because their spirits are not trained to relate to something that is not defined.

“Some people say Homecoming is about unity because that is their longing. Some say it is family, obedience, sacrifice, reconciliation, humility... Each one sees a piece of the puzzle, but if you don’t see the whole picture, then even though you hold an important piece, you won’t know what to do with it or where to place it.

“We need to die to our gifts. Everyone has spiritual gifts. I have spiritual gifts and I especially feel the Lord’s anointing in some areas, but I must die to my gifts. Otherwise, we will say,

'I'm not a plumber; when my time comes, then I'll serve.' 'I am not a carpenter...' 'I'm not...' We must be willing and ready to serve as the Lord leads, not just with our spiritual gifts.

"Also, we need people who are like architects among us who see the bigger picture and facilitate the team. These facilitators must be led by the Spirit to fulfill their difficult tasks.

"Transformation is not a good change, it's a radical change. It is a death to who you are, and resurrection to another form. It's the caterpillar to butterfly. You will not recognize yourself after that kind of transformative change. But people like tradition. I mature; I grow; I look at myself. I said to my wife Ruth a few times, you're not living with the man you married, because I've transformed many times. Literally the man she married is not the man she is living with now! How do you choose your partner? Only God. We want transformation in His presence!

"In my heart, I'm intentionally trying to move out of definition. Anyone can do what we are doing. It's not our trademark. Family is not our trademark. Obedience to God is not our trademark. That's Christianity 101. We're just going back to the foundation."





# Appendix

## The Overview of Overseas Chinese

IN RECENT YEARS, overseas Chinese have distinguished themselves from the Chinese population in Asia. A sharp increase in both their quality and quantity has highlighted the increasingly significant role they play. The data from the latest United Nations report on global immigration in 2019 shows that China has become the third largest migrant-exporting country, with eleven million overseas emigrants, only trailing behind India and Mexico.<sup>1</sup> The “Chinese International Immigration Report (2015)” discloses that the Chinese are the biggest immigrant group scattered around the world with the United States, Canada, Australia, developed countries in Europe and Japan being the most popular destinations in recent years.<sup>2</sup> To help readers develop a deeper understanding of overseas Chinese, the following paragraphs will delve into the overseas Chinese phenomenon from a historical and cross-cultural perspective.

### The Rising Up of Overseas Chinese in Other Nations

With mindsets such as “sojourner mentality” and “fallen leaves must return to the roots,” earlier and more traditional overseas Chinese developed relatively closed Chinese communities. Due to linguistic and cultural differences, conservative attitudes, and subpar economic circumstances, they lacked the willingness to integrate into local societies. A newer generation of Chinese

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1 “Future trends in overseas emigration from China”, <https://scgti.org/ccg/2013/0722/1702.html> (article in Chinese)

2 “Where are the Chinese emigrating to?” <https://overseastudent.ca/?p=18303> (article in Chinese)

immigrants, however, has displayed a stronger willingness to fit in both socially and politically as a result of higher levels of income, education, job positions, and linguistic capability. In recent years, there has been an increase in political participation and organization of political parties by overseas Chinese. In the year 2011 alone, Chinese French Wu Zhen Hua was elected as a committee member of the congress of Union pour un Mouvement Populaire in March; during the Canadian Federal Election in May, seven out of the twenty-two Chinese Canadians who ran for office were elected, setting a record high in terms of Chinese candidates in an election; in the same month in the U.K. regional elections, six out of the nine Chinese candidates were elected, with five winning the highest number of votes in their respective regions.<sup>3</sup>

### The Contribution of Overseas Chinese to Modern China

In modern Chinese history, overseas Chinese were a key factor in China's momentous transition from a feudal dynasty to a socialist nation state. In fact, they played a leading role in the historical development of modern China. For instance, Qichao Liang enlightened China with the New Democratic movement; Sun Yat-sen preached the "Three Principles of the People;" Tan Kah Kee prompted over ten million overseas Chinese to form hundreds of patriotic societies that contributed much to support China during the years of the Japanese invasion. Not only have overseas Chinese brought back enormous amounts of wealth, they have also introduced Western technology, culture, art and intellectual theories. Out of the twenty-three recipients of the "Liang Dan Yi Xing (Two Bombs and One Satellite)" Merit

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<sup>3</sup> "Future trends in overseas emigration from China", <https://scgti.org/ccg/2013/0722/1702.html>

Award, twenty-one were scientists who studied abroad. Also, through starting Chinese restaurants, Chinese schools, Chinese publications, and getting legal status for Chinese medicine in many nations, overseas Chinese have been pioneers in promoting Chinese culture. According to the data provided by Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of China's State Council to China Economic Weekly, overseas Chinese have invested the most in Mainland China. Over 60% of Mainland China's foreign investment comes from overseas Chinese and Chinese in Hong Kong and Macau, with a total of about 330 billion U.S. dollars.<sup>4</sup>

### The Contribution of Modern Overseas Chinese Christians

In 1854, Yung Wing, the first Chinese student to study abroad, came to Christ at Yale University. After returning to China, he actively participated in the establishment of the Chinese Educational Mission. Between 1872 and 1881, the Qing Dynasty government dispatched over 100 young students to study in the United States. Many of them came to Christ and preached the gospel after their return to China. Twenty years later, they became very influential individuals in many different fields. A few examples include Jeme Tien Yow, the “Father of China’s Railroad;” Liang Cheng, ambassador to the United States; and Tang Shao Yi, the first Premier of the Republic of China. Salt and Light, a book edited by Carol Hamrin and Stacey Bieler, discusses more thoroughly the contributions of Chinese Christians in this period in fields such as education, medicine, foreign relations, and agriculture. Some of them, such as Yung Wing, Tong Kwo On, Mei Yi-Chi and Y.C. James Yen, have great reputations, but few know they were Christians. The book

<sup>4</sup> “The contribution of overseas Chinese in the historical development of China”, [https://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog\\_695b36b90102ebw9.html](https://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_695b36b90102ebw9.html) (article written in Chinese)

describes the tremendous impact of the Christian faith in their lives and their contribution to China's development.<sup>5</sup>

### Pressure and Circumstances of Contemporary Overseas Chinese

God has granted the Chinese certain virtues such as perseverance, diligence, and fortitude. This has enabled generations of overseas Chinese to be successful in foreign lands. They have also given back to their motherland. However, behind the appearance of success, there is much pain hidden in their hearts. We Chinese, after all, have a need to save face and are accustomed to "only reporting the good news." This has led many in China to admire us and imagine that we are enjoying life in the "splendid outside world." It is time to unveil these unrealistic and romantic assumptions. Living in drastically different cultural, linguistic, and societal settings, overseas Chinese experience a wide array of pressures that include a sense of identity loss, struggles to make ends meet, racism, and generational conflicts. Reality is far from romantic and promising.

We can take depression as an example to help us further understand the inner world of overseas Chinese. In the Chinese culture, people are usually reluctant to admit they have depression and are unwilling to seek help because they would risk being called a lunatic, bringing shame to the family. Vancouver, where I live, has attracted many Chinese with its natural beauty; but even here they cannot escape depression. Canadian newspaper Sing Tao Daily reported an instance in which a couple committed suicide one after the other within a year because of depression, leaving behind two sons in their teens and a sixty-seven-year-old grandmother. On August 31, 2019, British newspaper UK-Chinese Times posted an article regarding this tragedy: "Why Is

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5 "A history of Chinese American Christians who returned to China", <https://www.bcl-chinese.net/node/161> (article written in Chinese)

the Depression Rate So High Among the Chinese?” The article probed the struggles of overseas Chinese, and documented the discussions regarding this incident by the Chinese Canadian media:

The kids are so pitiful; before emigrating, people need to carefully evaluate their ability to cope with stress.

Canada is not a paradise, and is not a place for just anyone to come.

The outside world is only shown the positive things, but immigrants have to cope with many hardships.

In fact, overseas Chinese immigrants and international students have become a high-risk group for depression. Countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand are the most popular countries for Chinese immigrants, but studies and media reports there have found that the average rate of depression among Chinese communities are higher than that of the local population.

In December of 2018, fifty-five-year-old Stanford University professor, Shoucheng Zhang, jumped off a university building and died. Due to his studies on topological insulators and the “Majorana Fermion,” he was once considered as “the Chinese physicist closest to the Nobel Prize in Physics.” His family members, however, were not aware that he was diagnosed with depression. In July of 2006, forty-two-year-old Guobing Jiang jumped off a highway interchange in Toronto and died. He was undoubtedly a successful individual. He scored the highest on the Chinese national university entrance exam in Hubei province, and became the youngest assistant professor of Tsing Hua University at the age of thirty-one. Between 1996 and 2006, he left for the U.S. and Canada, and obtained a dual-PhD from two distinguished universities there. In 2006, he pursued post-doctoral studies. However, as his contract expired, he was

faced with the possibility of unemployment and losing face if he returned to China. He was yet another talented scholar who eventually succumbed to the pressures of life.

Whether they are university professors or restaurant waiters, overseas Chinese are all susceptible to depression. The most tragic part is that the person and his family might be totally unaware of it.<sup>6</sup>

### Time for Overseas Chinese to Soar

As Christians, we know Jesus is the Way, the only Way for the human race, and the only Way for overseas Chinese! Through the brokenness and the humility brought upon us by our experiences overseas, we have reached our limits, but this is when God begins to work. Therefore, many overseas Chinese have come to Christ, the true God. However, after being saved by grace, our lives may gradually stabilize, and we may become complacent. In an environment where there is freedom of religion and little persecution, it is easy to become lukewarm if we are not spiritually alert (see Revelations 3:16). We become used to having no hunger or thirst for God and eventually become spiritually dry and numb. Like frogs in warm water where the heat is gradually increased, we may not even realize that we have been boiled alive.

There are many second-generation overseas Chinese who have distinguished themselves in various fields, and many of them have come to Christ. Yet they still struggle with their identity, and do not know who they are. Even after reaching high worldly positions, the depths of their hearts still ache with loneliness, emptiness, and dissatisfaction.

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6 “Immigrant couple commit suicide in Canada, why the increase in depression among Chinese?”, [ukchinese.com/2019/08/01](http://ukchinese.com/2019/08/01) (article written in Chinese)

Now is time for the Holy Spirit to awaken these dormant Josephs, Moseses, Esthers, Daniels, and Nehemiahs. They shall comprehend the exceptional role and calling of overseas Chinese and enter into the glorious destiny our heavenly Father has for us. My hope is that this book may serve a bridge between the Chinese in the motherland and overseas Chinese, so that our family in our native land can understand the spiritual needs of overseas Chinese and their second generation, and that overseas Chinese can embark on a journey to seek their roots and restore their Chinese identity and destiny.

Similarly, what I shared above as an overseas Chinese can also apply to those who left their native countries and settled overseas, e.g., overseas Jews, overseas Egyptians, overseas Japanese. Although they have left their mother nations, they have not forsaken their God-chosen bloodline identities, callings, and destinies.

Dear family, I long to discover with you the root of this “family journey” that has blessed over forty nations worldwide, and also the root of the self-identity the heavenly Father bestowed upon you when He created you. This pure river of Homecoming has led me back to my spiritual home and my natural home. This is indeed a surprise from Heavenly Father.

I have come home, and deeply believe that our Father will bring you home too! This is my blessing and prayer for you, from the bottom of my heart.



# About the Author

Joy Li's desire is to be a friend of God, preparing the dwelling place for His second coming. Her heart desire is to be a friend of God, preparing the dwelling place for His second coming. She longs to passionately love her Bridegroom Jesus and love others and see Mal 4:5-6 fulfilled in the Lord's end-time church family.

Joy is one of the pastors in the Church of Zion in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Once a church-planter of a Baptist church, she later joined the Renewal Pastors' Family in BC, and became part of the Canadian journey of Watchmen for the Nations for many years before the journey expanded to Asia.

Carrying the destiny of Chinese deep in her heart, she serves and shares leadership at City Prayer Altar and Renewal Pastors' Family, as well as North American Chinese Connection.

Following her spiritual fathers, she fully committed herself to serve the family journey in different places in the world—especially in Asia. Responding to the call of the Father, Joy and her team live in community and have all things in common, as in Acts 5. They are looking for the day we all become the One Bride that Jesus dies for, and will return for.



# Cover Art

The artwork on the cover of this book was taken from a painting by Jean Long titled “Wedding of the Lamb.” She graciously gave permission for her work to be used.

Discover other paintings and creative expressions on Jean’s website “midnight cry.”

Visit <https://midnightcryart.com/portfolio-item/wedding/>

