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## Restoration of all things

Jerusalem, August 2008

Acts 3: 21 ***“He (Jesus) must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.”***

Everything has to be restored until the Lord returns? This includes our proper relationship as a Church from the nations to Israel. In the times that we are living, some congregations recognise that we are in the same boat with the people of Israel. It went wrong during the time of the Nazis in Germany, because Christians thought, that they were not connected with Israel and with the 10 commandments, especially not with the first one. Exodus 20, 3 ***“I am the Lord your God, you shall have no other gods before me.”***

The first Christians suffered under the Roman Caesars because they could not bring godly honour to the Caesars. Mordecai could not give godly honour to Haman in the book of Esther, because he was a Jew. Hitler hated the Jewish people because of the God of Israel and the 10 commandments. If our conscience is bound to the 10 commandments a dictator cannot manipulate or control us. If he plans to kill or steal or be worshipped as God, he would not manage if people were committed to the word of God.

Manipulation can also happen in different forms inside of the church and we have to watch our motivations in the light of the word of God. Paul's motivations have been so pure that he could say in: 2. Corinthians 11, 2 ***“I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to HIM.”***

His first desire was to present to the Lord, a pure virgin bride. The Lord knows our motivations and what we are looking for. Do we like to have a great ministry and a lot of influence? Genesis 11, 4 ***“Come let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered.”***

Paul also talks about other wrong motivations: Galatians 4, 17- 18 ***“Those people are zealous to win you over, but for no good. What they want is to alienate you from us, so that you may be zealous for them. It is fine to be zealous, provided the purpose is good, and to be always and not just when I am with you. My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you.”*** We see Paul's struggle for the right relationship with his spiritual children. Paul warns us in Galatians 1, 10: ***“Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ.”***

We approach a time when the last Antichrist will again demand godly honour; therefore we must prepare our hearts to stay in the right relationship with our Lord. Through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit there was the first hour of grace for the church.

As we look at the effects of the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit, we can only pray that this outpouring would take place again.

The promise in Joel 2, 28 was ***“And afterward I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams; your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those***

*days*". The Spirit of God overcame all gaps existing during that time. The gap between Jew and Gentile couldn't be mentioned at that time, because the basis for this unity was only given through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. As the Spirit of God will be poured out again, even this gap will be bridged by His power. Jew and Gentile would find their place in the Kingdom of God and do what each one is required to do, being in the perfect will of the Lord. Ephesians 2, 14 -16 ***"For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility."*** In the New Testament this is the only time we see the word "create" in relation to Jesus. This creative act of Jesus is very important because it relates to the preparation of His Bride. During this process, we are passing through great birth pains. It can be painful to find the right place in God's Kingdom, because it might not be what we think and also not what others think. We have nothing in our hands, and depend on the Lord. There will be new wine in new wineskins. The unity of the first Church was a supernatural experience. Because of this unity in the Lord Jesus, there was sharing of goods, healing, deliverance, salvation and holiness. The law of Holy Spirit was written on their hearts, as it is written in Jeremiah 31, 31- 34. ***"The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them declares the Lord. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, know the Lord, because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord."*** Without this supernatural intervention we are unable to stand during difficulties and times of suffering.

Jesus was left alone in Gethsemane during His hour of great suffering. In the hour of great suffering for the Jewish people, the Holocaust, they were also left alone even from the biggest part of the Church in Europe.

In the hour of darkness and suffering, the whole body of Christ coming out of Jew and Gentile, will stand in opposition against humanistic understanding and the kingdom of this world.

Jesus loves the Jewish people and we also love them. The foundation of our love to the people of Israel comes out of our love to the Lord Jesus. He is also the door to Israel. John 10, 1- 2 ***"I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep."*** We may have some discouraging experience as friends of Israel and could turn against Israel, if our motivation is not founded in the Lord. The young Martin Luther was very positive towards the Jewish people, because he believed that they would receive the gospel of justification by faith. But when this did not happen as he expected he turned against the Jewish people. It is so important that the church of Jesus Christ would not miss the hour of their responsibility towards Israel! Jesus said, if salt loses its taste, it is worthless and be thrown on the streets.

As the Holy Spirit restores everything, He will also restore the manifold gifts of the Holy Spirit and the different callings, thus building up the Body of Christ. Ephesians 4, 11- 13 ***"It was HE who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge***

*of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.”*

Many of God’s children are displaced, because of human controls in the church. We seldom see Acts 13, 1 - 3 in practice. They served the Lord together in prayer and fasting. There was no agenda mentioned, but they received personal and cooperative words of confirmations of their callings from the Lord. The Body of Christ suffers, because many of God’s people are in bondage of human structures and not liberated in their calling. If the Holy Spirit is poured out again, every one will walk under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, in the calling the Lord has given and Jesus would rein in His Body, the Church.

Paul wanted to bring the gospel of grace to Jerusalem in Acts chapter 20, 24

*“However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me- the task of testifying to the gospel of God’s grace.”* There is a spiritual fight about the Gospel of grace especially in Jerusalem.

To believe in the grace of God and stand in this grace is very important. Romans 5, 15- 21

*“But with the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the one man’s sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who received God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. Consequently just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous. The law was added so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

Messengers bringing their word to the Church in Germany often use this scripture. Without the grace of God there is no way out for us. But this does not happen automatically. Grace and our response in faith will release the fruit of repentance. As Jesus told the Pharisees in Matthew 3, 8 *“Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.”* Friedrich Bonhöfer warned the church about a cheap grace.

Paul worked hard, but was able to bring grace and striving for works for righteousness together. 1Corintherans 15, 10 *“But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No I worked harder than all of them- yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.”*

Because of His grace we do not have to live in sin. Romans 6, 14: *“For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.”*

We have nothing to be proud of, because the Jews and Gentiles are chosen by grace. Romans 11. 5 *“So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. And if by grace, then it is no longer by works, if it were, grace would no longer be grace.”*

When the Lord saves the whole remnant of Israel, it will also be also because of HIS grace. Romans 11, 26 *“And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: “The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob.”* Romans 11, 32 *“For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that He may have mercy on them all.”* In the end God will show mercy on Jew and Gentile so that no one can boast.

Peter says that we have to put our hope in the grace of God. 1 Peter 1, 11 2 Peter 3, 15 ***“Bear in mind that our Lord’s patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him.”*** It seems that Peter did recognize, that Paul had special insight when it came to the understanding of grace and he referred to this.

If we count on the grace of God, we can see the purposes of God in the worst sinner.

There is a deep surging going on in Jerusalem for the real foundations of the first church since it all started there. The Messianic Jewish congregations don’t have a structure for yet all the congregations like a bishop. There are ideas on how to go about it, but there are also fears, that the mistakes of church history could be repeated. We need a supernatural breakthrough. There is an old resistance to the prophetic ministry in Jerusalem for a very long time. Jesus addressed the rejection of those who were sent from the Lord to Jerusalem and the rejection of prophecy. Matthew 23:37 ***“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!”***

An apostle is someone who is sent by the Lord and there is great need to receive those, who the Lord is sending. We need the restoration of the five-fold ministry. Ephesians 2, 19

***“Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, build on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.”***

The Lord is calling and sending workers in his harvest and he will restore these ministries and protect His flock from the self-appointed or self-promoting ministries. There is some confusion in the body of Christ because these ministries need to be restored.

Peter Robertson from New Zealand wrote some books. One is called: “The Jerusalem Revival.” In this book he wrote: *“The church in New Zealand will only see revival in the measure they are investing themselves for a Holy Spirit revival in Jerusalem.”* I got his permission to quote some short passage from his book. “Letters to a young prophet”

Quote: *“The unholy three’s only way of conceiving “government” in both Church and state is either the tyranny of the one over the many (dictatorship), or the tyranny of the majority over the minority (democracy). Prior to the Reformation, tyrannical governments were the order of the day via kings and popes. Since then Protestantism has been seduced by various manifestations of secular and religious democracy. It continues to strike me as queer indeed that Protestants who are so clear-eyed concerning the fallibility of an infallible pope are so utterly blind to their own equally stupid notion that majority of God’s people are sure to be right. The “apostolic revolution” which so many have been trumpeting in recent years ought to be addressing the substantial gaps in the Church’s foundations caused by all manner of humanistic rather than divine government. It’s entirely about the Church being built on God’s foundations, which are, Matthew 16: 18 and Ephesians 2: 19- 20.*

*The true apostolic revolution is all about God’s prerogative and right to build HIS house on HIS foundation, which consists of apostles and prophets, sovereign created and welded together by Jesus. This is the only “construction” that has the strength to bear the weight of those other leadership (usually pastoral, teaching, evangelistic) ministries necessary for the life and health of the local church life.”*

Some time ago I received another article about the teachings of the Nicolaitan. We read in the book of Revelation 2, 6 about this group but I did not have a lot of information before I got this article about the teachings of the Nicolaitan. I think it could be also interesting for you.

**“The Holy Spirit's makes us aware about the teachings that influences the Body of Christ to separate the people from a walk of intimacy with the Lord. One of the Stumbling stones is the spirit of the Nicolaitan. We recognize this spirit raising its head at the very outset of the early apostolic church and it represents a perverted form of leadership that has a opposite motivation than the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of the Lord will draw the people to the Lord Jesus while this counterfeit influence seeks to separate the people from the Lord. The Nicolaitan spirit will masquerade as a true governmental and spiritual authority, but using fear, manipulation and control to achieve its agenda.**

**The term "Nicolaitan" comes from two Greek words "Nikos" and "Laos". Nikos means to conquer and by implication, dominancy over the defeated. The term "laos" means "the common people" or the "laity." Then it means: "to conquer (dominate-intimidate-manipulate) the common people (laity).**

**An examination of church history is highlighting the Nicolaitan movement that marked the beginning of an unrighteous priesthood within the Church. We want to identify the spiritual influences that has stolen the inheritance of the saints throughout the Church ages and overcome with Christ as He overcame.**

**True leadership will equip the people to do the work of the ministry. (Ephesians 4:11-12) The apostle Paul was willing to lay down his life for the people to whom he ministered. He did not lord his spiritual authority over the people but readily poured himself out for the sake of the Lord's Church. That quality is the predominant separation between the genuine and the counterfeit forms of leadership.**

**The true leadership model is not that of a pyramid but an inverted pyramid. True spiritual fathers will take great joy in seeing their spiritual offspring flourish in their relationship with the Lord and the impartation of the gifts. The Lord clearly expressed his disgust and hatred for the Nicolaitan spirit and its corrupt agenda. In fact those who shared His disdain for this evil opposition were commended. (Revelation 2:6) For those entrusted with true authority, make no place for intimidation, controlling and power hungry counterfeit authority over the sheep.**

**The Nicolaitan spirit will target Christians who have lost their "first-love" affections for the Lord. The enemy meticulously orchestrates a series of life events that cool our affections for the things of the Spirit with the intended hope of imparting apathy and lethargy. Hope deferred will make the heart sick! If accomplished, the door is then opened to this form of leadership that directs the focus of the people away from the Lord.**

**Thankfully, the spirit of wisdom and revelation is promised to each believer, affording understanding of our rich inheritance in Christ. The Lord is granting the spirit of revelation to open "eyes and ears" to a place of fellowship with Him and taking away hopelessness. In its place, "first-love" affections are being restored. Holy desperation is in the hearts of a bridal company who will not be satisfied hearing the testimony of others who have encountered the Lord Jesus— they must have their own personal relationship.**

**In John 10 there is a clear word from the Lord stating, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them and they follow me." We are promised the ability to experientially apprehend the revelation of His Voice. The more acutely familiar we are with His Voice the more capable we become of recognizing the counterfeit. There has been a plot of the adversary to steal this aspect of our heritage, but the desolate heritage of the saints will be restored. The restoration promised in Joel 2:25 will take place. The Lord prophetically outlined this privilege when He said: To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. (John 10: 3). The Lord is calling us by name and leading us out of the bondage and oppression into a place of freedom and liberty because where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. The Nicolaitan spirit will no longer hold bride of Christ hostage. She is destined to be joined with the Lord in the promised union.**

**True Apostolic leadership will be commissioned with a fourfold mandate like the one given to the apostle Paul. The Lord sent one of His cherished friends, Ananias, to release a prophetic commission to the now converted Saul of Tarsus. Ananias told Paul four specific**

admonitions that would overshadow his life and are also characterize apostolic leaders. The scripture in Acts 22:12-15 says, "A certain Ananias, a man who was devout by the standard of the Law, and well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there, came to me, and standing near said to me, "Brother Saul, receive your sight!" And at that very time I looked up at him. And he said, "The God of our fathers has appointed you to know His will and to see the Righteous One and to hear an utterance from His mouth. For you will be a witness for Him to all men of what you have seen and heard."

Paul was empowered with four distinctive privileges that exemplified his apostolic calling.

1. Appointed to know His will.
2. See the Righteous One.
3. Hear utterances from His lips.
4. Be a witness/testifier of what was seen and heard.

The word witness is a judicial term signifying one who gives testimony only to what they have personally seen and heard. Anointed eyes and ears are essential in the accomplishment of this mandate. These attributes will begin to separate true governmental qualities from the Nicolaitan spirit." End of the article.

The Disciple of Jesus John must have known the teaching of the Nicolaitan. In this light we understand also better what he had to say about the teachings of the Gnosis and the Nicolaitan. He is warning in his first letter 1 John 2, 18- 21: "***Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us. But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth.***"

And 1. John 2,26-27: "***These things I have written to you concerning those who try to deceive you. But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.***"

John was for sure not against it to teach in the church; he only is addressing those leaders who believe that without their advice the cheep of the Lord would not find the right way or understand the ways of the Lord.

We are in need of a unity created by the Lord Himself between Israel and the Church in the nations. The Lord will build Jerusalem and it could be that He will call and use the outcasts as David did in first army. Psalm 147. 2-3 "***The Lord is building Jerusalem. He gathers the outcasts of Israel. He heals the wounded heart.***"

The restoration of all things is related to a new outpouring of the Holy Sprit.

Jesus said in Acts 1, 5: "***For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.***" Immediately after this the disciples asked Jesus if this is the time that the Kingdom would be restored to Israel. Verse 6 "***So when they met together, they asked him, Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?***" Jesus doesn't deny the connection between the outpouring of Holy Sprit and the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel. He just is adds: Verse 7 "***He said to them: It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.***"

Before the kingdom for Israel would be restored, the power, the call and the commissioning to preach the gospel all over the world, the Holy Spirit would be poured out and the disciples would begin in Jerusalem. Verse: 8 "***But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has***

***come upon you, and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. “***

In Ezekiel 37, 1- 2 the Spirit brought the prophet to a valley full of very dry bones. Only after he had observed this very sad situation, was he allowed to prophesy life into the dry bones. Ezekiel was so impacted with the very dry bones, that he prophesied out of obedience to the Lord, not out of his emotions.

Believers were together on the day of Pentecost, in one place and in unity. Acts 2, 1 ***“When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.”***

On one hand unity in prayer and being together in one place is a condition for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and on the other hand it is a result of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Many years ago, in 1982 in a European wide meeting in Strasbourg, some believers received a picture. There were ducks swimming in little pool, which was divided by a fence in the middle. But then a strong rain came and the level of the water was arose so that the dividing wall was covered with water and all the ducks were swimming together in one pool.

Our prayer in unity will release the Holy Spirit afresh over the body of Christ.

Verse 4- 5 ***“They where all filled with the Holy Spirit.” “And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven.”*** All where filled and God did not show any partiality. Even during that time Jerusalem was already a city where Jewish people and proselytes came together from all nations under heaven. Verse 10 ***“Visitors from Rom, both Jews and proselytes.”***

In his preaching Peter refers to the prophet Joel verse 17 ***“ I will pour out my Spirit over all flesh. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.”*** All flesh means all flesh, young and old, men and women, Jew and Gentile. Verse 21: ***“And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”*** The Name of the Lord will be known and many people will call on His Name Yeshua. In a time of great need and suffering God will bring us to this place. The Holy Spirit would also restore the grace of repentance to the Church. We need the repentance, which comes from a spirit of conviction. Peter addresses the Jewish people in the power of the Holy Spirit and with a lot of love, and not with a spirit of condemnation. Acts 2, 23 ***“ You have taken by lawless hands, have crucified and put to death”*** and Acts 2, 36 ***“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ.”***

The Holy Spirit brought conviction and there was a wonderful reaction, by the grace of God. Verse 37: ***“Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles. Men and brethren, what shall we do?”***

The first time we find the word “restore,” mentioned in the Bible, is in the story where Joseph meets the cupbearer, who was restored in to his position before the pharaoh. Genesis 40, 13- 21

In Psalm we read 51, 12 ***“Restore unto me the joy of my salvation.”*** Jesus also refers to this truth in Luke 10, 20 ***“However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”*** Every day the joy of our salvation can be our well of life and encouragement.

Another well of our joy is obedience to the Lord, as He leads us each day. John 15, 9- 11 ***“If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my father’s commands and remain in His love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.”***

I don’t think that Jesus is referring here to the “Ten Commandments” but more to the leading of the Holy Spirit, whom He experienced every day. Real joy in the Lord is related to our

ability to hear and act on what the Lord is asking us to do. The expectations that the Lord leads us in a real way, is often under attack. Sometimes we begin to function more according to people's expectations and it isn't easy to discern between the two.

The Holy Spirit will also restore Godly authority in the church.

There are two kinds of authority, the delegated and transmitted authority coming from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. There is the delegated authority that a Police officer has.

Whenever I see men or women in the uniform of the police, I ought to respect this person as a delegated authority, from the state in which I live. In some Churches ushers have a special uniform or a nametag, giving instructions that have to be followed, because they are authorised from the church leadership.

If we are in a place of authority, there is still the question of our motives for exercising authority. When our motivations are from God, the Glory belongs to HIM. He is the "One" being revealed. On the other hand, when a desire to dominate arises from within us, selfish ambitions are come forth.

This was always a question in the life of Jesus. After He spoke and healed people the spiritual leaders during that time asked Him, in whose authority are you doing this?

You are definitely are not doing this because this authority was delegated to you. So who sent you? **Luke 20, 2- 6** *"Tell us by what authority you are doing these things, they said. Who gave you this authority? He replied, I will also ask you a question. Tell me, John's baptism was it from heaven, or from men? They discussed it among themselves and said, "If we say, from heaven, he will ask, why didn't you believe him? But if we say, from men all the people will stone us, because they are persuaded that John was a prophet. So they answered, we don't know where it was from. Jesus said, neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things."*

At one time, Jesus also answered: **John 5, 19:** *"Jesus gave them this answer: I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does."* Our Lord Jesus Christ was the ultimate example of true spiritual authority when we look at His life and teaching. To enter in to the same lifestyle, we have to stay very close to Him as the branches to the vine.

As we see him washing the feet of His disciples, we grasp the character of Jesus.

He proceeded to perform the functions of the lowest slave. God was here incarnated, the Creator of the universe, the One who had the right to exercise all authority, acting like a slave! Jesus said: **John 13:13-15** *"You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If Lord then, your Teacher, and I have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you."* It is an authority with an entirely different motivation, from anything that is human and it displayed the true character of God.

How do we enter into the authority given by the Lord? For example, anyone can go fishing. But when someone fishes often and becomes good at catching fish, then you might say that person is a "fisherman." Firstly is not a title or some kind of position, but a description of what we do. Similarly, many people can fix a leaking faucet, but when they do this sort of work regularly and become good at what they do, then they are recognized as a "plumber." So it is, in the church. God has assigned special tasks to each one. These are unique areas of service through which we nurture the body of Christ. No one can delegate the members to prophesy in the services, if the Lord has not gifted the person. When God in the area of prophecy regularly uses someone and they become known for their exercise of this gift, then they could be called a prophet. When someone brings many people to the Lord we say he is

an evangelist. It is not about the titles. The Lord told us: **Mt 23: 9** *"And do not call anyone on earth father for you have one Father and he is in heaven. Nor are you to be called teacher, for you have one Teacher, the Christ. The greatest among you will be your servant."* The titles are reserved for the Father and for Jesus! He is "King of Kings" and "Lord of Lords."

In these present days people teach about divine order also in some Free Churches. The basic thought behind this instruction seems to be that, there exists a kind of hierarchy, a sort of chain of command, within the church of God, and that when we recognize it, submit to it and "get in line" we will fulfil God's will and experience a blessing. There exists a kind of pyramid structure, similar to an earthly corporation or government, within the church. But the structure of the Kingdom of Heaven is different.

Luke 22: 25-27 *"But Jesus called them to Himself and said: You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many"* Mt 20:25-28. Jesus makes a strong point here by saying: *"on the contrary, he who is greatest among you let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves."*

It is exactly the opposite way then it is in the world. Paul himself says concerning the authority manifested through him, **2 Corinthians. 1: 24** *"Not that we lord it over your faith, but we, are helpers of your joy."* A leader is someone who goes in front as an example. The others seeing this example realize that this is from God and follow.

King David for example, was a lowly shepherd, but the Lord chose him to lead His people. Many of the prophets were nobody and nothing until God touched their lives and began to flow through them. One day when the twelve were walking with Jesus, they began having an argument. They were fighting about who would be the greatest when Jesus became king. The Lord used this opportunity again and tried to show them something about how He intended His body to function. He took a little child beside Him and said something very profound: **Luke 9:48.** *"He who is least among you all will be great."* This exactly is the opposite of our normal, human way of thinking. **We read in Mt 20:26,2:** *"Whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave; just as the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve."*

Yeshua will restore all things before He comes back and His church would be very different. We learn some truth of His word only as we come into situations, which force us to find a solution to our problems. We ask ourselves the questions in the church: What kind of Church life did we pass onto our younger generation? What are we looking for in the Church and what are our desires? The letter of Hebrews tells us what Abraham was looking for!

Hebrews 11, 8 –10: *"By faith Abraham obeyed God when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise. For he waited for the city which has foundations whose builder and maker is God."*

Abraham preferred to rather live in tents, in something that was temporary, because he was looking for the perfect city, the heavenly Jerusalem! Abraham was dissatisfied with the buildings, with programs, plans and the convictions of men, relating deeply to this age. Even though he would have also liked to provide stability and a good future for Isaac and Jacob,

he still preferred the tent, in a temporary home. Also in the church when we meet someone who brings in a successful concept of Church life, fellowship and theology, we are often impressed. Successful ministries are very attractive, especially if a church has gone through very dry times. We are impressed, because we hope that our church would also grow in numbers and spiritual influence. Abraham could have built a big palace, because he was very rich. But he chose to live in tents, because his desire was to wait for the eternal city, where the foundation, architect and builder would be God Himself. He did not pretend that he had already arrived, but he continued to seek the heavenly city. He remained to be a seeker and as a man full of desires, to find everything in the Lord and to receive from HIM the new home. If we pretend that we have arrived as an individual or as a group, believers who cannot stand in their unfulfilled longings are attacked by promised expectations and because they are unable to be alone, they are willing to be a part of it. The methods of this world have received much space in some congregations and not only in traditional churches. The writer of the letter to the Hebrews reminds us: Hebrews 10, 35- 36 ***“So do not throw away your confidence, it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.”*** Because they desired a better heavenly country, God was not ashamed to be called their God. God is already responding to the desires of his people. He has prepared a city, a place for those who wait for His city. Hebrews 11, 14- 16 ***“For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. And truly if they had called to mind that country, from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. But now they desire a better that is a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.”***

Without a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the Lord will not have full control of over the Church. The Bridegroom Yeshua will form the shape of the bridal Church. He will create Himself the one “New Man” out of Jew and Gentile. He has created and prepared a place for us- the new city of Jerusalem. We need the leading of the Holy Spirit personally as well also as in the Church.

Every truth we have overlooked and neglected during the centuries of Church history will be restored in the visible, in the new building of God. Jesus is teaching us: Blessed are the hungry and in Matthew 5, 3 ***“Blessed are the poor in spirit. For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”***

Raniero Cantalamessa said: *There was a shift in Church History. After some time, it was no more recommended for a group of believers to be poor, as Jesus also was poor. But there was a concern about the poor and to help them out of their misery. To be poor is like the word of Jesus for the eunuch. Some are born poor, some are made poor by men, some have made themselves poor for the Kingdom’s sake.*” Like Paul said, if I gave all my possession to the poor and it would not be out of love, it would not count! The motivation is still the most important! In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul reminds us that without love, nothing counts before God.

To be poor in the spirit also means that, we accept that our knowledge and understanding about the ways of the Lord are very limited, especially if it comes to the will of God for another person. The Lord does not always inform us about His plans for other brothers and sisters. Real prophecy comes from an inner poverty. I do not know what the other person needs but the Lord knows. I do not know the right time but He knows. Isaiah 50, 4

We need more freedom of personal convictions, because if we have strong convictions we could pass on our thoughts to others. The poor in spirit will not dare to say something out of himself.

To discern all the information we receive every day is a great challenge.

Hebrews 13, 9: **10** *“Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods, which have not profited those who have been occupied with them. We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.”* The Lord has a way to feed those who seek him.

Hebrews 13, 13 – 14: *“Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city but we seek the one to come.”*

Often we do not even have to go outside the camp, because we already find ourselves outside. If it wasn't really our fault, then we will be very happy one day that we are outside.

**Galatians 1, 10** *“For do I now persuade men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.”* Bondservants like Paul made a decision to seek first the ways that would please the Lord. I showed Pastor Surprise this Bible study and after reading it he added a word from Ezekiel 20, 37 and from Leviticus 27, 32

Ezekiel 20, 37: *“I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into bound of the covenant.”* Leviticus 27, 32 *“And concerning the tithe of the herd of the flock, whatever passes under the rod, the tenth one shall be holy to the Lord.”*

He said: If we pass under the rod that means we are coming under the leading of the Holy Spirit and this is the life in the new covenant.

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