

THE CURRICULUM OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH, Vol 1

THE MILESTONES

In the ascension path of every Christian

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“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;” (Ephesians 6:18, KJV)

The 7 Milestones | The Curriculum of the Christian Faith

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Bracketed words in scripture references are for added emphasis.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

To the Lord Jesus Christ

The One who stands in the midst of the golden candlesticks

The One who alone is the Husband of the Bride

The One who is our strength and power,
whose enablement gives us the opportunity to walk in perfection

(2 Samuel 22:33)

To Him alone be glory, praise, dominion, and power, both now and forever.

Holy and Reverend is His Name.

Amen.

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Welcome

INTRODUCTION TO THE CURRICULUM

Welcome aboard!

You are now a believer, or perhaps you have been for a while. Nonetheless, welcome to the family of God. Welcome to the Christian faith, and welcome to the Christian program (with its seven modules). By God's grace, at the end of the program, you would have become like the Lord Jesus Christ. That is, you would have become a holy immortal divine being in the likeness of God — one who would reign in the Kingdom of God upon God's throne as a king and a priest by the power of an endless life.

Sounds strange? The following verses in the Bible show that such is God's plan for you. Romans 8:29 says God has foreknown you and predestined you to be conformed to the pattern of His Son, so that the Lord Jesus would be the Firstborn among many brethren (many holy and immortal brethren). 2 Peter 1:4 says God has given you great and precious promises (written in the Bible) that make it possible for you to also have His divine nature (through communion and fellowship with Him). 1 Corinthians 15:49-54 says that God has ordained that one day you will be changed from a mortal earthly being into an immortal heavenly being. 2 Corinthians 5:1-4 says that aside from the natural body you currently have, God has prepared for you a more glorious heavenly body. Revelation 1:6 says it is your destiny as a born-

again child of God to become a king and a priest — 1 Peter 2:5 calls it a royal priesthood. And in Revelation 3:21, the Lord Jesus promised that when you overcome you will sit with Him on His throne, even as He overcame and sat with His Father on His Throne. So yes, it is God's plan for you that at the end of the Christian program (after you have passed through the seven modules and allowed the power of God in each module to work on you) you would have become like the Lord Jesus Christ as a holy immortal divine being in the likeness of God.

Now you need not begin to wonder how these things will be. You have no ability in yourself to graduate into this glorious estate of being like the Lord Jesus. God said in Zechariah 4:6 that it is not by might, nor by power (that is, not by your strength, nor by the determination of your own heart), but by the influence and assistance of His Spirit. And Philippians 3:21 says it is Jesus who has the power to change us from our vile and lowly nature into His glorious nature — we cannot change ourselves.

This goodwill of God to assist us to become like Him is called Grace. That is why Ephesians 2:5-10 says that it is by grace (by unmerited assistance) that you are saved, through faith; not by works, so that you cannot boast, and even the faith is not of your own self, it is the gift of God. As such, the seven modules of the Christian curriculum are seven levels of the grace of God which when you experience will eventually transform you into His very image and likeness (as He originally intended in Genesis 1:26 — “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness ...”).

Unfortunately, many people drop out of the program, and for different reasons: distractions, discouragement, doubt, and even untimely death. But we trust that by the mercies of God you will make it to the end —module 7.

Now you may be wondering: What is the christian program, and what are its seven modules? It is an allegorical way of saying that there are seven phases you are to advance through in your Christian journey; beginning from when you became born-again and ending when you become like the Lord Jesus Christ, as a holy immortal divine being. That is to say, death is not the ideal end of your christian journey. It is actually a premature exit from the program as far as the course outline God has provided is concerned. The appropriate end of your christian journey is becoming like Christ Jesus. And even if you were to die, the appropriate scenario would be for you to get to the point where like Paul in 2 Timothy 4:7 you can say “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith”. Which is to say: I have gone through the program; I have overcome to the end; I am now waiting for my graduation ceremony when I will be crowned with immortality and God’s divinity.

So you would ask: How do I move from where I am to this end of being like Christ Jesus? That is what “The Curriculum of the Christian Faith” is about. We would be looking through scriptures to gain understanding of the truths pertaining to each of the seven modules of the curriculum and how these truths (in each module) would gradually transform you from what you are now to what the Lord Jesus Christ is, because the truths of God (when received and believed) are the means by which the power of God is downloaded into you to change you.

That is why the Lord Jesus in John 10:35 explains that the Word of God (the Truth of God) that comes to you (when you believe it) is what will transform you into a god (that is, a heir of God, as Romans 8:16-17 calls it). Psalm 19:7 echoes the same truth (that it is the Word of God that will change you) by saying the law of the Lord (the Word of the Lord) is perfect (in definition and in effect) because it possesses the power to convert your soul (your personality: your mind, your emotions, your will, etc.). That is powerful!

The Word of God can change your personality. The Word of God can change your mind (so that you can have the mind of Christ). The Word of God can change your emotions (so that you can have God's emotions — love, joy, peace and so on). The Word of God can change your will (so that you have His will). The Word of God can change your desires (so that you can have God's desires). The Word of God can change you (so that you can be who He has purposed you to be in Him).

In agreement to this, Romans 1:16 says the gospel (the good news truths of the Word of God) is the power by which God saves (for those who believe). And Hebrews 4:2 re-emphasizes the need to believe by saying except you believe the gospel (the Word of God) it will not have a profitable effect on you. Meaning, you must believe the Word of God for you to experience God's transforming power. In each of the seven modules of the curriculum there are gospel truths that you need to understand and believe so that you can experience the power of God to transform you, till you become like the Lord Jesus.

That is the ideal framework for spiritual growth in your Christian journey — believe the Word of God and be changed! It is God's method for installing Christ-like attributes in you. The fact that this is the method by which we are to advance in our Christian journey is why the Christian message is called Gospel, which means Good News.

It is good news to know that God's method is not dependent on our strength or our ability to accomplish. As such, our many weaknesses cannot hinder us from becoming like Christ Jesus. They (our weaknesses) are swallowed up by the excellency of God's method, so that even the weakest of the weakest can become like the Son of God. Hallelujah!

GOD'S METHOD

Unlike other aspects of life where you are used to accomplishing things by the strength of your determination and your ability to come up with

methodologies for doing things, in your Christian journey you will be able to have and maintain sustainable growth only when you subscribe to God's method of creating realities. If you do not, you may experience the rising and falling syndrome, where for some time you appear strong, doing many goodly works, but at other times you are weak, unmotivated and feeling unable to make progress.

What is God's method? We can look at the first thing we are told that God created (relative to this world) to learn His method of creating things. And because our God does not change, as He said in Malachi 3:6, we know that His method in Genesis is still His method today and is His method for creating Christ-like attributes in you.

Genesis 1:1-5 captures the core of God's method, which is replicated throughout chapter 1. It says: "[1] In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. [2] And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. [3] And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. [4] And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. [5] And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day."

This passage tells us that the initial state of the earth is that it was without form and void and full of darkness. How did God go about creating a new reality — light? Verse 3 says "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." In other words, to create light in place of darkness, God released a creative power by speaking His Word "Let there be light". This is God's method. Meaning, when God wants to create Christ-like attributes in your life, He will release His creative power into you by speaking His Word into your life. In other words, just as "let there be light" was a specific word for creating light, so also there is a specific word for every attribute of Christ that God wants to create in you, be it

a strong prayer life, or holiness, or humility, or forgiveness, or patience, or ability to do supernatural things (healings and miracles), etc. The only major difference between the creation in Genesis and the creation in your life is that now, as a Christian, God will involve you in the creation process. How?

The bible says in Romans 10:10 “For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” And in 2 Corinthians 4:13 it says “We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;” These passages show that just as God’s method for creating realities is to release His creative power by speaking His Word so also He will involve us His people in the creative process by giving us His Word to speak, so that we can release His creative power to create Christ’s attributes in us.

It means, just as 2 Corinthians 4:13 says, as believers, Christians, we are to be speakers — people who speak the Word of God into their lives and situations to release God’s creative power! This is God’s method for creating Christ’s attributes in you, beyond your natural ability to accomplish things or follow instructions or come up with methodologies to train yourself in something. And in each of the seven modules of the Christian curriculum, there are truths (revelations of His Word) that you would need to understand, believe, and speak into your life in order to release God’s creative power into you to produce the aspects of Christ’s fruits described in each of the seven modules.

You may then be wondering: Why seven? How do we know that there are seven parts in the Christian journey? Seven is the number for perfection and completion in biblical prophetic numerology. God created the world in seven days, as recorded in Genesis chapter 1, and He would recreate you into the likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ in seven phases.

Notwithstanding, God actually outlined the curriculum in the bible, though He did it symbolically. He introduced it in Leviticus chapter 23 as the seven milestone feasts which He instructed the people of Israel to celebrate at their appointed times through the course of the year: each feast at its own time. 1 Corinthians 10:11 says that the things that God made the people of Israel experience were to serve as an example for us (His people in the New Testament). Meaning, these feasts that were physical periods in their year were to be examples (or allegories) of spiritual periods in our Christian life.

For example, the first period (the first feast) is called the feast of Passover. For the people of Israel, it marked their beginning as a nation, because that was the time of the year when God, through the blood of lambs, delivered them from bondage in Egypt, and it therefore became the beginning of their calendar year. But for us, born-again Christians, 1 Corinthians 5:7 tells us that Passover marks the beginning of a believer's Christian life, because it represents the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus on the cross and the shedding of His blood (as the sacrificial Lamb), which was the means by which God delivered us from our "Egypt" (the powers of darkness that held us in bondage to sin, mentioned in Colossians 1:13). As such, each of the seven feasts represent seven milestones in your Christian advancement, beginning from when you become born-again, at Passover, to the end, when you are like the Lord Jesus Christ, as a holy immortal divine being, at the seventh feast. In their order, these are the seven feasts:

1. The feast of Passover
2. The feast of Unleavened Bread
3. The feast of Firstfruits
4. The feast of Pentecost
5. The feast of Trumpets
6. The day of Atonement

7. The feast of Tabernacles

They represent the seven milestones in your christian journey; and they are the seven modules in The Curriculum of the Christian Faith.

It is important to note that they are not just human originated feasts, but as the Lord called them in Leviticus 23:2 & 4, they are the feasts of the LORD. In verse 2, God particularly called them "... My feasts". Meaning, it is God that is celebrated in these feasts. That is, the milestones that these feasts represent are things that you will experience because of God's victory in your life, not because of your own strength. That is why the instrument of His Word is key to bringing you into each of the seven milestones.

This emphasis on the Word of God as the source of the power that will bring you into each of the milestones exposes another important truth, which is: your advancement through the seven milestones of the christian faith (from born-again to divinity) is not a matter of time but a matter of the degree of interaction you have with the Lord Jesus in His Word. That is, a person who was born-again 2 years ago does not necessarily have an advantage over the person who got born-again 6 months ago simply because of time. The only advantage would be who has had more interactions with the Lord Jesus in His Word.

Romans 10:6-10 tells us that we should not say who can ascend up to heaven to bring down the Lord Jesus so that He can be with us again, but rather, through His Word (by believing and confessing it) we can have the same results as if He was physically present with us to teach us or heal or impact our lives in one way or the other.

Meaning, in our christian journey, we can experience the same transforming effect that the twelve disciples experienced (that turned them into apostles) because of their interaction with the Lord Jesus physically. Only difference is they experienced the impact of His physical presence while we experience the impact of His spiritual presence. And as Romans

10:6-10 explains, we experience the impact of His spiritual presence through His Word, when we believe and speak it by faith; because His words are not ordinary words, they are actually spiritual agents of life. That is what the Lord Jesus said in John 6:63 — “**It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.**”

This would be a good place for you to pause and chew on this truth — interacting with Jesus through His Word. Ensure you understand what it means and how it works as has been explained. Because it is as you interact with Jesus that you will record key advancements in your christian journey. Notwithstanding, as you read on, it would become clearer in the subsequent chapters.

We will now begin to look into the seven feasts — that is, the seven milestones of the Christian faith which are the seven modules in the Christian curriculum — and we trust the Lord Jesus to favour you with much understanding. Amen.

To enrol,

There is a prerequisite

Module 0

REPENTANCE

Circumcision

Before looking into the seven modules in the curriculum of the Christian faith, it is important to highlight the prerequisite for enrolling in the Christian program. The prerequisite is Circumcision. That is, before you can become a Christian you must first be circumcised (spiritually speaking).

We had mentioned earlier that the Passover (the first feast) marks the beginning of a believer's Christian life (as a person free from bondage to the powers of sin), just as it marked the beginning of Israel (as a nation free from bondage in Egypt). We would look into the details of the Passover experience in the next chapter (Module 1).

But for now, the prerequisite requirement implies that before you can experience the Passover and its effect of freedom from the sin-causing bondage of the powers of darkness you must first be circumcised. God expressed this requirement clearly to the Israelites in Exodus 12:43-51. He said:

“[43] ... This is the ordinance of the Passover: No foreigner shall eat it. ... [48] And when a stranger dwells with you and wants to keep the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he

shall be as a native of the land. For no uncircumcised person shall eat it. [49] One law shall be for the native-born and for the stranger who dwells among you. [50] Thus all the children of Israel did; as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did. [51] And it came to pass, on that very same day, that the LORD brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt according to their armies.”

God was clear to them that except a person is circumcised the person cannot partake of the Passover. If we remember, 1 Corinthians 10:11 which we quoted earlier tells us that the things God instructed the people of Israel to do served as examples of spiritual things or principles that we, Christians, are to experience and adhere to. Meaning, just as He said to them, so also it is true for us, that no one can experience the Passover (meaning no one can become a Christian) except the person is spiritually circumcised.

So what does it mean to be circumcised? Physically speaking, it means to cut off the foreskin of the male reproductive organ. As such, it was something that only males could do. But spiritually, to be circumcised means to cut off the foreskin of the heart. And as such, it is something everyone can do. To cut off the foreskin of the heart means to remove an unclean layer from your heart. Deuteronomy 10:16 shows this by saying: “Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked.”

The word “stiffnecked” means “stubborn”, which implies rebellion. The passage is therefore saying that to circumcise (to cut off) the foreskin of the heart means to stop being stubborn towards God; that is, to get rid of a state of heart that is rebellious against God. This change of heart away from stubbornness and rebellion is called **repentance**. Meaning, before you can become a Christian, you must first express genuine repentance to God. That is, you must acknowledge that all your past sins

are wrong, ask God for forgiveness, and make up your mind to change from living a life that is rebellious against God's way. That is the prerequisite for enrolling in the Christian (life-transformation) program — repentance.

Repentance is particularly important because, when you repent, God responds by giving you a new spiritual heart and removes the old. With a new heart, you would be receptive to God's Word, unlike the old heart that was rebellious against God. Just as the physical heart is the organ for pumping blood containing nutrients to various parts of the body so that the body can function properly, so also the new spiritual heart you receive is the means by which God's life flows to every part of your being, so that your spiritual being can function properly and effectively to the glory of God. Therefore, this prerequisite of repentance (circumcision) is needed in order for you to advance spiritually.

If therefore peradventure you are not yet born-again (that is, you are not yet a child of God; not yet a Christian), God said in Jeremiah 33:3 "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know." So where you are right now, call on God and believe that He is hearing you, because He is actually hearing you and has always been watching you. Call on Him and talk to Him.

Repent and ask Him to forgive you of all your sins — sins in your mind, sins that you did. Ask Him to forgive you and tell Him that you repent of all of them. Ask Him to accept you as His own. Say to Him: "Lord Jesus I surrender to you. I declare that you are the Lord of my life. I renounce every other thing that has been lord over my life. Be my Guide. Be my Friend. Be my Shepherd. Be my God". Continue to pour out your heart to Him in all sincerity. Tell Him as it is. And then ask Him for His Spirit to come upon you. Open your heart and receive His Spirit. And rejoice in the salvation you have just received.

If you have done this sincerely, then congratulations, you have been accepted into the Christian program. If not and you would like someone to pray with you, or if you have but will still want someone to share more with you, then kindly send an email to: tolu.olunubi@gmail.com or a message on Instagram @tolu.olunubi.

We will now begin to look into the seven milestones you will advance through in your Christian journey by the help of the Holy Spirit in the Word of God.

Study Notes: Write a brief summary of what you've learnt so far

*As a born-again Christian,
These are your 7 milestones*

Module 1

DELIVERANCE FROM THE BONDAGE OF SIN

Passover

This is the first period of your Christian journey. The period where you experience the Passover.

What is the Passover?

As the name implies, it means for something to pass over. That is, instead of it coming to you, it passes over and goes somewhere else. That is the English interpretation. As you may know, the Old Testament portion of the bible was compiled from scriptures that were written in the Hebrew language, while the New Testament portion was compiled from scriptures that were written in the Greek language. So we can gain some more understanding by looking at the original words. The Hebrew word translated to English as Passover is “Pesach” and it means “a pretermission” or “an exemption”. And the root Hebrew word from which “Pesach” is derived is “Pâsach” which means “to skip over”. As such, Passover (the first season of your Christian journey) is a time when you experience an exemption from something — a time when something skips you.

What are you exempt from?

Judgment (of death)! Let us go to the origin of the Passover feast to understand this. We can find it in Exodus chapters 11, 12, 13 and 14. From chapter 11, it reads:

“[1] And the Lord said unto Moses, Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether ... [4] And Moses said, Thus saith the Lord, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: [5] And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts. [6] And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more. [7] But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.”

The children of Israel were in bondage as slaves in Egypt for four hundred years, and God made pharaoh (king of Egypt) to release them by bringing ten plagues on Egypt. This plague described above in Exodus 11:1-7 was the tenth plague. The next verses in chapter 12 give more detail. It reads:

“[1] And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, [2] This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. [3] Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: [4]

And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. [5] Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: [6] And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. [7] And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it ... [12] For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord. [13] And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. [14] And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.”

Here we see that this last plague was a judgment by God on Egypt and its gods, to deliver the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. We also see that God told them that this month where He delivers them from Egypt will be their first month (the beginning of their year).

But for them to experience this new beginning they needed to escape the judgment on Egypt; that is, they needed the judgment to skip (pass over) them. And to be eligible for the pass over (the escape), God instructed them to take a lamb, kill it, take its blood and apply it on the entrances of their houses, so that the blood will be a sign to mark those who are to be exempt from the judgment on Egypt. Then God instructed them to keep this practice as a feast continually (in every first month of

their years) to be a memorial of how He delivered them from bondage in Egypt. That is the origin of the Passover feast.

How does this relate to you?

1 Corinthians 5:7-8 says:

“[7] Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: [8] Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

This passage tells us that the Lord Jesus Christ is our Passover. Meaning, He is the Lamb that was slain for us, whose blood is the acceptable sign to mark those that should be exempt from God’s judgement. John 1:29 says:

“The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

And Matthew 26:1-2 says:

“And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, He said unto His disciples, Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.”

The Lord Jesus was actually crucified on the Passover feast day as a confirmation that He is the real Lamb whose blood is destined to save humanity from God’s judgment on sin. Romans 3:23 says:

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;”

So when you became born-again, what happened is that you subscribed by faith to Jesus as your personal Lamb, just as God instructed the Israelites in Exodus 12 to each take a lamb for a house and kill it. It was therefore necessary for you to accept Jesus **personally**, as the Lamb for your house. 1 Corinthians 3:9 & 16 says:

“[9] For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. ... [16] Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”

A temple is a house. You are a house — a house of God. And by accepting Jesus, you accepted Him as the Lamb for your house (the house that you are), and spiritually, His blood was applied upon you to serve as a mark that you should be exempt from God's judgment on “Egypt”, and should be delivered from “Egypt”.

What is the “Egypt” you were delivered from?

Colossians 1:12-14 says:

“[12] Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: [13] Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: [14] In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins:”

This passage tells us that we were delivered from the power of darkness (which thrives on ignorance) and translated into the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. In other words, the “Egypt” we were delivered from is “the power of darkness”. What is the power of darkness? It is the power of satan. Acts 26:18 says:

“To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me.”

This is what the Lord Jesus said to Paul, one of the Apostles, when He appeared to him to commission him for ministry. It shows that the power of darkness we are delivered from is the power of satan.

What is the power of satan?

The name that God called satan in Genesis 4:6-7 makes it obvious. It says:

“[6] And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? [7] If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door.

And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.”

In this passage, God referred to satan as sin. He used the pronouns “his” and “him” to refer to sin, which indicates that He was not referring to an action but a person, and that person of sin is satan. Another passage that shows this is John 8:34. It says:

“Jesus answered them, **Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.**”

Here, there are two mentions of sin. The first is an act, “... committeth sin ...”, while the second is a person, “... servant of sin”. And as we saw in Genesis 4:7, this person of sin (this person that makes people commit sin) is satan. Meaning, the power of satan (which is the power of darkness) includes the power of sin — the power to make a person commit sin. This is the “Egypt” we were delivered from — slavery to the power of sin. Ephesians 2:1-3 echoes this fact (that satan is the one who influences men to sin). It says:

“[1] And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; [2] Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: [3] Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”

This passage says that we were dead in sins, and in that state of deadness we lived according to the course of this world. The “course of this world”

means the way this world operates. And 1 John 2:15-17 reveals what the way of this world is. It says:

“[15] Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. [16] For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. [17] And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

It reveals that the way of the world is characterized by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. But Ephesians 2:2 (quoted above) shows that this lustful course of the world is orchestrated by someone called “the prince of the power of the air”, which is satan.

Air is used as a symbol for the spiritual realm. This is because though air exists it is not visible to the eyes, just as the spiritual realm exists but is not visible to the physical eyes. However, the spiritual realm symbolized as air is particularly the spiritual realm of the earth. There are three spiritual realms. There is the spiritual realm called paradise. In 2 Corinthians 12:2-4 it is called the third heaven — the spiritual realm where the throne of God and the angels of God are. By calling paradise the third heaven, it indicates that there is also the second heaven and the first heaven.

The third heaven (paradise) existed long before Genesis chapter 1 when God created this world. Genesis 1:1 says “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”. As such, this world (the world man exists in) consists of a heaven and an earth. However, when God created this world, He created both a physical and a spiritual world.

Man is a spirit and has a physical body with which he lives on earth and expresses a soul. Our spirits live in the spiritual world, while our bodies exist in the physical world. Meaning, just as there is a physical heaven and earth, so also there is a spiritual heaven and a spiritual earth.

The earth in this context does not refer to the ground, but rather the environment of the air where man lives his life and carries out his activities. In the physical world, there is the expanse that is filled with air (from the ground to the clouds). This is the earth. And its spiritual equivalent is the air referenced in Ephesians 2:2 where the phrase “... prince of the power of the air ...” is mentioned. This is the first heaven (the lowest of the three).

Above this is the heaven of this world, which by definition is the second heaven. The heaven of this world is the realm of spiritual authority over the earth. Genesis 1:16-18 shows this by saying:

“[16] And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: He made the stars also. [17] And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, [18] And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good.”

In verses 17 and 18, it says God put the lights in the heaven in order for them to rule and give light to the earth. This shows that the heaven is the position of rulership (authority and influence) over the earth.

Consciously or unconsciously, we humans have acknowledged this (that the heaven is the position of influence over the earth) by sending satellites into the physical heaven (space — beyond the air) in order to be able to reach many more people in the earth.

Likewise, the second heaven is the spiritual realm from which the first heaven (the spiritual realm of the air) is influenced on a territorial scale. Those are the three spiritual realms: the paradise (third heaven), the heaven of this world (the second heaven), and the earth of this world (the first heaven — the realm of the air).

Whereas air represents the spiritual realm of the earth, wind (which is air in motion) is used to represent the move (or activity) of a spirit.

That is how it is used in Daniel 7:2 (to refer to the activity of unclean spirits) and John 3:8 (to refer to the activity of the Holy Spirit).

As such, “the power of the air” refers to the beings that exercise power or influence over the air (the spiritual realm of the earth), and because the second heaven is the position of authority over the air, it means these beings that operate as the power of the air have access to (and operate from) the second heaven. They are the ones mentioned as principalities and powers and spiritual rulers of darkness in Ephesians 6:12 which says:

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”

These are the powers of the air — the ones that order the course of this world in lustfulness and rebellion against God. They are the angels that rebelled against God and were cast out of paradise (the third heaven). They are the ones referred to as demons, and their leader is satan — that is why he is referred to as the prince of the power of the air.

The word “prince” used in the verse (Ephesians 2:2) does not refer to the son of a king, but it means “chief”, a principal (the leader). Ideally, Adam is the one God ordained as the prince of the power of the air, when He told him (in Genesis 1:26-28) to have dominion over the earth and rule over all living things — living things take in air. But when Adam chose to obey satan and disobey God, he gave satan the opportunity to assume that authority.

Notwithstanding, satan’s claim to that title is invalid now because Jesus has already come as another Adam, and when satan tried to tempt Him, He overcame all the way to the cross, and on the third day of dying, He resurrected from death as a proof of His victory over satan.

However, satan still looms around parading himself as the prince of the power of the air over those who are not in Christ and who have not

come to the truth that all power and authority belong to Jesus Christ. But soon, as shown in Revelation 12:7-9, satan and his fellow fallen angels will soon be cast out of the spiritual heaven of this world (the second heaven) so that they can no longer operate as principalities and powers and rulers of darkness. Revelation 12:7-9 says:

“[7] And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, [8] And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. [9] And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.”

And as shown in Revelation 16:17, after being cast down from the second heaven, they will also be afterwards cast out of the spiritual earth (the air). Revelation 16:17 says:

“And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.”

The pouring of the vial into the air symbolizes God’s judgment on the spirits of darkness in the air (the spiritual earth). Revelation 20:1-3 shows this in a different way. It says:

“[1] And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. [2] And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, [3] And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.”

When this is done — that is, satan and his angels cast out of both the second heaven and the first heaven (the air) — 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 shows that the air would have been fully reclaimed by the descending conquest of the Lord Jesus and would be the spiritual venue of our joining Him in glory. It says:

“[16] For the Lord himself shall **descend from heaven** (the third heaven) with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: [17] Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, **to meet the Lord in the air**: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

Why did we go through all these explanations?

That is, why take the time to explain what the prince of the power of the air means and consequently the three realms of heaven? It is to appreciate the line in Ephesians 2:2 that refers to satan as “... the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:”. As a reminder, Ephesians 2:2 says:

“Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, **the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:**”

Why is this important? It is because it shows that satan (and his fellow fallen angels) are the ones working as spirits of darkness in those who live in disobedience to God. The next verse (verse 3) of Ephesians 2 refers to them (those who live in disobedience to God) as those who live according to the lusts of the flesh. Meaning the spirits of darkness (working in those who live in disobedience to God) are the ones responsible for the lusts of the flesh. But what are the lusts of the flesh? Galatians 5:19-21 says:

“[19] Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, [20] Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, [21] Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

This means when you see someone committing fornication (one of the works or lusts of the flesh), it shows that (according to Ephesians 2:2-3) a spirit of darkness (particularly, a spirit responsible for causing fornication) is working in the person.

In science, power is defined as the ability to do work — a definition that is useful in this explanation. It shows that “the ability of the spirits of darkness to work in a person to make the person commit sin” is the power of sin. That is why Jesus said in John 8:34 that whoever commits sin (the act) is a servant of sin (the spirit of darkness responsible for the particular sin act).

This is the bondage of “Egypt” — bondage to the power of sin — and it is this bondage you are set free from at the Passover phase of your Christian journey, because we have seen that sin is not just an act but is bondage to the spirits of sin (satan and his angels) who work in people (as “pharaohs” and “slave masters”) to make them commit sin. Romans 7:14-20 gives a personal perspective to this bondage of sin. It says:

“[14] For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. [15] For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. [16] If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. [17] Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. [18] For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform

that which is good I find not. [19] For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. [20] Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.”

Verse 14 uses a phrase that gives a clue to the origin of this bondage. It says “... sold under sin”. This means sold as a slave to the spirits of sin. When and how did this take place? It was in the garden of Eden when Adam and Eve (the physical parents of all humanity) decided to obey satan and disobeyed God (see Genesis 3). What they did not know is that there is a law that you become servants to whoever you obey. Romans 6:16 says it:

“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?”

So by obeying satan Adam and Eve became servants (slaves) to him, and because all humanity was inside them when they obeyed satan, all humanity were by their act sold as slaves to satan and his angels (the spirits of sin).

Romans 7:14-20 shows the personal experience of someone sold under sin; an experience we can all relate to. It shows that, when in bondage, you will find yourself doing things that you know are wrong (things that you even hate), while the good things that you know you should do, you would find that you are not doing them (no matter how much you desire to do them).

For example, a person in bondage to the spirit of lying or the spirit of immorality that makes him masturbate. He could hate what he is doing (lying or masturbating) but he still ends up doing it. The explanation for this (as stated in verses 17 and 20) is that it is not him that is doing it (the lying or masturbating); rather, it is sin (the spirit) that is doing it in him, just as we had understood earlier.

Can we then relax and say “It is not me committing sin, it is the spirit of sin that is making me commit sin, so I don’t need to do anything”? No we can’t! Why? Because the judgment on Egypt involved everyone in Egypt. It did not matter whether they were slaves or masters. Everyone was included. The only thing that made anyone escape the judgment was the blood of the lamb that served as the mark of exemption. Ezekiel 18:20 says:

“The soul that sinneth, it shall die ...”

And Romans 6:23 says:

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Meaning, God’s judgment on sin — the entire kingdom of sin, both the spirits of sin (satan and his fellow fallen angels) and the humans that are their slaves whom they make to live in sin — God’s judgment on the entire kingdom of sin is death! This death is not the physical death we all know but is a spiritual death in the lake of fire (a death referred to as the second death in Revelation 20:10-15). So it is not sufficient to say “Oh, I am a slave to sin, it is not my intention to sin, it is the spirits of darkness that are making me sin” — You will be judged!

But because God has better plans for you in His goal of redeeming you to Himself, He made a way for you to escape His judgment on sin, and that way is through the blood of the Passover Lamb (our Lord Jesus) applied as a mark of exemption upon you when you became born-again.

You may still be wondering: Why blood? Why is blood the mark of exemption? Why not something else? It is because the context is judgment. Blood indicates that judgment has already taken place because the judgement is death. So our Lord Jesus came as the spotless Lamb (as in Exodus 12) to pay the penalty of the judgment that was set on us (because we were in sin), so that we can be exempt from judgment. That is why John 3:16-18 says:

“[16] For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. [17] For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved. [18] He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

His blood on you is a statement saying: “I have died for this one, he does not have to die again”. That is *Passover!*

THE CONTAINER PRINCIPLE

Another helpful way to understand the process by which God made the *Passover* possible for us is to consider what we can call *The Container Principle*. What is the container principle? It is the spiritual law by which many people can be grouped in one person, and what that one person does, all the people inside him are considered to have done it. Every father is a “container”. Because the child was part of him before the child was born. We find a clear example of this principle used to affirm a spiritual truth in *Hebrews 7:9-10*. It says:

“[9] And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. [10] For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.”

Without digressing into another subject, in the full chapter of this passage, we are told of a time when Abraham paid tithes to someone called *Melchizedek*. We will not bother about the technicalities of what it means. But our focus is on the logic used to link Levi (Abraham’s great grandson) to the tithe paid to *Melchizedek*. The passage says that Levi was in Abraham when Abraham paid tithe to *Melchizedek*, and as such, in the spiritual realm, it is considered that Levi paid tithe to *Melchizedek*

(in the loins of Abraham). Not that Abraham paid tithe to Melchizedek on behalf of Levi. But Levi paid tithe to Melchizedek. That is how it is seen in the spiritual realm.

Why did we go into this? It is because it helps us understand how sin entered into the world. Dial back to the beginning of the world. God created Adam and Eve. Meaning, in retrospect, all humanity was in them.

We read in Genesis that Adam and Eve disobeyed God and obeyed satan. And we have previously discussed that satan is referred to as sin, because he has an influence to make people under his control commit sin.

Romans 6:16 tells us that whoever a person yields himself to obey, they become a servant of that person. And that is what happened to Adam and Eve unknowingly. They became servants of satan (that is, they became servants of sin). Meaning, satan could now influence them to commit sin. Or put differently, satan could now install the sin nature into them.

The sin nature is not man's tendency to sin but is the influence of unclean spirits to make man sin, which is what Jesus said in John 8:34 — that a servant of sin commits sin.

By the container principle, because all humanity was in Adam when he was unknowingly making himself a servant of sin, it means that all humanity at that point became servants of sin. To stress this further, just as it was considered that Levi actually paid tithe to Melchizedek (according to the spiritual “container” principle), so also, because you were in Adam when he was disobeying God and obeying satan, it is spiritually considered that: you disobeyed God; you obeyed satan; as such, you became a servant of sin. This was a spiritual conclusion made even before you were born, which is why David in Psalm 51:5 said:

“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.”

He meant, in bondage to sin did my mother conceive me. And that is how the whole world is full of sin. Everyone was considered to have disobeyed God and obeyed Satan and Satan had a legal claim to influence everyone to commit sin as his servants of sin.

You may be thinking — that is not fair. But God in His wisdom applied it to our advantage, so that just as it was reckoned that we chose sin in Adam and thus became servants to the influence of sin, likewise it is reckoned that we chose holiness in Christ Jesus and thus have become servants of the Holy Spirit’s influence. Romans 5:17-19 says:

“[17] For if by one man's offence (Adam's offence) death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. [18] Therefore as by the offence of one (Adam) judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one (Jesus) the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. [19] For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”

Hallelujah! Another passage, 1 Corinthians 15:45-49 gives more insight into why this is so. It says:

“[45] And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit. [46] Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. [47] The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. [48] As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. [49] And as we

have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”

In verse 45 of this passage, Jesus (the Lord from heaven, as He is called in verse 47) is referred to as “the Last Adam”. Why? What does it mean to be an Adam? And how is Jesus an Adam?

Adam was the first man, and as such, the father of all humanity. Meaning by calling Jesus an Adam, it means that He is a new first man, and as such, the father of a new humanity. But this new humanity is not a separate set of human beings. Rather, it is a new version of the existing set of human beings. He is called Last Adam because after Him there will be no other father of humanity, and being an Adam, He is a replacement for the previous Adam, so that at the end there is only one Adam: the new Adam, which is the Last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The implication of this is that if all the human beings in Adam (the ones that have died, including abortions, plus the ones that are currently alive, plus the ones that will still be born) sum up to say 15 billion people, a new version of all the 15 billion people exist in the new Adam (Jesus Christ). Pause and think about that! All humanity (every single person) already has a new holy version of themselves in the new Adam (the Lord Jesus Christ). And just as the actions Adam took (in disobeying God, obeying satan, and thus becoming a servant of sin) were applied to all the “15 billion” people in Adam, likewise, the actions that Jesus (the new Adam) took when on earth (in obeying God, disregarding satan, and being declared as a holy beloved Son of God that pleases the Father) were applied to all the same “15 billion” people.

So, in Adam we were all sinners, but in Christ Jesus we are all holy and obedient children of God. Meaning the actions of the Lord Jesus Christ are what define the new version of all humanity, just as the actions

of the first Adam were what defined the first sinful version of all humanity — a sinful version that is still present for many, but for you has become past (because you have been born-again).

Part of the actions of the Lord Jesus that define the new version of humanity is His death on the cross. By the container principle, because the Lord Jesus is an Adam, when He went to the cross to die it is considered that all humanity in Him went to the cross to die. This death was not for Himself but was a payment (a penalty) for the sins of the world. John 15:13 says “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down His life for His friends.”. Romans 6:23 says “For the wages of sin is death”. And Ezekiel 18:4 says “... the soul that sinneth, it shall die”.

As such, because of Adam, all humanity had a sentence of death on them as a debt to be paid. Meaning, before anyone can have a new beginning, that person must first pay his debt of death for his sin. But if everyone died for their own sin then God will lose all of us. So God sent the Lord Jesus as an Adam (a new Adam — the Last Adam) to define a new reality for us all.

We all were in Him when He went to the cross to die, and just as it was reckoned that when Adam disobeyed God you disobeyed God, so also it is reckoned that when Jesus went to the cross you also went to the cross, when He died you died, and when He resurrected in a new and glorious form of life (immortal life) you also resurrected in a new form of life.

Meaning, in Him, you have died for your sins (and are thus free from condemnation) and in Him you have also resurrected (that is, you have been regenerated) into a new form of life. It is this new form of life that Paul referred to in Romans 6:4 when He said:

“Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

This newness of life is the new Christ-like life you are able to live after you become born-again. That is how God used the container principle to make the Passover possible for you. And just as the bondage to sin became your practical reality when you were born (just as David said “in sin did my mother conceive me”, though the transaction was concluded in Adam even before you were born), so also your freedom in Christ and the nature of holiness become your practical reality when you become born-again (even though the transaction was completed in Jesus long before you were physically born).

We would still make reference to this container principle later, because just as Jesus died and thus we are reckoned to have died, and He resurrected and thus we are reckoned to have been regenerated into a new life, so also as He is currently seated in heaven upon the Throne (as the Son of God who is King of kings and Lord of lords), likewise it is reckoned that we have access to the authority of God’s throne and can use it to establish His Kingdom on earth as His royal priests. Amen! But we would look at that later.

THE THREE ELEMENTS OF DELIVERANCE FROM EGYPT

Thus far we have talked about “Egypt” as referring to “the power of sin” (or the kingdom of sin), where satan and his fellow fallen angels (spirits of darkness) operate as pharaohs and slave masters to make people sin.

We have also talked about the blood of the lamb as the mark of exemption from God’s judgment and understood that Jesus Christ is the Lamb that has come to pay the penalty for the sins of humanity so that we can escape God’s judgment on sin.

But there is more to the Passover experience. As we will see in Exodus 12, 13 and 14, there were three elements that were involved in the complete deliverance of Israel from Egypt — a complete deliverance to the extent where it was said in Exodus 14:13:

“... Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, **ye shall see them again no more for ever.**”

Likewise, for us, there are three elements involved in giving us a complete deliverance from the bondage of the power of satan (be it as it relates to sin, or sickness, or demonic oppression) to the extent where in our daily living we see it (the power of satan) no more. These three elements of deliverance are:

1. The blood of the lamb,
2. The pillar of fire and cloud, and
3. The crossing of the red sea.

THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB

We have already talked about the blood of the lamb. We have seen that its role in the deliverance process was to exempt the people of Israel from God’s judgment on Egypt, and by exempting them from God’s judgment on Egypt, the blood of the lamb effectively served as a mark of re-identification that excluded them from being categorized with Egypt.

For us, this means that the blood of Jesus separates us from those upon whom the power of satan can be exercised. That is, when the blood of Jesus is upon you, you are no longer considered to be part of Egypt (part of those under the bondage of the power of satan) and as such the power of satan cannot be exercised to make you sin or make you sick or make you subject to demonic oppression of any sort (be it ancestral or territorial or witchcraft).

Meaning, for example, even if the whole world is experiencing a pandemic (which the bible refers to as pestilence) — such pandemic (widespread sickness) is an expression of the power of satan — the blood of

Jesus exempts you from also getting sick because it identifies you as being born-again and thus excludes you from the category of those over whom satan can inflict such sickness.

You may find however that just as satan has lost his power to make you sin but will still try to suggest sin to your mind (as we will discuss in Module 2) so also though he has lost the power to make you sick he will still try to suggest sickness to you.

Your duty will be to prayerfully enforce the exemption from the influence of satan that the blood of Jesus gives you. But when a Christian does not know this or knows it but does not have conviction of it, the person runs the risk of not experiencing the exemption Jesus has secured for him or her by His blood — exemption from being compelled to sin, exemption from being sick, exemption from being oppressed, exemption from being subject to any expression of the power of satan.

THE PILLAR OF FIERY CLOUD & THE CROSSING OF THE RED SEA

We will look at the relevant verses in Exodus 13 and 14. From verse 17 of chapter 13, it reads:

“[17] And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt: [18] But God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red sea: and the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt. [20] And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness ... [21] And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: [22] He took not

away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.”

This passage tells us of the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire. We see that it is a physical manifestation of the presence of God to lead (guide) the people in the way they should go. During the day it appeared as a pillar of cloud (to provide shade from the wilderness heat) and during the night it appeared as a pillar of fire (to provide warmth and light in the wilderness cold and darkness). Exodus 23:20-23 sheds more light on this pillar of fiery cloud (which Exodus 13:21 refers to as “And the Lord went before them ...”). Exodus 23:20-23 says:

“[20] Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. [21] Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him. [22] But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries. [23] For mine Angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off.”

Thus, we see that whereas Exodus 13:21 (the previous passage) refers to the pillar of cloud and fire as “And the Lord went before them ...”, Exodus 23:23 (quoted above) refers to it as “For Mine Angel shall go before thee”. Meaning, the pillar of cloud and fire is the physical manifestation of the angel that God sent to guide the Israelites to the promised land. We would make reference to this later.

The final element of deliverance from Egypt is the crossing of the Red Sea. We can see this in Exodus 14. From verse 1, it reads:

“[1] And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, [2] Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn and encamp before Pi-hahiroth,

between Migdol and the sea, over against Baal-zephon: before it shall ye encamp by the sea. [3] For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in. [4] And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them; and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord. And they did so. [5] And it was told the king of Egypt that the people fled: and the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people, and they said, Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us? [6] And he made ready his chariot, and took his people with him: [7] And he took six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over every one of them. [8] And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued after the children of Israel: and the children of Israel went out with an high hand. [9] But the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the sea, beside Pi-hahiroth, before Baal-zephon. [10] And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the Lord.”

Here we see something important that models the character of the kingdom of sin. Even after a person is delivered from their hold, they often attempt to recapture the person.

For example, you may have noticed that if there were particular aspects of sin that you were in bondage to before you became born-again, after becoming born-again, you may have noticed a campaign of suggestions in your mind seeking to pull you to return to those things.

They will not have the same control as before, but you may have noticed a bombardment of your mind with the thoughts of doing those sinful things again; for example, sexual thoughts for someone who was in bondage to sexual immorality. These are manifestations of the kind of recapture campaign that pharaoh and his men launched at the Israelites. So how were they dealt with? Continuing from verse 13, Exodus 14 reads:

“[13] And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you to day: **for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.** [14] The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace. [15] And the Lord said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they **go forward:** [16] But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. [17] And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen. [18] And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen. [19] And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: [20] **And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel;** and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: **so that the one came not near the other all the night.”**

This passage shows us the first part of how the recapture campaign of Egypt was dealt with. It tells us that the pillar of fiery cloud came between the Israelites and the Egyptians. The goal of the angel (the pillar of fiery cloud) moving to stand between the Israelites and the Egyptians was to halt the advancement of the Egyptians towards the Israelites.

For us, keeping in mind that Egypt represents the powers of sin, this move indicates a gesture of God to assist a new believer to maintain his new freedom from sin by stopping the spirits of sin from recapturing him. We would soon see how when we understand what the pillar of fiery cloud represents for us. But before that, continuing in Exodus 14, from verse 21, it reads:

“[21] And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. [22] And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. [23] And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. [24] And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, [25] And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians. [26] And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. [27] And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; **and the**

Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. [28]

And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them. [29]

But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. [30] Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. [31] And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses.”

This is it! The issue of Egypt finally and totally dealt with. Verse 27 says “... and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.” Glory to God! Keep this verse in mind when we begin to look at what the crossing of the red sea represents for us — water baptism. It is an indicator of the great degree of saving power God has allotted to the mystery of water baptism — a power that is activated when the baptism is done with expectant faith.

What is the pillar of fiery cloud? And what is the red sea?

1 Corinthians 10:1-6 gives us a clue. It says:

“[1] Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; [2] And were all **baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea**; ... [6] Now these things were our examples, ...”

In this passage, we are told that the experience of the Israelites with the pillar of cloud and the crossing of the red sea were **baptisms**. From what we have seen so far, the pillar of cloud was the physical manifestation of the Angel that God sent to guide the Israelites through the wilderness to

the Promised Land. But for us in the New Testament, who has been sent to guide us? Jesus said in John 16:12-13:

“[12] I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. [13] Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come.”

This passage tells us that the One sent to guide us (to the promised estate of being like the Lord Jesus) is the Spirit of truth — the Holy Spirit. Meaning, the Holy Spirit is the New Testament equivalent of the Angel that was sent to guide the Israelites, and as such, the Holy Spirit’s influence is for us like the pillar of fiery cloud.

In addition to this, Hebrews 3:1-6 makes a comparison between Moses and Jesus, indicating that Jesus is the New Testament equivalent of Moses. And in Deuteronomy 18:15, Moses prophesied, saying:

“The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall hearken;”

This Prophet that Moses was prophesying about is the Lord Jesus. Acts 3:22 & 26 says:

“[22] For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you. ... [26] unto you first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away everyone of you from his iniquities.”

So the Lord Jesus is the New Testament equivalent of Moses. Why is that relevant in this discuss? It is because it helps us to see that the New Testament equivalent of the phrase “baptized unto Moses in the cloud” (mentioned in 1 Corinthians 10:2) is “baptized unto Jesus in the Holy

Spirit”, or in short form: baptism in the Holy Spirit, while the New Testament equivalent of the implied phrase “baptized unto Moses in the sea” (also mentioned in 1 Corinthians 10:2) is “baptized unto Jesus in the water”, or in short form: water baptism. We would look at baptism in the Holy Spirit first and then water baptism.

BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is the second element of deliverance from the power of sin, after the blood of the Lamb. Like the pillar of fiery cloud, it is the Holy Spirit that stops the recapture campaign of the spirits of sin so that you can be free indeed. 2 Corinthians 3:17 says:

“Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”

It is therefore important for you to be baptized in the Holy Spirit for you to have a clean break from sin and receive divine assistance to live a victorious Christian life.

What is baptism in the Holy Spirit?

The word “baptism” or “baptize” means to “immerse”. As such, baptism in the Holy Spirit means to be immersed (dipped into) the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:9 gives a good description of what this means. It says:

“But ye are not in the flesh, but **in the Spirit**, if so be that the Spirit of God **dwell in you**. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.”

The phrase of focus is “... ye are ... in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you ...”. This shows that immersion (baptism) in the Holy Spirit means that you are to be in the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit is to be inside you. How?

It makes more sense when you consider a physical scenario where this kind of thing happens. One example is: a fish is in water and the water is in the fish. Another example is: a human being is in air (air is around us) and the air is also in the human being (we breathe in air).

In both examples, the relationship is such that the water or air is the necessary surviving environment for the fish or human being. So also it is for the relationship between the born-again Christian and the Holy Spirit. We must be in Him and He in us because He (the Holy Spirit) is the necessary surviving environment for our Christian life to flourish. Acts 17:28 captures this neatly by saying:

“For in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring.”

In other words, as children of God, we live in the Holy Spirit, we move in the Holy Spirit, and we have our being in the Holy Spirit. But this being that we have in the Holy Spirit is not just a human kind of being, rather, we have the opportunity to have a divine kind of being in Him.

With this understanding, it becomes clear that baptism in the Holy Spirit is not just a one-time thing. We are immersed into Him and are never to come out but are to perpetually remain in Him so that we can survive and make progress as fruitful and victorious Christians who can express supernatural possibilities.

How does it take place? That is, how does one get baptized in the Holy Spirit? It is quite simple. It requires faith to ask and receive. The Lord Jesus said in Luke 11:9-13:

“[9] And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. [10] For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. [11] If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? [12] Or if

he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? [13] If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?”

It is that simple! It is similar to how you became born-again. You simply called out to God with repentance and sincerity of heart, asked Him to forgive you for all your sins, asked Him to wash you and regenerate you with the blood of Jesus, and asked Him to become the Lord of your life, and by so doing, you became born-again — and you believed it!

So also, as the Lord Jesus said in Luke 11:9-13, to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, you must believe that you can ask God to baptize you in the Holy Spirit and believe that when you ask He will indeed baptize you in the Holy Spirit.

You can go ahead and ask Him now if you have not already been baptized in the Holy Spirit. Once you ask Him, you can proceed to engage the benefits of being baptized in the Holy Spirit — by praying in the Spirit.

What does it mean to pray in the Spirit?

Praying in the Spirit is a form of prayer where the Holy Spirit prays through you while you open your mouth and speak unintelligibly by faith. Romans 8:26 describes it, saying:

“Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”

The emphasis in this kind of prayer is not on what is coming out of your mouth. That is, unlike praying with understanding where you know what you are saying, in this kind of prayer (praying in the Spirit) what

comes out of your mouth may initially sound like rubbish to you. That is why the verse says “... groanings which cannot be uttered”. Meaning, the depth and extent of what the Holy Spirit is praying through you cannot be readily uttered (spoken) in known language.

The way you participate in such spiritual groanings (prayers) is through faith by opening your mouth and letting utterances come out even though they are unintelligible and may sound like rubbish. The most important thing is faith — faith that the Holy Spirit is praying through you (irrespective of how incomprehensible what comes out of your mouth may sound).

It helps at this point if you have heard someone pray in the Spirit before, or if you have someone to pray in the Spirit along with you. Just flow along and speak, believing that the Lord is praying through you. It would sound like nonsense to your natural mind, as such, don't focus on the sound; but the more you believe (as you speak), the more you will have a witness (an assurance) in your spirit and will feel your heart connecting to the heart of God. Just believe and see!

Relative to deliverance from Egypt (deliverance from the powers of sin), in your practical daily life, anytime you are faced with a recapture campaign of the enemy trying to pull you into sin, when you pray in the Spirit, you are effectively invoking a spiritual whirlwind (like a tornado) to come down as a pillar of fire and cloud to stop the advancement of the spirits of darkness against you (just like how God used the pillar of fiery cloud to stop the Egyptians from getting to the Israelites); and as a result (of such effect of praying in the spirit), you will feel a relief of holiness and an ease to abstain from sin.

In addition to this, another effect of praying in the Spirit (that would aid you in your Christian advancement) is that it increases your faith,

which in turn gives you access to greater possibilities in God — possibilities that relate to expedited character formation, ministerial ability, divine health, and much more. Romans 8:16 says:

“The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:”

Emphasis on “The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit ...”. The word “witness” means to testify or to provide evidence. In other words, Romans 8:16 is saying that the Holy Spirit testifies to and provides spiritual evidence to your spirit. What is the effect of this provision of evidence to your spirit? Hebrews 11:1 says:

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, **the evidence of things not seen.**”

Meaning, when the Holy Spirit bears witness with your spirit — that is, when He testifies and provides evidence to your spirit — He is actually increasing your faith (your conviction), because faith is spiritual evidence; and this transaction of providing evidence to your spirit (increasing your faith) is something that takes place (or is enhanced) when you pray in the Spirit. Why is this important? That is, why is it important that praying in the Spirit increases your faith? It is because Romans 5:2 says:

“... we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand ...”

And Romans 1:17 says:

“... the righteousness of God [is] revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”

These passages show that faith is the means by which you can access the grace of God (the unmerited provisions of God’s divine assistance), and the higher the faith, the higher the level of God’s righteous provisions you can access.

Meaning, the effect of praying in the Spirit is that it increases your faith and thus enables you to access greater levels of God's righteous operations, like: healings, miracles, supernatural knowledge, and even expedited character formation. But all these are possible in the first place because you have been immersed into the Holy Spirit who is the custodian of all these possibilities.

It is like the nutrients in the water that a fish is immersed in. Because the fish is in the water, the nutrients in the water can flow into the fish. Likewise, there are many realities and possibilities (supernatural "nutrients") that are in the Holy Spirit and you have access to them because you have been immersed (baptized) into fellowship with Him. What is required is for you to be more and more open to Him (like the fish needs to be open to the water) so that more of Him can flow into you, and praying in the Spirit is a major way to be more open to the Holy Spirit. Other ways include praising and worshipping God, fasting, and meditating on the Word of God.

WATER BAPTISM

This is the third element of deliverance from the power of sin and satan after the blood of the Lamb and baptism in the Holy Spirit. It is represented by the crossing of the red sea. When referring to the experience of the Israelites in crossing the red sea under Moses' leadership, 1 Corinthians 10:2 (which we mentioned earlier) described it as "baptized unto Moses in the sea". But as we also discussed earlier, the New Testament equivalent of this experience is "baptized unto Jesus in the water", or in short: water baptism. Speaking of water baptism, Romans 6:3-7 says:

"[3] Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? [4] Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also

should walk in newness of life. [5] For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: [6] Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. [7] For he that is dead is freed from sin.”

This passage reveals what baptism into Christ is, and the part it plays in ensuring deliverance from the power of sin. Verse 3 says baptism into Christ is baptism into His death. And from verses 4 and 5, we can understand that when a person is baptized (immersed into the water) it symbolizes being buried with Christ, and when the person is raised up out of the water it symbolizes being resurrected with Christ. Meaning, baptism into Christ is baptism into His death and resurrection.

How does water baptism help in deliverance from the power of sin?

It helps by making us no longer alive to the slave master. Remember we had looked at Romans 7:14 which said we were sold as slaves to sin — that is, we were slaves to the power of sin.

Now imagine a physical scenario where a person is a slave to a master. Or a scenario where a master has ten slaves. If two of the slaves die, how many slaves does the master have? The answer is eight. What about the remaining two? They are no longer slaves because they are no longer alive. But what if they could somehow resurrect in another kingdom. If that happened, to their initial slave master, they are dead, and thus are no longer slaves, but to the new kingdom, they are alive and are free. As such, by the process of death and resurrection, they have become free from slavery and have gained the opportunity to live a new life.

This is how dying and resurrecting with Christ (through water baptism) serves as the third element of deliverance from the power of sin. You die with Christ and thus are no longer alive in the kingdom of sin,

and you resurrect with Christ and thus are free to live a new life in the Kingdom of God. Romans 6:7 summarizes it neatly by saying:

“For he that is dead is freed from sin.”

And Romans 6:6 adds to it, saying:

“... our old man is crucified with Him ... that henceforth we should not serve sin.”

This is basically what happened to the Israelites when they crossed the red sea — they died, and they resurrected. The reality is that no one can cross the Red Sea on dry land alive. No one can walk through the bottom of the sea alive. In fact, to get to the bottom of the sea (as a human being with no external aid), one would have to die. As such, by taking the Israelites to walk through the bottom of the Red Sea, God was taking them through a symbolic death process, and consequently, by bringing them out of the Red Sea, God was taking them through a symbolic resurrection process.

It is by this symbolic death and resurrection that the Egyptians were finally dealt with, which is why Exodus 14:27 says “... and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea”, as a prophecy of the great salvation God has designed to be accomplished through water baptism. The Egyptians followed them into the water but could not come out because resurrection was only for the people of God. Likewise, when you are buried with Christ through water baptism, the spirits of sin that held you in bondage follow you into that burial but are unable to follow you out when you are raised with Christ (out of the water). They are gone! So that the Egyptians (the power of sin and satan) that you saw before, you shall see them again no more, and henceforth will be free to live a victorious Christian life, no longer under bondage to the compelling force of the spirits of sin.

How does this work?

Colossians 2:11-12 says:

“[11] In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: [12] Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him **through the faith of the operation of God**, who hath raised Him from the dead.”

This passage shows us that the miracle of death and resurrection with Christ is not in the water you are baptized in; rather, the miracle is through the faith of the operation of God. It is God that can do that miraculous operation: to cause you to die with Christ and to be resurrected with Him. **But you need to believe it!** Romans 5:2 says “... we have access by faith ...”. As such, faith (that when you are immersed into the water you are being buried with Christ and when you are raised out of the water you are resurrecting with Christ) is what is required from you to experience the actual death and resurrection operation of God that ends the hold of the powers of darkness over you.

Why water? It is because it is a convenient medium to dip you in and bring you out, as a symbolic model of being buried in the grave and being brought out of the grave. It will be complicated to do it with sand (or the ground), which is why God chose water as the medium for this baptism into Christ’s death and resurrection.

It is important to note that this operation of God in baptism not only ends the hold of the powers of darkness as it relates to sin, but ends it in ALL dimensions, including any ancestral holds of darkness. The operation of God in baptism deals with them all as they are all manifestations of Egypt bondage prior to being born-again.

Wrapping everything up in summary, we can now understand that in the first season of your Christian journey (in the first module of the Christian curriculum), you must experience the three elements of deliverance from Egypt (the powers of darkness) in order for your Passover

experience to be complete. If you do not, you will advance in your Christian journey with contradictions (scenarios of oppression that a born-again child of God ought not to experience).

The three elements of deliverance — the **blood** of the Lamb, baptism of the Holy **Spirit**, and **water** baptism — point to affirm that indeed the Lord Jesus is the Messiah: the sent One who has the power to save humanity from the bondage of the enemy. That is why 1 John 5:5&8 says:

“[5] Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? ... [8] And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in One.”

The Lord Jesus is the One in whom these three elements agree. On the cross, He released them out of Himself to initiate their operations. He released His Spirit when He gave up the ghost, and He released the blood and water when He was pierced to confirm that He had died. This was a symbolic act of commissioning them as effective elements of deliverance from the powers of sin and satan. As such, it is indeed through the Lord Jesus Christ, the author of these three elements of deliverance, that we are able to overcome the world — that is, overcome the spirits of sin and darkness that orchestrate the course of this world. John 3:3-5 says:

“[3] Jesus answered and said unto him, **Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.** [4] Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? [5] Jesus answered, **Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.**”

This is the complete Passover. The time in your life when you are born-again by the blood, by the water and by the Spirit to have a new beginning as a citizen in the Kingdom of God, free from the former bondage of sin, able to advance victoriously towards the promise of being like the Lord Jesus Christ as a holy immortal divine being that is a royal temple for the Almighty God.

Remember that in the introduction to the curriculum we mentioned that you need to allow the truths of the Word of God in each of the seven modules work in you for you to experience the prescribed victories in each module. In the Passover module, for you to experience complete deliverance from bondage to the powers of darkness, the truths of the Word of God that you need to allow to work in you are the truths of the blood, the Spirit, and the Water.

Now that you are free from bondage to the powers of darkness:

What next?

Module 2

VICTORY IN THE BATTLE OF THE MIND

The Unleavening

This is the second milestone in the ideal Christian progression. Or in the educational language we have been using, this is the second module in the Christian curriculum — the milestone where you begin to be victorious in the battle of the mind.

Remember we had mentioned in the introduction to the curriculum that each of the seven milestones in the Christian curriculum are represented by the seven feasts that God instructed the people of Israel to keep through the course of the year.

This second milestone where you begin to be victorious in the battle of the mind is the milestone that is represented by the second feast: the feast of unleavened bread — the time when the Israelites were to **remove leaven** from their houses. We can find this feast described in Leviticus 23:6-8. From verse 4, it reads:

“[4] These are the feasts of the Lord, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. [5] In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's passover. [6] And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord: seven days ye must eat unleavened

bread. [7] In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. [8] But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.”

We can get more insight on this feast by looking at Exodus 12:15-17. It reads:

“[15] Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day **ye shall put away leaven out of your houses:** for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel. [16] And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you. [17] And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever.”

The first passage (Leviticus 23:4-8) tells us that the feast of unleavened bread is to be kept for seven days. While the second passage (Exodus 12:15-17) clearly states that during this seven-day period the people are to remove leaven from their houses and not eat leavened bread.

How does this relate to you? That is, what does it mean for you to remove leaven from your house? 1 Corinthians 3:16 says:

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”

And 2 Corinthians 6:16 also says:

“And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

These passages show that, as a child of God, you are a temple of God. A temple is a house. Meaning, as a child of God, you are a house of God. Matthew 12:43-45 gives a broader perspective to this. There, Jesus said:

“[43] When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. [44] Then he saith, I will return into **my house** from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. [45] Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.”

Thus, a person can be symbolically referred to as a house. If he is a Christian, then he is a house of God. If he is not, then he is a house occupied by unclean spirits. As such, when Exodus 12:15 says “... ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: ...”, for us it means that we are to put away leaven from our lives.

What is leaven?

Physically speaking, leaven is a substance used in baking bread. It is an agent introduced into the dough to make it rise. When introduced into the dough, leaven has a character of spreading quickly across the dough. That is how it accomplishes the “rising” effect on the dough. Paul bears witness to this in 1 Corinthians 5:6 saying “... Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?” Meaning when even a little leaven is introduced into a lump of dough it would spread to affect the whole lump. This is an important attribute to take note of.

Spiritually speaking, depending on the context, leaven represents corrupting sinful expressions. 1 Corinthians 5:8 says:

“Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

This passage mentions malice and wickedness (which we know are expressions of sin) as examples of leaven. Meaning, all expressions of sin can be viewed as leaven.

Now you may wonder: how come expressions of sin are coming up again as leaven in the second milestone (the unleavening); are they not to have been dealt with “as Egypt” in the first milestone (the Passover)? To answer, we can consider another passage to learn more about leaven. Matthew 16:6 & 12 says:

“[6] Then Jesus said unto them, **Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.** ... [12] Then understood they how that He bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the **doctrine** of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.”

Here, the Lord Jesus used leaven to represent the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Why? It is because the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees was corrupt; such that if a person yields to it, they will end up sinning against God. Jesus said it in Matthew 23:15:

“**Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte (convert), and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.**”

That is why He called their doctrine leaven, because it was corrupt and made a person a child of hell (a sinner). But by referring to doctrine (a set of teachings or opinions) as leaven, the Lord Jesus is teaching us that leaven does not just refer to sin that has manifested as actions, but leaven also refers to the thoughts (ideas) and opinions that conceive sin in the mind, before it is acted out.

For example, 1 Corinthians 5:8 mentions malice as an example of leaven. The action of malice is to stop talking to someone: to avoid interacting with them. But before malice gets to the point of actions, it begins as a thought or an opinion about the person or something they did. This thought that leads to the action of malice is also malice (even before it becomes an action) and as such it is leaven. The Lord Jesus explained this in Matthew 5:27-28 — that sin is still sin, even when it is in the mind and has not become an action. He said:

“[27] Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: [28] But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.”

In other words, there is the sin of the physical action of adultery. But even before the action, while it is a thought (a concept suggested and brooded on in the mind) it is also a sin. **This is important to note, as it helps to differentiate between the mode of operation of the spirits of sin in the first milestone (the Passover) and in the second milestone (the Unleavening).**

With this in mind, when we are told in 1 Corinthians 5:7-8 that we should purge out the old leaven of malice and wickedness (which are examples of sin), we can understand that (in this season of unleavening) it is no longer referring to the bondage hold of sin (which would have been dealt with in your Passover milestone), but rather is referring to the suggestions (or projected opinions) of the spirits of sin into your thoughts at times when you are most vulnerable.

These suggestions in the mind are like doctrines (teachings). They are part of what 1 Timothy 4:1 refers to as “... doctrines of devils”. They are the lectures of unclean spirits who seek to teach you to think and act in a sinful way. Some of their lectures include the works of the flesh mentioned in Galatians 5:19-21:

“[19] ... adultery, fornication, lewdness, [20] idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, [21] envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, ...”

For each of these, the spirits of sin have a method of lecturing your mind in an attempt to make you carry out the actions, especially at times when you may be vulnerable to an appetite, preference, mindset, or social construct.

Take malice again for example. The leaven to be dealt with are the suggestions that the spirits of malice project as thoughts into your mind, especially at a time when someone offends you. The goal of those projected thoughts is to teach you a way of thinking that would make you see reason to keep malice and act maliciously towards the person.

But knowing that a little leaven leavens the whole lump (as said in 1 Corinthians 5:6), **you have a responsibility to quickly cast down such thoughts and fill your mind rather with what the Word of God teaches** because if you don't the thought would quickly spread in your mind (establishing itself as a mindset) and end up manifesting as an act of malice like changing your attitude towards the person, or withdrawing from normal communication with the person, or even saying hurtful things in response to the person who offended you.

Another potent example of leaven to be mindful of is unbelief. Hebrews 3:12 calls it an evil heart. It reads:

“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.”

And our Lord Jesus in Matthew 17:17 referred to it (unbelief or faithlessness) as perversion. He said:

“... O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me.”

He said this when His disciples were unable to cast out a demon from a man because of doubt in their heart even though Jesus had given them the power to. Satan (through projected thoughts) had corrupted their reasoning to magnify the situation above the power of Christ, and that is perversion.

Doubt (or unbelief) is a major category of leaven (along with accusation and condemnation) that you would need to be mindful of (and diligently cast down) in the course of your Christian journey as it is often employed by the spirits of darkness to weary and corrupt the mind of believers so that they will draw back from faith in God and regress into fear or sin.

Such diligence to quickly cast down projected leaven thoughts from spirits of sin is what is needed in this milestone of unleavening. It is a diligence for warfare — the kind of warfare described in 2 Corinthians 10:4-6 which says:

“[4] (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) [5] Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; [6] And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.”

This passage tells us that the warfare we are fighting is not carnal (not physical) and thus the weapons we employ are not to be physical but spiritual weapons that God has made mighty. It tells us that a key aspect of this spiritual warfare involves casting down imaginations and thoughts that are in opposition to (or different from) the truths of God. These thoughts and imaginations that we are to cast down are the leaven we are to remove from our houses (remove from ourselves). They are projections of the spirits of sin and darkness intended to corrupt our

minds and affect our outward expressions — their goal being to re-participate in our lives to make us sin. Ephesians 6:10-18 sheds more light on this warfare. It says:

“[10] Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. [11] Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. [12] For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. [13] Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. [14] Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; [15] And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; [16] Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. [17] And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: [18] Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;”

Verse 16 says we should take on the shield of faith (which is part of the armour that God has provided for us) so that we can use it to quench the fiery darts of the wicked — the wicked being the spirits of darkness mentioned in verse 12. These fiery darts (flaming arrows) are words spoken by spirits of darkness. When spoken, the words appear in the mind as thoughts and imaginations — the thoughts and imaginations that 2 Corinthians 10:5 says we should cast down. Psalm 64:2-4 says:

“[2] Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity: [3] Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot **their arrows**,

even bitter words: [4] That they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.”

This is the nature of the fiery darts (flaming arrows) that you are to quench with the shield of faith. They are bitter words spoken as thoughts into your mind by spirits of darkness with the intent of depositing such thoughts as leaven to corrupt your actions back into sin. Your duty is to cast them down so that you do not sin. That is the battle diligence required for unleavening in this second milestone of the Christian curriculum.

This battle readiness that characterizes the unleavening milestone (the milestone after the Passover where you were delivered from Egypt) is a reason why Exodus 13:18 says:

“But God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red sea: and the children of Israel went up **harnessed** out of the land of Egypt.”

The word “harnessed” is translated from the Hebrew word “châmûsh” which means “soldiers in battle array”. It shows that upon leaving Egypt, the people of Israel needed to adopt a battle readiness in order to advance successfully on their journey to the promised land. This is the same for you. After your Passover milestone, you must adopt a readiness for spiritual warfare — the warfare of casting down leaven thoughts and imaginations projected by the spirits of sin and darkness. This is so that you can maintain your Christ-obtained victory over sin and advance meaningfully towards the other milestones in your Christian journey till you arrive at the promise of being like the Lord Jesus Christ.

In addition to being harnessed (being battle ready), it is important to note that the Angel (who appeared as a pillar of fiery cloud) that helped to protect the people of Israel from the recapture campaign of Egypt (as we discussed in module 1) did not just stop there but continued leading them in their journey to the promised land, even after Egypt

was destroyed at the Red Sea. The Angel (the pillar of fiery cloud) was the supernatural advantage that Israel had in defeating the other nations that were on their way to the promised land. This is also the same for you.

Remember that we identified the Holy Spirit as the New Testament equivalent of the Angel that was sent to guide the Israelites in their journey, and we understood that when you pray in the Spirit, part of the effect in the spiritual realm is like a pillar (a tornado) of cloud and fire. As such, in this battle of unleavening, **beyond your determination** to cast down the thoughts and imaginations projected by unclean spirits, do not forget that **the Holy Spirit is your added advantage**.

Any time you sense the attempts of unclean spirits to participate in your life (that is, to deposit leaven into your mind), especially at times when you may be vulnerable (to an offence, a temptation, or a situation) **always remember to pray in the Spirit**.

For example: when you feel an influence trying to make you think evil of someone because the person did something you did not like; or when you feel an influence trying to make you doubt God and slip into depression because a situation did not go as you wanted; or when you feel an influence accusing you and trying to make you discouraged because you did not meet up to a desired goal; or when you feel an influence trying to make you think immoral (lustful) thoughts because you saw the opposite sex dressed in a certain way.

In all these scenarios and many more that can occur through the course of your day, be vigilant (with battle-mindedness) to sense when a spirit of darkness is trying to influence you, and at such times, **always remember to pray in the Spirit** (as part of your battle strategy to cast down their projected thoughts and imaginations). When you do, you will be causing an effect like the tornado pillar of fire, and that will drive the spirits of darkness away from you. There are many more benefits of

praying in the Spirit, but that is beyond the scope of this book. Just remember to pray in the Spirit often.

On a final note, in Leviticus 23:4-8 and Exodus 12:15-17 (both of which we read earlier) the instruction for the feast of Unleavened Bread was to keep it for seven days — that is, they were to remove leaven from their houses for seven days. What does this mean for us?

The number seven in biblical prophetic numerology represents perfection. So, by saying remove leaven from your houses for seven days, for us, it means you are to keep maintaining the diligence of removing leaven from your life until you are made perfect in Christ. Meaning, this unleavening is not something you start and stop. Even in the third milestone (and beyond), you still maintain the battle discipline of unleavening — that is, all through your life, you maintain the attitude of diligently casting down leaven thoughts, imaginations and teachings projected by spirits of darkness who seek to participate in your life again to make you sin.

The faithfulness with which you do this will affect the pace (physical timing) in which you will arrive at the seventh milestone. We can say so because the seventh feast is exactly seven months from the day of this feast of Unleavened Bread — indicating that removing leaven from your life (casting down thoughts projected from spirits of darkness) is closely related to your arriving at the seventh milestone (where you experience full Kingdom living).

Study Notes: Write a brief summary of what you've learnt so far

As you gain victory in the battle of the mind

It paves the way for Christ-like character

Module 3

EXPRESSING CHRIST'S CHARACTER

Firstfruits

This is the third milestone in the Christian growth progression — the milestone represented by the third feast that God instructed the people of Israel to keep: the feast of firstfruits. It was the time when the people of Israel gathered up the firstfruits of their harvest and waved a portion of it to God as a ceremonial show of appreciation. The firstfruits of their harvest refers to the first set of their harvest.

In the promised land, there were three harvest periods: the feast of firstfruits (which was the third feast: when barley was harvested), the feast of harvest, also known as Pentecost (which was the fourth feast: when wheat was harvested), and the feast of ingathering, also known as Tabernacles (which was the seventh feast: when all the fruit crops, like grapes, olives, figs, dates, pomegranates, would have been fully harvested, at which point the entire harvest of the year was considered to have been complete).

As such, firstfruits simply refers to the first set (the first batch) of the year's harvest, and being the third appointed feast, it represents the fact that it is at the third milestone of your Christian advancement that your life begins to yield the harvest of the first set of Christ's qualities

— after you have passed through Passover and diligently maintain the discipline of Unleavening. Leviticus 23:9-11 describes the feast of firstfruits. It reads:

“[9] And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, [10] Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, **When ye be come into the land** which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: [11] And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.”

This passage highlights some details that are important for understanding how this feast of firstfruits plays out in the life of a Christian. It states in verse 10 that this feast was to be kept when the people of Israel entered the promised land and reaped the firstfruit harvest. Meaning, for us, before a person can arrive at the firstfruits milestone in the Christian journey, they must have first entered the promised land.

What is the promised land that a Christian has entered?

It is the “new creation man”. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says:

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

This is the promised land that you entered into when you became born-again. You entered into the spiritual genealogy of Christ as a new creation man. But that was just the beginning. It is like for the people of Israel, entering into the promised land was not their final goal, rather, their final goal was to yield the full harvest of the promised land.

So also, for you as a Christian, becoming born-again as a new creature is not your final goal, rather, your final goal for becoming a Christian is to actually yield the full harvest of the attributes of Christ as a new manifest nature (in character and ability). Meaning, becoming a new

creation man (our equivalent of entering the promised land) is just the beginning, and is the prerequisite for yielding the firstfruits and full harvest of Christ's nature.

What is the New Creation Man?

Ephesians 4:24 says:

“... put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

This passage tells us that the new creation man is a being that is created in God's likeness to be righteous and holy. How? Ephesians 2:10 says:

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

The phrase “... created in Christ Jesus ...” indicates that Christ Jesus is the substance (the raw material) from whom we were newly created when we became born-again. Meaning, the new creation man is actually Christ. He is the promised land we entered into when we were delivered from Egypt. Which is why Colossians 1:13 says:

“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son:”

Christ Jesus is the promised land (the Kingdom) we entered into after being delivered from the bondage of the powers of sin and darkness.

What does it mean that Christ Jesus is the Promised Land?

It means that when you became born-again, you were reborn as a Christ. That is, you were reborn into the Christ family as a descendant of Jesus Christ. He is the one who is like God and is righteous and truly holy. As such, irrespective of how you currently feel, irrespective of the weaknesses you currently have, irrespective of the mistakes you recently made,

irrespective of anything, if you are born-again, you are a Christ (that is, you are a member of the Christ family) and as such you have the potential to be righteous and truly holy. That is the truth. And you are to accept it by faith. You have the spiritual DNA of Christ in you (as His descendant) and as such you have the potential to be in God's likeness as a righteous and truly holy person. Think about it and say this to yourself: **"Because I am born-again, I am recreated in Christ Jesus, and I have the potential to be righteous and truly holy — a potential to be just like my Lord Jesus"**. In summary therefore, Christ Jesus being our promised land means that He is the foundation of what we are newly created to be. He is the definition of what our new potential is; which is why Hebrews 6:19-20 refers to Him as the forerunner of our hope — the One who has gone ahead to show us what God has ordained for us to also become. It reads:

"[16] For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. [17] Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: [18] That by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: [19] Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; [20] **Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.**"

He is indeed our forerunner — our trailblazer — and thus the definition of what our new potential is. Meaning, everything that He is serves as a description of what we can be, because He is the substance used to create the new life we have been born-again into.

Knowing this — that as Christians the promised land we have entered into is that we have been born-again (recreated) into new Christ creatures that have the potential to be like the Lord Jesus — we can move on to ask:

What are the firstfruits to be harvested in the new Christ creature?

They are **the first set of Christ's fruits** formed in us. They are **fruits of character**. Galatians 5:22-23 mentions a couple of them. It reads:

“[22] But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, [23] Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”

Having these fruits formed in us is the summary of what Ephesians 4:24 (which we read earlier) refers to as being in righteousness and true holiness. They are called fruit of the Spirit because it is the Spirit of God that germinates them in us as we expose ourselves to the Word of God. Knowing these character traits helps us to evaluate ourselves to see if we have arrived at (or advanced through) the milestone of yielding the firstfruits of the new Christ creature that we have been born-again (recreated) into.

How does a Christian arrive at the milestone of producing the firstfruits harvest?

Keeping in mind that the promised land means that we are born-again (recreated) into persons that now have the potential to be righteous and truly holy like the Lord Jesus Christ, this question can be rephrased as: How does a believer move from just having the potential to be righteous and truly holy to actually expressing that righteousness and holiness as a character? Or: How does a believer move from just having the potential to express the fruit of the Spirit (mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23) to ac-

tually expressing them (love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, etc.) as a daily character? We can find the answer in Leviticus 23:11. It is captured in the phrase "... on the morrow after the sabbath ...". Leviticus 23:10-11 says:

"[10] Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: [11] And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it."

In this passage, God tells the people of Israel the day they should keep the feast of firstfruits. He said it is "... on the morrow after the sabbath ...". That is, on the next day (the tomorrow) after the sabbath. The emphasis of using the sabbath as the time indicator to determine when they should keep the feast highlights a spiritual link between the sabbath and the feast of firstfruits. Saying it should be on the next day after the sabbath implies for us in the New Testament that in order for you as a Christian to experience the firstfruits milestone (the third milestone) **you must first experience the sabbath**. It is after the sabbath (on the tomorrow after the sabbath) that you will experience the firstfruits milestone of expressing the righteous and holy character of Christ. The sabbath therefore contributes to the process of moving you from just having the potential to have Christ's character, to actually expressing His character as your new Christian character. So then:

What is the Sabbath?

The Jewish word translated to English as sabbath means "rest" or "desist from exertion". In other words, it means to do no work. That is what God said in Leviticus 23:3. He said: "... the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the Lord in all

your dwellings.” So the sabbath was a time when God required the people of Israel to rest from all activities and do no work. It was also always a time for holy convocation. A holy convocation was a time when the people of Israel gathered together to listen to the public reading of scriptures (the Bible). As such, the sabbath was a time to do no work and to rather gather to read the scriptures. Exodus 12:16 adds to this, saying:

“And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, but that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you.”

This verse carefully mentions an important detail about the sabbath. In addition to saying that they were to do no work and were to have a holy convocation (that is, gather to read scriptures), God made an exception for the only permitted work on the sabbath — the work of preparing the food they will eat. What does this mean for a Christian? What does it mean to have holy convocation and do no work, except the work of preparing food to eat? And how does this help in bringing the Christian into the firstfruits milestone? To answer, we would need to first ask:

What is the food a Christian is to eat?

It is the Word of God. In different passages of the Bible, **the Word of God is represented as food**. In 1 Peter 2:2, the Word of God is represented as milk:

“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby”

In Hebrews 5:12-14, the Word of God is represented as meat:

“[12] For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk,

and not of strong meat. [13] For everyone that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. [14] But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

In John 1:14-17 and Revelation 19:11-16, the Lord Jesus is called the Word of God:

“[14] And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. [15] John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. [16] And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. [17] For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” (John 1:14-17, KJV)

“[11] And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. [12] His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself. [13] And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God. [14] And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. [15] And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. [16] And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King Of Kings, And Lord Of Lords.” (Revelation 19:11-16, KJV)

And in John 6:48-55, Jesus said of Himself:

“[48] I am the Bread of Life ... [53] ... Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. [54] Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. [55] For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.”

When the Lord Jesus said we should eat Him, keeping in mind that He is called the Word of God, we can understand that He meant we should take in His Words by hearing, digesting (meditating on) and believing them. As such, in response to the question “What is the food a Christian is to eat?”, **the food is the Word of God.**

Meaning, when God’s instruction for the sabbath is that no work be done except the work of preparing food to eat, for us, keeping in mind that the sabbath is the means by which we yield the firstfruits of Christ’s nature, this instruction means that in keeping the sabbath the only work God wants us to do is the work of reading, digesting and believing His Word. In other words, as we discussed in the Introduction to the Curriculum, exposure to the Word of God is the means by which we yield the harvest of the firstfruits of Christ’s nature — His Character.

The second question to ask (as we seek to understand how a Christian should keep the sabbath) is:

What does it mean to do no work?

It simply means to not exert your own effort in trying to produce the fruits of Christ’s attributes in your life. The energy for yielding Christ’s fruits should and would come from the digested Word of God (which is why preparing the food is the only allowed work in the sabbath). Hebrews 4:9-12 echoes this principle of not engaging your own strength to produce the realities of God in your life, but rather relying on the strength of the Word of God. It says:

“[9] There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. [10] For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His. [11] Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. [12] For the Word of God is alive, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

This passage talks about the rest (the sabbath) of God. It explains that whoever has entered into God’s rest has ceased from his own works. It then says we should labour (make effort) to enter into that rest, and reveals that the process of labouring involves resisting unbelief in order to experience the power of the Word of God (which is alive and powerful). In other words, we enter into God’s rest by ceasing from applying our own efforts and rather ensuring that we have faith in the Word of God — casting down unbelief.

A practical example. Let us say you are struggling with a weakness, perhaps anger for example. You find that you are easily angered, and when angry, you can do almost anything destructive. Or perhaps you do not express it outwardly but implode internally and find that you end up keeping malice for a long time with the person that angered you.

To deal with this issue, you may be tempted to seek to apply different principles of anger management or put some methodologies in place to help you to stop getting angry. But ceasing (resting) from your own works (that is, doing no work, as required in the sabbath), in this case, involves not applying your own strength or wisdom to overcome the anger. Rather, as also required in the sabbath, you are to focus your energy on preparing the food you will eat. That is, search through the Word of God for a verse or verses that relate to the issue (in this case, dealing with anger). An example scripture is 1 Corinthians 13:5 which says: Love

is not easily provoked; Love thinks no evil. Meditate on those Words. Understand that they are not just words or written texts, but as the Lord Jesus said in John 6:63, they are actually descriptions of the influence of the Spirit of Life. John 6:63 says:

“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”

Knowing that the Word of God in the Bible are not just words but are textual descriptions of the influence of the Spirit of Life, you should let the power of the Spirit of Life sip into you. For example, in the case of 1 Corinthians 13:5 (which says love is not easily provoked and love thinks no evil) as the means to deal with anger, the passage (1 Corinthians 13:5) is describing the power of the Spirit of Life to establish love in you and enable you to not be easily provoked and to not think evil. Think about it!

As Jesus explained in John 6:63, beyond textual or mental information, the verse (1 Corinthians 13:5) is a description of the power of the Spirit of Life to establish love in you: to enable you to not be easily provoked and to think no evil. Meaning, there is power available to make you yield the fruits of Christ's nature and making use of that power is a more sustained way of yielding the fruits of Christ (rather than your own efforts). You should thus let that power of the Spirit of Life sip into you. How? By believing and confessing the Word of God. Romans 10:10 says:

“For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

In other words, you activate the Spirit of the Word by believing it, and then you let the power of the Spirit of the Word enter into you (or work for you) by confessing it (speaking it). It is when you speak it that you experience salvation — that is, deliverance or victory in any situation of interest (e.g., victory over anger). That is how you gain the energy to deal with weaknesses and yield the fruits of Christ's character.

This same principle can be applied for yielding all other virtues of Christ — holiness, prayer, selflessness, obedience, faith, power, etc. And by so doing, you would be gaining victory through the Word of God and not by your own self-generated wisdom or strength. That is the sabbath way (the restful way) of victory. In the stead of anger, the Word produces love (in the stead of weakness, the Word produces strength).

We can therefore now understand the prophetic significance of God's instruction in Leviticus 23:11 that the feast of firstfruits should be **on the morrow after the sabbath**. It is an instruction intended to reveal to us in the New Testament that the way we can yield the fruits of Christ's attributes (to express as our new Christian character) is **by keeping the sabbath** — that is, by resting from all our human efforts and methodologies for character formation, and rather searching through (and meditating carefully on) the Word of God to gain understanding and the faith that opens us up to the Spirit of Life (in the Word of God) that has the power to change us. **It is the only way to become like Christ**. It is the only way to arrive at the firstfruits milestone.

Any other human way would result in a sinusoidal experience of rising and falling — feeling holy and churchy some days and losing steam (having no motivation to act “christiany”) on other days. This is because the Christ character is not just an act you can decide to put up but is a nature that must spring up from the new creation man that you have become. It is the power of the Spirit of Life in the Word of God that provides the energy for germination (and harvest) as you “keep the sabbath” — that is, as you cease from your own efforts and instead depend on the power of the Word of God. Your self will and strength cannot do it. It is written: “... Not by (human) might, nor by (human) power, but by My Spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.” (Zechariah 4:6, KJV). “... for by (human) strength shall no man prevail.” (1 Samuel 2:9, KJV).

As we round up our discuss on this module, it is necessary to note an important detail in God's instruction for the timing of the feast of firstfruits. According to God's instructions, the feast of firstfruits (the third feast) was to be celebrated within the seven days of the feast of unleavened bread. As we learnt in the previous module, God instructed the people of Israel to keep the feast of unleavened bread (remove leaven from their houses) for seven days. The first of these seven days was a sabbath and the seventh of the seven days was also a sabbath. Then, for the feast of firstfruits, God instructed that the feast should be on the next day (the morrow) after the sabbath. This sabbath is the first sabbath of the seven days of the feast of unleavened bread. Meaning, the feast of firstfruits (the third feast) is within the feast of unleavened bread (the second feast) — it is on the second day.

God did this deliberately as a symbol to communicate a message to us in the New Testament. Keeping in mind that the feast of unleavened bread for us represents a continued diligence of removing the leaven of thoughts and imaginations projected into our minds by the spirits of darkness, the message God is communicating to us by putting the feast of firstfruits within the feast of unleavened bread is that the diligence of unleavening is closely related to the harvest of the firstfruits of Christ's attributes in us.

Meaning, the more faithful you are to cast down the thoughts and imaginations projected into your mind by the spirits of darkness (whose aim is to pull you back into sin, e.g., anger, unforgiveness, immorality, unbelief), and rather uphold the Word of God in your heart, mind and confession, the easier it will be for you to harvest the character of Christ (e.g., love, forgiveness, holiness, faith).

In other words, even though you are now born-again as a new Christ creature, satan will keep trying to make it look to you like you still have a sinful nature — that you still have an appetite (or tendency) for sin:

lies, immorality, selfishness, unforgiveness, unbelief, etc. — by continuously suggesting sin (leaven) into your mind and making it look like your own thoughts and imaginations. But you are to cast them down, and rather uphold in your mind (by faith in the Word of God) that you are a new Christ creature who has Christ's character. Philemon 1:6 says:

“That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.”

This passage is saying that there are many good things (good qualities) that are in you because you are in (or from) Christ Jesus, and you are to acknowledge them (the good qualities). It is as you acknowledge them (the Christ qualities) as your new reality (and do not believe the sinful projections of satan as your reality) that “the communication of your faith” becomes more effective.

The communication of your faith refers to the outward expression of your Christian faith, which is defined not just by your words but by the quality of Christ-like character that people see in you. The increase in effectiveness of the communication of your Christian faith therefore means that there is more of Christ for people to see in you, which would have a higher impact on them.

Philemon 1:6 is therefore saying that there is more of Christ for people to see in you (that is, your life will show more harvest of Christ's fruits) the more you acknowledge by faith that you are a new creature with goodly Christ qualities, and no longer a sinful person (as satan's leaven projections would like you to think). This Acknowledging is a sabbath principle. It involves you elevating the Word of God (and what the Word says about you) above anything else by reading it, understanding it, believing it, and confessing it over yourself.

That is why God put the feast of firstfruits on the next day after the sabbath that begins the seven days of the feast of unleavened bread (meaning, within the feast of unleavened bread).

Now that you have Christ's character:

You are ready for ministry

Module 4

EXPRESSING CHRIST'S MINISTRY ABILITY

Pentecost

This is the fourth milestone in your Christian advancement. It is the milestone where you begin to manifest anointing for ministry. Meaning, ministry, or “anointing” is not something meant for a select few. It is the destiny of every child of God. Every Christian has been “called” into ministry. Romans 8:16-17 says:

“[16] The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, [17] and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, ...”

This passage says that every child of God is a heir of God. Do you know what that means? A heir is one who inherits something valuable that belongs to a parent. As such, a heir of God is one who inherits an attribute (or quality) that belongs to God. Meaning, every child of God has a portion of God that they inherit. The passage goes on to say: “joint heirs with Christ”. Meaning, every portion of God that a Christian inherits is first inherited by Christ and we join Him in inheriting God. The beauty of this is that we can always look to the life of Jesus to gain inspiration on how to operate each dimension of inheritance, because He expresses all dimensions of God’s attributes. He said

whoever has seen Me has seen the Father (John 14:9). And by being joint heirs with Him, people are to see the Father in you also, as you express the portion of God He has given you to inherit.

The inheritance that each Christian has from God is what defines their purpose and ministry on earth. In other words, your purpose is defined by your inheritance in God; because it is what you have inherited that determines the kind of ministry you are to carry out in the church and to the world, and the successful carrying out of that ministry is the purpose for which you have been sent into the world by your Heavenly Father. Jesus modelled such life of purpose when He came into the world. He said: I have come to do Thy will O God, as it is written of Me in the volume of the book (Hebrews 10:7). That is the same attitude you are to have. You have come into this world to accomplish a particular aspect of the will of God, and your inheritance is what you are to use to accomplish that purpose; because at the end of the earth phase of your life, you will have to give account of how well you have lived for God's purpose using your inheritance.

This fourth milestone (represented by the fourth feast) is where you begin to see and express your inheritance. God indicated this symbolically in Leviticus 23:15-17 when He gave the instructions for the fourth feast. He said:

“[15] And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: [16] Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord. [17] Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the Lord.”

The key is in verse 17 — “Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour ...”. The loaves of bread represent “maturity into ministry”. The Lord Jesus used a similar symbol in John 6:48 when He said: “I am the bread of life.” What does it mean that He is the bread of life? It means people can eat Him and have life. In John 6:51 He said:

“I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: ...”

What does it mean to eat Him? It simply means to take in His words and believe them, allowing His words to affect you. Then, speaking of believing, in John 6:47 He said:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life.”

So, being “bread of life” means that when a person hears His words and takes them in, the person will experience life; and that is what ministry entails — having God’s Words to speak, with the goal of producing life in the hearer. Acts 11:13-15 affirms this — that ministry entails speaking the words of life with conviction. It tells of when an angel appeared to Cornelius and asked him to send for Peter who would speak words of life to him. It says:

“[13] And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; [14] Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved. [15] And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.”

Verse 14 says “... tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved”. That is the core of ministry. The power and life is in the words. They are not normal words. They are supernatural words. Words of God. Words that when spoken (as shown in verse 15) will lead to the Holy

Spirit coming on the hearer to impart life on them. That is how the Lord Jesus operates as a bread of life — He has the words of life, as Peter explicitly affirms in John 6:68:

“Then Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go?
Thou hast the words of eternal life.”

So when people hear His words (and observe how He lives according to those words and take those words in) they have life. That is what it means to be a bread of life.

As such, by saying that the Israelites should bring out two loaves of bread at the fourth feast, God is indicating that it is at the fourth milestone that you begin to be a bread of life in ministry capacity — having the necessary conviction to activate the power for salvation and deliverance in His words when you speak it to people and to yourself. Your excellence in ministry at this milestone is to the extent you have faith and utmost regard for the Word of God. No man has any ability of himself. All the spiritual (supernatural) ability is of the Holy Spirit who moves upon a person when the words of God are spoken and heard with the expectation of faith’s conviction. Knowing this will assist your maturity into a bread of life.

This truth (of being a bread of life) is further appreciated when we connect it with God’s instructions for the third feast. If you remember, in Leviticus 23:10-13, regarding the third feast, God instructed the Israelites to bring two-tenths measure of fine flour. This fine flour (gotten by grinding the grains) represents fine character (which is the main harvest of the third milestone). In John 12:24 Jesus used “grain of wheat” to refer to Himself and all the children of God. He said:

“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.”

He is the “grain of wheat” that fell into the ground and died, and we (children of God) are the “much grain” that His sacrifice produced. So when God instructed at the third feast that the Israelites should bring two-tenths measure of fine flour (produced by grinding grain), for us it represents producing a fine (spiritually smooth) character, just as we talked about already in Module 3.

The amount “two-tenths” represents a witness born out of conformance to God’s character standard. How do we know this? In biblical numerology, the number two represents “witness”. In many passages of scripture, it is affirmed that for a testimony to be accepted it must be confirmed by at least two witnesses (Deuteronomy 19:15). On the other hand, the number ten represents God’s standard for godliness. One very key example of this is the Ten Commandments. By making them ten in number, God was indicating the prophetic meaning of the number ten — His complete standard for godly character. In addition to whole numbers, fractions are a way of showing a relationship between two numerical meanings. In this case of two-tenths, mathematically speaking, the fraction means “two out of ten”, but prophetically speaking, it means a witness born out of (or that emerges from) God’s complete standard for godliness. As such, “two-tenths measure of fine flour” represents “the witness of a fine character — character that is produced by yielding to God’s standard for godliness”.

What is the witness of fine character? It is a witness to the fact that you have been with Jesus, just as the pattern of life and speech of the disciples was a witness that they were followers of Jesus. It was because of this witness of their character that people in Antioch called the disciples Christians (people who behave like Christ) as said in Acts 11:26 — “... And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.”

Knowing these (what the fine flour and the two-tenths amount represent), we can better appreciate how interesting it is that at the fourth

feast, God asked them to bring the same measure of flour (two-tenths), this time however, not just as flour, but as two loaves of baked bread. By instructing on the same amount of flour, God was modelling a growth progression where the same you who produces a fine Christ-like character at the third milestone will also mature (on the foundation of that sound character) to become a bread of life in ministry capacity at the fourth milestone.

How does one arrive at the fourth milestone?

In verses 15 and 16 of Leviticus 23 (quoted earlier), we see that the timing for the fourth feast is after seven sabbaths from the third feast. Seven sabbaths is seven weeks. The seventh day of every week was a sabbath in Israel according to God's instruction. In Leviticus 23:3 God said:

“Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings.”

So “after seven sabbaths” is “after seven weeks”. In other words, the time gap between the third feast and the fourth feast is fifty days, which is why the fourth feast is called Pentecost in the New Testament. Pentecost is a Greek word which means “the fiftieth day”. It is the feast day on which the Holy Spirit was first released upon the early disciples. Acts 2:1-4 says:

“[1] And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. [2] And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. [3] And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. [4] And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

This shows that in order for you to arrive at the fourth milestone and function in ministry capacity using your inheritance, you need the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit that will train you to grow in your unique God-assigned ministry. And it is the Holy Spirit that will guide you on how to go about ministry.

In addition to this, we had noted that, from the third feast, to arrive at the fourth feast, you count seven sabbaths. This is important. If you remember from the previous module when we considered the third feast (the firstfruits), we learnt about the sabbath as it applies to a Christian; because the instruction for the feast of firstfruits was that it should be celebrated on the morrow (the next day) after the sabbath (which for us meant that you have to experience the sabbath before you can yield the harvest of Christ's character). We learnt what it means for a Christian to do no work except the work of preparing what he will eat and how that is the means to sustainably produce the character of Christ in you (by the power of the Spirit of Life in the Word of God).

Trusting that you still remember those things, you will appreciate that the fourth feast is a milestone of another form of firstfruits. In Leviticus 23:15-17, God told the people of Israel that after seven sabbaths from the third feast, they should offer a new offering (the two loaves of bread) as firstfruits unto the Lord. So whereas the third feast is a firstfruits of Christ-like character, the fourth feast is a firstfruits of Christ-like ministry.

Also, whereas the third feast is "after the sabbath", the fourth feast is "after the seventh sabbath" (counting from the third). Seven is the number for perfection and completion in biblical prophetic numerology. As such, "after seven sabbaths" simply means "after the sabbath has done a complete work in you". That is, "after you have fully yielded to the process of not using your own wisdom or strength and have rather focused on being exposed to the power of the Spirit of Life in the Word of God".

When you have this experience (of seven sabbaths), after beginning to produce the fruits of Christ's character, you will begin to see another kind of firstfruits emerge in your life. It is the influence (the impartation) of the Holy Spirit on you through the Word of God. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Life behind the texts of scripture you read in the bible. So for every category of inheritance and ministry, there are passages in the bible that describe them.

As you read the scriptures, the Holy Spirit will draw your heart to certain kinds of ministry. That is how you begin to know your inheritance. When you keep the sabbath on those verses (by meditating on them and praying (prophesying) them into your life with faith), the Holy Spirit (the Spirit of Life in the Word of God) will begin to produce those ministry capacities in you and will lead you on how to carry out the ministry. That is how you arrive at the fourth milestone of your Christian journey — the milestone of expressing Christ-like ministry capacity.

In closing this section on the fourth milestone, it is also important to note some extra details on the nature of Pentecost (the fourth milestone). Because the day of the fourth feast is obtained by counting seven weeks from the third feast, it (the fourth feast: Pentecost) is also referred to as “the feast of weeks” (Exodus 34:22). In addition to this, it is also referred to as “the feast of harvest” and “the firstfruits of thy labours” (Exodus 23:16). This reference “the firstfruits of thy labours” gives an extra perspective to the Pentecost feast. It tells us that Pentecost is the firstfruits (the first part or foretaste) of the full harvest.

We had mentioned earlier that the full harvest is at the seventh feast, which for us symbolizes fully emerging as a divine son of God in the likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ. As such, the fourth milestone is when you begin to manifest the firstfruits of divinity. In other words, the fruits of Christ-like ministerial capacity (e.g. wisdom to download and reveal mysteries in the Word of God, prophetic graces like word of knowledge,

healing graces, miracles, discerning of spirits, and many more) are all firstfruits of divinity — a foretaste of spiritual divine abilities that we will yet manifest in full at the seventh milestone.

Leviticus 23:17 (which we had looked at earlier) shows yet another important detail of this fourth milestone. It says:

“Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the Lord.”

The statement “... they shall be baked with leaven ...” reveals something important. In this context, leaven does not speak of sin (or the activities of the spirits of sin). God will not make a deliberate provision for sin. So His saying it should be baked with leaven is not referring to a ministry (as bread of life) that includes sin. Rather, the leaven in this context refers to the aerating influence that leaven gives. That is, when leaven is added to bread, it makes the bread to increase in size due to the air bubbles created in the bread by the chemical reactions of the leaven. The loaf of bread assumes a size that is bigger than its actual size. That is the message God is passing across by that statement. He is showing that at the fourth milestone, the abilities you begin to manifest (which are firstfruits of divinity) are actually abilities that are beyond you. You manifest them because of the aerating (air bubbles) influence of the Holy Spirit.

For example, when you lay hands on people and they are healed, it is not because your hands have any particular ability to heal. But rather, the Holy Spirit works alongside you, such that at the time you lay your hands (or speak the Word) the Holy Spirit (or the angels the Holy Spirit sends as ministering spirits) touch the people spiritually and they are healed. The actual healing is because of the Holy Spirit's work in the spiritual realm, but it will appear as though it is the laying of your hands. Such is an example of the air bubbles effect of leaven.

So when God said “they shall be baked with leaven” He is indicating that the supernatural abilities that manifest at the fourth milestone are actually beyond you; and as such, you must be careful to ensure that you do not ascribe to yourself those supernatural abilities, but rather continue to give diligence to ensure that your character is aligned with that of Christ, lest you lose focus and are overrun with the corruption of sin (like pride and self-confidence) as is the case with many Christians today. But at the seventh milestone (at the end of the curriculum) you would have become a full divine being — no longer just a human being propped up by the “air bubbles effect” — but a divine being (like the Lord Jesus currently is) with actual supernatural abilities to do the kinds of things angels can do and much more.

Although, to get there, you would have to be willing to go beyond Pentecost. Meaning, despite the beautiful possibilities that manifest in your life at this fourth milestone (Pentecost), you must not consider yourself to have arrived at your final destination.

Despite the possibilities you can experience at Pentecost:

There is more

Module 5

THE CALL TO MOVE BEYOND PENTECOST

Trumpets

This is the fifth milestone in your Christian journey. It is symbolized by the fifth feast that God instructed the people of Israel to keep — the feast of the day of blowing of trumpets. Leviticus 23:24-25 and Numbers 29:1 tell us about this fifth feast. Leviticus 23:24-25 says:

“[24] Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation. [25] Ye shall do no servile work therein: but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord.”

And Numbers 29:1 says:

“[1] And in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work: **it is a day of blowing the trumpets** unto you.”

From these two passages, we see that the feast of trumpets was a day that God instructed the people of Israel to dedicate for the purpose of blowing trumpets. That is how the feast of trumpets was to be kept — by blowing trumpets. Meaning, the character of the day of the feast of

trumpets is that it was a day when the people of Israel heard the sound of trumpets all day. Pretty interesting!

But what does that mean for us? How do we keep the feast of trumpets? That is, as a christian, what does it mean to have a milestone where you blow and hear the sound of the trumpet? Isaiah 58:1 gives a clue. It says:

“Cry aloud, spare not, **lift up thy voice like a trumpet**, and shew My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.”

In this passage, we see that a trumpet is used prophetically to represent a voice — not just any voice, but a voice that is calling one’s attention to a higher spiritual level; in this case, the call is to repentance, by showing the people their sins. Revelation 4:1 is another good example. It says:

“After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and **the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me**; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.”

Here again, we see that a trumpet is used to represent a voice that calls one to ascend up to a higher spiritual level. Keeping this in mind, you can appreciate that, for you, the feast of trumpets represents a milestone in your Christian journey where you begin to hear the sound of the trumpet (which is the voice of God in the Word of God) calling you to ascend up to a higher spiritual level. What higher spiritual level? It is a level beyond the previous milestone of Pentecost.

If you remember, we mentioned that Pentecost is the milestone where you begin to express ministry gifts. We learnt from the Old Testament name for the Pentecost feast (which is the feast of the firstfruits of harvest) that the ministry gifts you express at the Pentecost milestone are firstfruits (a foretaste) of divinity (the final milestone of being a divine

son of God like the Lord Jesus Christ). And we also noted that your ability to manifest the ministry gifts (or firstfruits of divinity) is because you are aerated (bubbled up) by the Holy Spirit (just as leaven aerates bread with air bubbles that make it rise to a size greater than its actual size).

The Holy Spirit causes you to rise to a spiritual capacity beyond your human capacity, and that is how you are able to express the ministry gifts at the Pentecost milestone (e.g., healings, miracles, prophecy, supernatural knowledge, wisdom etc.). These are things beyond human ability. For example, the ministry of healing takes place such that when you lay your physical hands on a person, the angels of God (as ministering spirits under the instruction of the Holy Spirit) carry out a spiritual operation of changing the body part that needs healing and it manifests physically as a healing or a miracle. Your physical hands can not accomplish supernatural things on its own, except with the help of the Lord and His angels. Such is an example of aeration, where you function in a capacity beyond your human ability.

But at the milestone of the feast of trumpets, you begin to hear the call of the Lord to ascend to a higher spiritual level — beyond Pentecost. This spiritual level beyond Pentecost is the final milestone (the seventh) — the one where you no longer operate as a human being (aided by angels to express spiritual abilities that are beyond your human limitations), but rather, you operate as a capable divine spirit.

What does that mean? It means that (using the same example of healing) you would be able to carry out the same kind of spiritual operations the angels can. It will not just be you laying physical hands and the angels (as spirits) do the spiritual work, rather, you would have the ability to function as a powerful spirit. You would even be able to do more than the angels can, because whereas they are angelic, as servants of God, you would be divine, as a son of God (just like the Lord Jesus Christ). That is

why Romans 8:29 (which we mentioned in the Introduction to the Curriculum) says that God has predestined us to be conformed to the pattern of our Lord Jesus, as His brethren; and 1 Peter 1:4 says God has given us great promises that make it possible for us to partake of His divine nature (as divine sons of God who are younger siblings of Jesus).

It is a milestone where you live less like an ordinary human being and more like a spirit being, no longer dependent on physical things like food or sleep for survival. This is the milestone that is the reason for the call to go beyond Pentecost. But to get there, you would need to pass through the experience of the fifth and sixth milestones.

What is the experience of the fifth milestone?

It is the sound of the trumpet — the sound whose impact on you is to induce the energy you need to move beyond Pentecost (the fourth milestone) to the fullness (the seventh milestone). Indeed, the spiritual energy (the strength) required to advance beyond Pentecost to the fullness is more than our human capacity. But the sound of the trumpet (produced by blowing the trumpet) is the means by which you receive that energy.

Physically speaking, sound is a form of energy. That is why when you hear a loud sound (for example, a fire alarm) you could potentially have a headache or feel uncomfortable in your ears, and sometimes you will find yourself reflexively reacting by covering your ears with your hands. This is because sound is a form of energy. It is not touching you but is transmitted to you as sound waves from the source and you feel its impact.

Another perspective on the impact of sound is words. Words are articulated (understandable) sounds. When you hear bad news, it has an impact on you. You could find your heart beginning to beat faster and

deeper, or you could find yourself beginning to sweat and breathe heavily, etc. Or if you hear good news, it also has an impact on you. You could find yourself suddenly full of energy because of the joy caused by the news, or you could find yourself inspired to do something that ordinarily you may not have done, simply because of the motivation from words spoken to you. Such is the impact of sound.

How does this relate to the sound of the trumpet? It relates because the trumpet has a sound, and as such transmits energy, which has an impact. So, knowing the nature and impact of sound gives a perspective to appreciate the effect of the sound of the trumpet.

What is the Trumpet?

As we had mentioned earlier, the trumpet prophetically refers to the spoken Word of God, either as uttered by God, an angel sent by God, or a human sent by God. We looked at Isaiah 58:1 where God gave Isaiah words to speak and asked him to declare it to the people, and we saw that this declaration of the word of God was referred to as a trumpet — “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.” We also saw Revelation 4:1 where the word of God declared to John through a heavenly being was referred to as a trumpet — “After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.” As such, we understand that prophetically speaking, a trumpet refers to the spoken Word of God.

How do we blow the trumpet in this fifth milestone?

We blow the trumpet simply by taking the Word of God and declaring it. What is special about doing this? Or what is the effect of doing this?

Like physical sound that transmits energy, when the Word of God is declared it transmits spiritual energy (power). Where does this energy come from? It comes from the Spirit of the Word! It is the Spirit of the Word that gives you the strength you need to advance through to the fullness. A good scriptural example that helps to understand this is in Ezekiel 2:1-2. It says:

“[1] And He said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee. [2] And the spirit entered into me when He spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard Him that spake unto me.”

When you read from the ending of chapter 1, you will see that God is the person talking to Ezekiel. So in verse 1 (of chapter 2 quoted above), God says to Ezekiel: stand up and I will speak with you. Prior to this, Ezekiel was on the floor. Ezekiel 1:28 (the last verse of the previous chapter) says:

“... This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of One that spake.”

So Ezekiel had just seen an open vision of the glory of God and it drained him of his strength to the point that he fell on the floor. That was why he was on the floor. Then in verse 1 of chapter 2, God says to him: stand up on your feet and I will talk with you. This was an instruction. But observe how verse 2 describes the way Ezekiel stood up. It says the spirit entered into him when God spoke to him, and the spirit set him on his feet so that he could hear God speaking with him. Think about that. God gave an instruction — stand up — and embedded in the instruction was a spirit that entered into Ezekiel to enable him obey the instruction — to stand up.

It shows that the nature of God’s Word is that there is a Spirit to it, and it was the release of the Spirit that enabled Ezekiel to stand up.

Meaning, God did not intend for Ezekiel to try or struggle by his own strength to stand up. The spirit came from the word that God spoke "... Stand upon thy feet ...", which is what our Lord Jesus explained in John 6:63 that:

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

Meaning, in all of God's Word as recorded in the Bible, there is a spirit to it, beyond the text, and it is the spirit that we are to connect with and draw strength from in order to live according to the Word of God.

This experience of Ezekiel is a prototype of how God designed for us to advance in our Christian journey (as we discussed in the Introduction to the Curriculum). Like Ezekiel, we are to stand before the Lord — in righteousness and holiness. But the strength to do so is beyond human capacity. So we need to rely on the Spirit of the Word. This is a principle that is further involved in this fifth milestone. It is a milestone where the Lord begins to put more emphasis on your being able to draw strength from His Spirit through His Word so that you have enough spiritual energy to go through the sixth milestone — the milestone where you begin to de-emphasize the natural and are more deliberately re-configured for immortality.

Another scripture that is worthy of note, relative to this discuss of the spiritual effect of the spoken Word of God, is Daniel 10:18-19. It says:

"[18] Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, [19] And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak: for thou hast strengthened me. [20] Then said he, knowest thou wherefore I am come unto thee? And now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of

Grecia shall come. [21] But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince.”

This passage shows us when the angel Gabriel appeared to Daniel. When you read prior verses, you will see that Daniel was drained of strength because he saw the angel, similar to what happened to Ezekiel. But verses 18 and 19 show the interesting way with which Daniel was strengthened (like Ezekiel’s experience).

Verse 18 says that he was strengthened by the angel, and verse 19 shows how the angel strengthened him — by speaking to him. The angel said to Daniel: “... be strong, yea, be strong ...”, which is similar to when God said in Genesis 1:3 “... Let there be light ...”. Upon hearing these words “... be strong, yea, be strong ...”, Daniel testified that “... when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened ...”.

Although we are not given a description of the spiritual activity behind the words of the angel, we know from Ezekiel’s experience and with the testimony of Daniel after hearing the words that when the angel said “... be strong, yea, be strong ...” the spirit of this word entered into Daniel to make him strong. This is another example of the same principle. We have seen in Ezekiel’s case that it was God that spoke to him. We have seen in Daniel’s case that it was an angel that spoke to him. And we will later see that you too can take the Word of God and speak to yourself to receive the strengthening impact of the Spirit of the Word (an operation administered by the Holy Spirit).

You will find that in the sixth milestone, there are requirements God will make on you as He works to reconfigure you for immortality and full Kingdom living. Those requirements can be likened to the instruction He gave to Ezekiel. And just as He did not expect Ezekiel to obey that instruction by his own strength (given the circumstances of the im-

pact of His glory) so also God is not expecting you to meet those requirements by your own strength (given that they are counter-intuitive to your current natural state).

Rather, just as Ezekiel heard the Word of God (in his case: stand up), or as in Daniel's case (be strong), and yielded by faith to the strengthening influence of the spirit of the word, so also you will need to take the Word of God (written in the Bible), meditate on it to understand and believe it, and then speak it to yourself (as a trumpet) to release to yourself the Spirit of the Word that will endue you with the spiritual energy you need to make profitable advancement in your Christian journey to the fullness.

Psalm 2:7 is a good example of this kind of attitude towards the Word of God. Speaking about the Lord Jesus, it says:

“I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten thee.”

This is a prophecy about the Lord Jesus regarding how He was going to establish His heritage as a Son of God when He came into the world. In other words, it is a prophecy that when the Lord Jesus comes into the world (which He already has) He would find in the scriptures the decree of God concerning Himself, that He is a Son of God, and He would not just read it and pass by, but will diligently declare it to (and over) Himself. It thus indicates that there is a spiritual significance to declaring the Word of God to yourself. Luke 4:18 shows a recorded instance where the Lord Jesus did this kind of declaration. From verse 16 to 21, it reads:

“[16] And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. [17] And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written, [18] **The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath**

anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, [19] To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. [20] And He closed the book, and He gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him. [21] And He began to say unto them, **This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.**”

In this passage, we see the Lord Jesus do a public version of something He must have been doing privately, similar to the Psalm 2:7 prophecy. We see that He visited Nazareth, entered their synagogue, took the scriptures, turned to a certain place (a place He must have been familiar with in His private readings) and declared the Word of God over Himself — that the Spirit of the LORD is upon Him.

Drawing inspiration from the Ezekiel experience, we can understand that when the Lord Jesus declared this verse of scripture to Himself that “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me ...” (which is in Isaiah 61:1), the spiritual effect is that the Spirit of the Word was released to Him to do what the word says, which is: be upon Him, anoint Him to preach the gospel, enable Him to heal, and empower Him to deliver.

So we see that even the Lord Jesus applied this principle (of trumpeting the Word of God to Himself) when He was on earth, both to experientially establish His estate as a Son of God and to receive enablement for ministry. It is a wisdom that we had talked about in prior modules (especially relative to the sabbath), but it is even more important in this fifth milestone so that you will have the necessary strength to advance into the fullness.

An example of how you can “declare the decree” or “sound the trumpet” just like the Lord Jesus did is to take a verse like Matthew 5:48 and speak it over yourself. It is the passage where the Lord Jesus said:

“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”

Now, ordinarily no one can be perfect. And, indeed, many Christians hold the view that it is not possible to be perfect. That is why this is an excellent passage to use as an example.

The verse is a decree from the Lord that you should be perfect with the same level of perfection that the Father is perfect. Following the example of Ezekiel’s experience, the Lord is not asking or expecting us to use our own strength to try and be perfect. Rather, as exemplified in Psalm 2:7 and Luke 4:18, it is God’s expectation that we take this decree and declare it to ourselves — as a trumpet. What would that look like? You can for example say to yourself — “I am perfect even as my Father in heaven is perfect”. Simple as it is, you would be initiating a spiritual sequence of events where the Spirit of the Word will be released to you (as was Ezekiel’s experience) to make you perfect.

Another example is Matthew 5:8 which says: “**Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God**”. With this you can declare to yourself — “I am pure in heart. I shall see God” — and the effect will be the release of the Spirit of the Word to make you pure in heart and indeed cause you to see God (especially seeing in terms of understanding in your mind, or even seeing in terms of a visual encounter).

Yet another example is Romans 8:14 which says: “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God”. With this you can declare to yourself — “I am led by the Spirit of God. I am a son of God” — and the effect will be the release of the Spirit of the Word to enable you to willfully yield to the leadings of the Holy Spirit and to establish you experientially as a son of God (which is quite similar to what the Lord Jesus did in Psalms 2:7 that we saw earlier).

The possibilities are endless. Imagine what your life will become when you **develop this habit of always trumpeting** the Word of God

to yourself (while also seizing from speaking negative words, like: “I am a failure”, or “I am a sinner”, or “I am good for nothing, etc.”). You will indeed experience an accelerated spiritual growth. That is why Joel 3:10 says “... let the weak say, I am strong”, not “I am weak”.

The tremendous benefit we gain from speaking the Word of God to ourselves is why Ephesians 2:8 says:

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:”

Grace is unmerited favour. It is indeed an unmerited favour of assistance that rather than we attempting to obey the Word of God by our own strength, we can be helped by the Spirit of the Word. It therefore sheds more light on why in Hosea 10:12 it is written:

“Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; ...”

The righteousness is the righteousness of faith, as said in Romans 4:13 & 9:30. So, “sow to yourselves in righteousness” means “sow to yourselves in faith”. What are you sowing to yourself? The Word of God and the Spirit of the Word.

Every time you speak the Word of God to yourself with faith you are sowing to yourself — you are investing spiritually in yourself — because more of the spirit of the word will be at work in you to enable you do things that you ordinarily of your own strength cannot do. That is the mercy of grace. Ephesians 3:14-17 says:

“[14] For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, [15] Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, [16] That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be **strengthened with might by His Spirit** in the inner man; [17] That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith ...”

The Holy Spirit is the One who strengthens you with might (with spiritual energy), and He does so as you sow to yourself with faith by blowing the trumpet of the Word of God. That is really the only way to gain the strength you need for the next milestone.

After gaining strength from the sound of the trumpets:

*It is time to walk
the way of the holiest,
the path of life*

Module 6

DE-EMPHASIZING THE NATURAL

The Day of Atonement

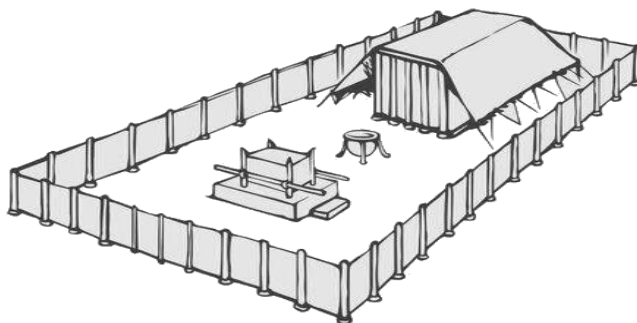
This is the sixth milestone in your Christian advancement; the milestone where you begin to be less human and more divine — less temporal and more eternal. It is the milestone typified by the sixth feast that God instructed the people of Israel to keep — the day of Atonement, which was not actually a feast (in terms of merriment) but was more so an appointment with God. We can find the details of the day of Atonement described in Leviticus 23:27-32. It reads:

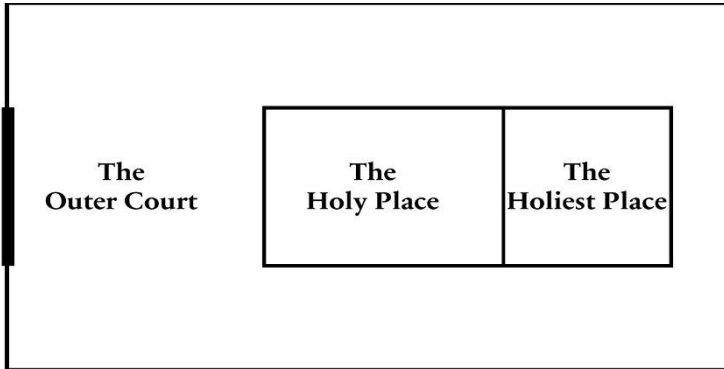
“[27] Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord. [28] And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the Lord your God. [29] For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. [30] And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people. [31] Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your

generations in all your dwellings. [32] It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.”

From this passage, we can learn that a major aspect of the day of Atonement is that the people must afflict their soul. This meant that they should abstain from pleasure — for example, food, and other comforts. Meaning, the day of Atonement was a day of fasting. But why? Why did God instruct that the sixth feast be a day of abstaining from pleasures? And what does this mean for us in terms of the sixth milestone in the Christian curriculum? The answer is in Leviticus 16 and Hebrews 9.

Upon reading Leviticus 16, you would see that on the day of Atonement, the High Priest went into the Most Holy Place of the Tabernacle. The tabernacle is another name for the Temple of God. There are three sections in the tabernacle: the Outer Court, the Holy Place, and the Most Holy (or Holiest) Place. The Outer Court is uncovered, that is, no “roof”. It is the external compound surrounding the covered portion of the tabernacle, as shown in the following images.





The covered portion of the tabernacle comprises of the Holy Place and the Holiest Place. As such, the Holy Place is also sometimes referred to as the first tabernacle, because it is the first section of the covered portion of the tabernacle; while the Holiest Place is also referred to as the second tabernacle, because it is the second section of the covered portion of the tabernacle. No one goes into the Holiest Place except the High Priest once a year on the day of Atonement. Leviticus 16 describes in detail what he goes in there to do. But for now, our focus is on the fact that he goes into the holiest place only once a year, and that once is on the day of Atonement.

Why is this so?

That is, why is the day of Atonement the day he enters into the holiest place once a year? If we remember, 1 Corinthians 10:1-6 tells us that the things God made the people of Israel experience were to serve as examples for us. As such, we understand that God designed it for them that way (that entrance into the holiest place was only on the day of Atonement) to show us that it is in the sixth milestone of the Christian curriculum (the milestone represented by the day of Atonement) that we begin to advance into the holiest place. And when we understand what the

holiest place represents for us, it will make more sense why (as required on the day of Atonement) we must “afflict our souls” at this sixth milestone.

What is the Holiest Place?

As described earlier, the holiest place is the most holy section of the temple. But for us, the temple in question is not a physical temple, unlike the Israelites for whom it was physical. For us, 1 Corinthians 3:16 says:

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”

And 1 Corinthians 6:19 makes it even clearer by saying:

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”

These two passages show that God designed you (your body) to be His temple. Meaning, just as the physical temple had three sections (outer court, holy place, and holiest place), so also your Christian life (and its ideal seven modules) can be categorized into three phases. Also, just as the covered portions of the temple (the holy place and holiest place) are referred to as the first tabernacle and the second tabernacle respectively, so also you being a temple of God means that you have a first body and a second body.

How do you have three phases and two bodies?

The Outer Court is the section that represents the first phase of your Christian journey — the phase where you transitioned from being an unbeliever to being a true Christian, which is from Module 0 to Module 3. That is, when you were not a Christian, you were outside the temple; your body was not considered a temple of God. But when you became

born-again (that is, as you went through repentance, confessing faith in Jesus Christ, subscribing to the blood of His Cross, water baptism), and as you were being established as a true christian (that is, as you removed leaven from your life and cultivated Christ's character) you were passing through the Outer Court; you were going through the first phase — a phase that serves as the foundation of your Christian life.

After that, you became a true christian, which is when you arrived at the holy place — the second phase. It was at this point that your body became a temple of God.

Now, ideally, we should not have to use a term like “true christian”, every christian should be a “true christian”. But there is the popular scenario of people going through the born-again process (Module 0) yet not giving diligence to fully experience Module 1 and 2 (the Unleavening), and as such, claim to be christians, but their lives are not different from the world. Such persons are still in the Outer Court phase of their Christian journey, which is not where God wants anyone to remain, just as no one expects a person who aims to enter a house to remain in the compound of the house after crossing the gate, but to rather walk through the compound to the door of the house and enter.

So, while a person is still in the Outer Court phase, yes, his body belongs to God, but it is only counted as a temple of God when you become a holy place for God — that is, when you enter the Holy Place phase. Notwithstanding, this body that becomes a temple of God is just your first body — your current natural body. It is “the first tabernacle” represented by the holy place. Meaning, your second phase (which is up to the sixth milestone) is the entire period of your christian life in the natural body (your first body).

But you have a second body: a spiritual body — the one represented by the holiest place (the second tabernacle). When you enter into that body, that would be your third phase (the final, which is module 7). 1

Corinthians 15:44 speaks about that second body, calling it a spiritual body. It says:

“... There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.”

Then verses 53-54 (of 1 Corinthians 15) add more detail by calling the natural body “mortal” and “corruptible” (decayable) while calling the spiritual body “immortal” and “incorruptible” (non decayable). It says:

“[53] For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. [54] So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. [55] O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”

This second body (your next body — the holiest) is a body that cannot die; it cannot be dissolved. 2 Corinthians 5:1-4 sheds even more light on this by saying:

“[1] For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. [2] For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: [3] If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. [4] For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.”

This passage tells us that our current natural body (the first body) is our earthly house that can be dissolved (because it is mortal); but that we have another house (a heavenly and eternal house) which is the immortal body. It tells us that the desire is not that we should take off this one first and be naked (which means to die and lose our body), but rather, while still in the natural body, we change into the heavenly body when our current mortality is swallowed up by life. As such, the transition into

the holiest (the transition into the spiritual immortal heavenly body) is a transition that happens as you are swallowed up by life. Meaning, the sixth milestone (the milestone of entering into the holiest) is the time when you are swallowed up by life. It is a progressive swallowing up that can be described as “walking the path of life”. Psalm 16:11 says:

“Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”

This path of life is the one referred to as “... the way into the holiest ...” in Hebrews 9:8, which we can rephrase as “the way into the immortal spiritual body” or “the way into the fullness”.

THE WAY INTO THE HOLIEST

What is the way into the holiest? How does one navigate into the heavenly body? A clue is given in Hebrews 9:8. It says:

“The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing;”

This passage is saying that while the first tabernacle is standing, the way into the holiest (the second tabernacle) is not open. But what does this mean? We have understood that the first tabernacle represents our current natural earthly body, while the second tabernacle (the holiest) represents our next body — the spiritual heavenly body. The passage is therefore hinting that while the natural earthly body is still standing, the way into the spiritual heavenly body (the holiest) is not open. Does that mean we have to die before we can enter into the spiritual heavenly body? No! We know from 1 Corinthians 15:51 and 2 Corinthians 5:4 that we do not need to die before we enter into the heavenly body. 1 Corinthians 15:51 says:

“Listen very carefully, I tell you a mystery [a secret truth decreed by God and previously hidden, but now revealed]; we will not

all sleep [in death], but we will all be [completely] changed [wondrously transformed],” (AMP)

Even our Lord Jesus modelled this when He was on earth by changing into the glorious body on the mount of transfiguration (in Matthew 17:1-2 and Luke 9:27-29) to show that children of God can mature into such a level where they put on the heavenly body (to participate bodily in heaven) while still on earth, without needing to die first. Luke 9:27-29 (speaking about when Jesus transfigured) says:

“[27] But I tell you truthfully, there are some among those standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God.” [28] Now about eight days after these teachings, He took along Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. [29] As He was praying, the appearance of His face became different [actually transformed], and His clothing became white and flashing with the brilliance of lightning.” (AMP)

This passage shows us that our Lord Jesus gave us an example that while still on earth (without dying) we can mature and transform into the heavenly body; which is why He is called our forerunner in Hebrews 6:19-20.

That being the case, what does it mean that the way into the holiest is not open while the first tabernacle is still standing? That is, what does it mean that the way into the spiritual heavenly body is not open while the natural earthy body is still standing? Or, how do we bring down the natural earthy body, so that it would no longer be standing and we can advance into the heavenly body? The answer is in God’s instruction for the day of Atonement (the feast that represents the sixth milestone) — afflict your soul!

What does it mean to afflict your soul?

Hebrews 10:19-20 says:

“[19] Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, [20] By a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh;”

The passage is telling us that the Lord Jesus has made a way for us to enter into the holiest, through the veil. What is the veil? In the physical temple, the veil is what demarcated the holy place from the holiest place. It is a thick curtain. As such, to enter into the holiest place, the priest had to go beyond the veil. But for us, this passage is saying that the veil is the flesh — the flesh being the natural body. Meaning, for us to enter into the holiest, we must go beyond the flesh. Our Lord Jesus modelled this pathway for us by going beyond the flesh. He did so as our forerunner — the one who goes ahead as a trailblazer to show the way for us to follow. Hebrews 6:19-20 says:

“[19] Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; [20] Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”

Thus, our Lord Jesus is our forerunner in the journey to obtaining the hope that is beyond the veil (the hope that is in the holiest) — the hope of putting on the spiritual heavenly immortal body. He went ahead by going past the veil of the natural body and entering into the heavenly body; which is why the previous passage (Hebrews 10:19-20) says the Lord Jesus (as our forerunner) consecrated for us (showed us) the way into the holiest by going beyond the flesh, as a model that we also must go beyond the flesh.

The flesh is the natural body with its needs and senses. It is after He went beyond the flesh (the natural body) that Hebrews 9:24 says:

“For Christ did not enter into a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but [He entered] into heaven itself, now to appear in the very presence of God on our behalf;”
(AMP)

The phrase “heaven itself” or “a holy place not made with hands” refers to the heavenly body (the holiest). 2 Corinthians 5:1-2 talks about it using similar language, saying:

“[1] For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. [2] For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:”

The earthly house is the natural body, while the heavenly house (the house not made with hands) is the heavenly immortal body. Our Lord Jesus also referred to the heavenly body as a heavenly house in John 14:2. He said:

“In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.”

This passage is generally thought to refer to houses in heaven, but it is actually a reference to the heavenly body in agreement with 2 Corinthians 5:1-2 which calls it a heavenly house. As such, “entering into heaven” (as said in Hebrews 9:24) is another way of saying “entering into the heavenly body” (the heavenly mansion), because it is only with a heavenly body that a person can enter into and actively participate in heaven. In other words, Hebrews 9:24 (quoted earlier) is saying that, after His time on earth in the natural body, Jesus transitioned into the heavenly body to continue to appear in the presence of God for us. But to enter into this heavenly body, He showed us that we must go past the veil of the flesh (the natural body with its needs and senses); and according to God’s instruction for the day of Atonement (which is symbolic of His

instruction for the sixth milestone), we have understood that the way to go past the veil of the flesh is to afflict your soul.

It is important to note that God's interest is not that you suffer, or be deprived of pleasure, just for the sake of being deprived. Rather, the purpose for "afflict your soul" is that you be reprogrammed (or reoriented) for a higher measure of life. Moses's words in Deuteronomy 8:1-6 shows this. He said:

[1] All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers. [2] And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. [3] And He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live. [4] Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years. [5] Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee. [6] Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways, and to fear Him."

Verse 3 says God humbled them and made them to suffer hunger — hunger for the normal food they were used to in Egypt (bread, meat, garlic, cucumber, etc.) — while feeding them with manna instead. For them, the manna was physical; that is, it was a physical substance that

fell from heaven with the morning dew. But for us, our Lord Jesus explained in John 6:32-35 that He (the Word of God) is the true manna. It reads:

“[32] Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. [33] For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. [34] Then said they unto Him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. [35] And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.”

As such, what God wanted to accomplish as stated in Deuteronomy 8:3 is that by depriving them of normal food, He wanted to teach a lesson that man was not intended to live (survive or draw energy) from physical food alone, but from the Word of God.

This is the lesson that you are to learn at the sixth milestone of your Christian growth. You are to come to terms with the fact that you can live on the Word of God and are to reduce your dependence on physical food for survival, strength, health and nourishment. That is how angels survive. They receive the energy in the Words that come out from God. And at the sixth milestone, you are to master how to do this, because the Word of God is what has the energy necessary to propel your transformation into the holiest (the spiritual heavenly body). The advantage we have over the angels (the messengers of God) in this mode of nourishment is that the words God has spoken to us give us access to the exact level of life we see in our Lord Jesus (as sons of God), which according to Hebrews 1:4 is so much better and more excellent than that of the angels.

The aim of the instruction “afflict your soul” is therefore to tune you to shift away from thinking that your survival depends on physical food

or elements. Rather, you were designed to draw strength from the Word of God — even physical strength: from the Word of God. The statement in Hebrews 9:8 that the way into the holiest (the second tabernacle) is not revealed while the first tabernacle is still standing shows that while you maintain a posture of depending on physical means for your survival, and gratifying all the needs of your natural body, you will not be able to shift into the heavenly body (represented by the holiest) while you are alive on earth. But if you begin to live by the Word of God (that is, feed more deliberately and expectantly on the Word of God as your source of spiritual and physical sustenance), the way into the holiest will be open to you.

How does one live by the Word of God?

As alluded to in Deuteronomy 8:3, we “live by the Word of God” by “eating the Word of God” to gain spiritual and physical energy. But to fully gain the energy in the Word of God, you need to first understand that the Word of God is a person — not just mere spoken words or written texts, but a person — and this person is Jesus. When you hear the Word of God preached or read the written texts in the bible, your attention and faith should be on receiving life from Jesus. Every passage of scripture is a description of a dimension of life that He gives. It is this life that He gives that is the energy in the Word of God — energy for daily spiritual and physical endeavours. That is what you are to live on — the life that Jesus gives. You are thus to meditate patiently on every Word of God that you hear or read till you receive understanding and it translates to life, strength, enablement, deliverance and upliftment in you.

It is because of this life that you gain from the Word of God that the Word of God is described symbolically as food of different forms — bread, water, milk, meat. And just as you chew food to digest it and gain

the nutrients in it, so also you are to ponder on the Word of God till you understand it clearly and gain life from it. That is part of what God gave you imagination for — to meditate on the Word of God for the purpose of gaining life (energy).

The Word of God as bread

In John 6:47-51 Jesus said:

“[47] Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life. [48] I am that bread of life. [49] Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. [50] This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. [51] I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. ... [58] This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.”

Jesus is the Word of God as clearly stated in John 1:1-14 and Revelation 19:11-13. John 1:1-14 says:

“[1] In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... [14] And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

And Revelation 19:11-13 says:

“[11] And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. [12] His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself. [13] And

He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God.”

So, Jesus is the Word of God. Meaning, He is the embodiment of all the life that the Word of God describes. As such, when Jesus refers to Himself in John 6:47-58 as bread (the living bread), He is saying that the Word of God is bread. We are to eat this bread by listening to what Jesus says, believe it and obey it. That is how we take Him in — by taking in what He says. And as we meditate on, understand, believe, and obey what He says, then we will have His life flow into us to energize us and deliver us (just as healthy physical food helps the body to grow and also to fight off diseases). The life in the Word of God will energize you, causing you to both grow and to be delivered from any form of oppression of the enemy.

The Word of God as Water

In John 4:10-30 it is written:

“[10] Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water. [11] The woman saith unto Him, Sir, Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast Thou that living water? [12] Art Thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? [13] Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: [14] But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. [15] The woman saith unto Him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. [16] Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband,

and come hither. [17] The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: [18] For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly. [19] The woman saith unto Him, Sir, I perceive that Thou art a prophet. [20] Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. [21] Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. [22] Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. [23] But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. [24] God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. [25] The woman saith unto Him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us all things. [26] Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am He. [27] And upon this came His disciples, and marvelled that He talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest Thou? or, Why talkest Thou with her? [28] The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, [29] Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? [30] Then they went out of the city, and came unto Him.”

In this passage, the Lord Jesus began to give the woman the water of His Word in verses 15 and 16. She had asked for the living water and then He told her “... Go, call thy husband, and come ...”. This setup the stage for Him to give her a prophetic Word of knowledge about her life, which made her to call Him a prophet in verse 19. He continued to give her Words of truth enlightening her about how to truly worship God and to

give her hope of salvation. They were Words of revelation that opened her eyes and heart to see that He (Jesus) is the Messiah; and that revelation (due to the Words He spoke to her) gave her such strength that she ignored her water pot (the reason she came to the well in the first place), ran back to the city, and began to preach to the whole city, such that the people of the city came out to see Jesus.

That is the kind of strength we get for both physical and spiritual doings when we drink the water of the Word of God. The woman drank the water of the Word of God (and gained the strength) by hearing what Jesus said, believing it, and obeying it. That is how we access the energy of God in the Word of God for our survival and daily exploits, such that we have capacity to go beyond the flesh (the requirements of the natural body), just as the woman left the water she came to draw from the well and ran rather on the strength of the living water (the Word of God) that Jesus gave her.

Still in relation to the Word of God as water, in Ephesians 5:25-26 it is written:

“[25] Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; [26] That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,”

This verse further helps to show that the Word of God is also represented as water — living water (as the Lord Jesus said to the woman by the well).

The Word of God as Milk

In 1 Peter 2:2 it is written:

“[2] As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:”

This passage shows that just as milk provides babies with all the essential nutrients they need to grow, so also the Word of God contains all the essential nutrients we need to grow; not just grow spiritually only, but

also grow physically, which is why (in terms of physical growth) the Word of God can for example restore a person to good health from a sickness, just as physical milk helps a baby's immune system. We just have to take it in by hearing or reading, meditating, believing, and then obeying so that we can experience the effect of the life in the Word.

The Word of God as strong meat

In Hebrews 5:12-14 it is written:

“[12] For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. [13] For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. [14] But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

In this passage, the oracles of God refer to the Word of God. The word translated to English as “oracle” is from a Greek word “logion” which means “an utterance of God”. The utterances of God are the Word of God. As such, the simple principles or revelations of the Word of God are referred to as milk, while the deeper truths (or hidden mysteries) are referred to as strong meat. Meat in this passage does not necessarily mean meat, like beef etc. The word translated to English as “meat” is from a Greek word “trophe” which means food. This is the case in many other places in the bible. The word translated to meat actually means food. Meaning, in contrast to milk, meat refers to mature food. So, the simple principles or revelations of the Word of God are referred to as milk, while the deeper truths (or hidden mysteries) are referred to as mature food.

As in the case of physical milk and physical mature food (rice, bread, beef, vegetables, nuts, etc.), the portion of nutrients in the mature food is more (in amount and in potency) than in baby milk (since a baby's digestive system cannot handle some nutrients yet). So also for the Word of God. There are principles in the Word of God you can get easily just by reading the texts in the bible, but there are also hidden mysteries that may not be clear initially until you wait meditatively and prayerfully on those scriptures to receive revelation from the Lord. Those truths you get after waiting on the Lord for understanding of a verse or passage are deeper and generally contain more potent spiritual nutrients that infuse greater life and energy into you (spiritually and physically) for daily survival, exploits and victories. And as verse 14 shows, the more you wait on God for deeper truths (that is, mature food beyond milk) the more you are exercising your spiritual and physical senses to be able to discern between good and evil.

In addition to Hebrews 5:12-14, another passage that talks about the Word of God as meat is John 4:34 which says "Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." In this passage the Lord Jesus is saying that He gains spiritual energy (and in this case even physical energy) from doing the will of His Father (God). Which means, for us, in addition to hearing and reading and meditating on the Word of God, we further gain the energy in the Word of God when we actually obediently do it. The obedience could be to do what we read in the Bible, or to follow specific situation-based instructions that the Holy Spirit gives in accordance to the Word of God (and for the accomplishment of the Will of God). In the case in John 4:34, God led Jesus to minister to the lady at the well. Ministering the truth of God to her was the will of God, and by doing it, Jesus gained energy even before His disciples returned with physical food. They were even amazed

at the state they found Him, because when they were going to look for food, He was tired. In Psalm 22:22 it is written:

“I will declare Thy Name unto My brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee.”

As such, declaring (preaching) God to people is the will of God, which is why the Lord Jesus told us in Matthew 28:18-20:

“[18] ... All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. [19] Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: [20] Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

Therefore, when Jesus preached to the lady at the well, He was doing the will of God in obedience to the written Word He had read and understood and believed; and by so doing He gained strength, such that although He was initially tired and His disciples went to look for food, when they returned (after He had finished preaching to the lady) they realized He was strong and no longer tired and wondered if He had eaten, which is why He explained to them: “My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work.” So when you do the will of God (as described in the bible and as instructed by the Holy Spirit) you gain the food of greater revelations and more influx of the life of God into you.

From these different analogies of the Word of God as bread, water, milk, and meat we have seen that indeed the Word of God is food. And in this sixth milestone you are required to **reduce** (not eliminate, but reduce) your dependence on physical food and pleasures by “afflicting your soul” and rather **increase** your dependence on the Word of God as

your source of physical and spiritual life, so that you can gain the necessary supernatural energy to change into the spiritual heavenly body (the holiest).

In Deuteronomy 8:3-4, it says that God deprived them of normal food and fed them rather with manna, so that they (and us) will know that God did not intend for man to live by bread (physical food) alone, but by the Word of God. And as a proof of the supremacy of the Word of God as our ideal food, verse 4 mentions that their feet did not swell despite walking long hours in the desert for forty years. That is extraordinary and unnatural. Normally, if they had fed on natural food, their feet would have swollen like other wilderness travellers. But theirs did not.

God did this to teach us that when we begin to see the Word of God as a food alternative to the physical food we are used to, and begin to eat the Word of God consciously with the faith expectation of gaining physical and spiritual strength from the Word, we would witness supernatural possibilities in our lives that defy the natural patterns we are used to.

For them, part of the supernatural possibilities was that their feet did not swell, while for us, the supernatural possibilities are that we will observe unusual expressions of life in our bodies (in health, strength and abilities) that will constitute a gradual transition into the spiritual body (the holiest).

That is how we walk the way into the holiest — by eating the Word of God: that is, by hearing or reading it, believing and speaking it, and obeying it. 2 Corinthians 4:13 says:

“[13] We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;”

As such, you express your belief in the Word of God by speaking the Word of God. Speaking is thus part of the ways you take in the life in

the Word of God, which is why Joel 3:10 says “... let the weak say, I am strong.” It is the Word of God. But you take it in by believing that you are strong and then saying that you are strong.

Why does speaking the Word of God help?

It is because the Word of God is a spirit of life. This spirit of life is released to work in a person or a situation when the Word of God is spoken. The Lord Jesus hinted to this in John 6:63 by saying:

“It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”

So, when you hear or read the Word of God, and believe it, you are to speak it to activate the Spirit of the Word which will work as an agent of life to cause you to experience the reality that the Word describes.

For example, even the truth “... man shall not live by bread alone ...”, you need to believe it after reading or hearing it, and then you need to speak it to yourself. Speaking it to yourself is an expression of faith, as said in 2 Corinthians 4:13 — we believe therefore we speak! When you speak it, you release to yourself the spirit of life in that Word and it will empower you to not live by bread alone but by the Word of God. It is by that empowerment that you can obey this truth — the truth of afflicting your soul (reducing your dependence on physical pleasures) and living rather by the Word of God. Amazing isn't it? You need the Word of God to live by the Word of God.

This is a necessary wisdom for obeying the “afflict your soul” instruction of the sixth milestone. The strength to switch to dependence on the Word of God more than on physical food comes from the Spirit of the Word which you activate and release to yourself by speaking the Word of God to yourself. Many scriptures show this principle. For example, in Ezekiel 37:1-10 God led Ezekiel to speak the Word of God to release the power of God to change a situation. It reads:

“[1] The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, [2] And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. [3] And He said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, Thou knowest. [4] Again He said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. [5] Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: [6] And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. [7] So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. [8] And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. [9] Then said He unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. [10] So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.”

This passage shows us the effect of prophesying (declaring) the Word of God to yourself or to a situation. It is a principle that God had trained Ezekiel in, even in his personal experience (as we had discussed earlier). By speaking the word of God to the dry bones, a spiritual protocol was initiated that made God’s power available to change the situation for good.

This is a wisdom that you would need to continue to apply in this sixth milestone in order to gain the strength you need to afflict your soul and the strength you need to reprogram your mind to depend more on the Word of God for sustenance than on physical food and pleasure.

As you gain the strength and are able to afflict your soul and renew your mind, **you will gradually begin to enter into the holiest** (as the priest did on the day of Atonement — the feast that represents this sixth milestone). In other words, you will begin to experience the first tabernacle (your current natural body) no longer “standing” (as prophetically required in Hebrews 9:8 that we looked at earlier). No longer standing means that it will begin to change into the second tabernacle (your heavenly body — the holiest), so that you can fully operate in the next milestone as a divine Kingdom agent — one who lives on earth and can also be present in heaven, and who labours for the advantage of the Kingdom of God and the establishment of the will of God (according to the pattern of the Lord Jesus, when He was on earth).

After advancing into the holiest:

*It is time to live the life
God created you to live*

Module 7

FULL KINGDOM LIVING

Tabernacles / Ingathering

This is the seventh milestone in your Christian journey — the milestone you arrive at after you have faithfully passed through the sixth milestone. Arriving at this milestone is the core reason you became born-again — to live the full kingdom life. It is the milestone where your life begins to resemble the full stature of the life our Lord Jesus lived while He was on earth. For example, in John 3:2, Nicodemus came to Jesus by night and said:

“... Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with him.”

Nicodemus observed that Jesus is not like any other man. There were possibilities and characteristics that Jesus expressed that had never been seen before among men, from fallen Adam till that time (Moses and Elijah included). In fact, in Matthew 9:8, when the people saw the kinds of things that Jesus was doing (like healing a man that was paralyzed), “... they marvelled, and glorified God, who had given such power unto men”. Jesus was pioneering a new kind of reality among men. So Nicodemus came to Him to find out how He was able to do

such things. Then Jesus explained to him that those things he observed are simply characteristics of the kingdom of God. He said:

“[3] ... Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again (from above), he cannot see the kingdom of God. ... [5] ... Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

(John 3:3&5, KJV)

Initially, when you read this response that Jesus gave, it does not seem to relate to Nicodemus' statement. Nicodemus said: there are many miracles and supernatural things I observe in and through you. And Jesus said: except a man is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. It seems like an unrelated answer. But on a second look with the help of the Holy Spirit, it becomes clearer that Jesus was actually explaining to him how it can be possible for such supernatural things he observed in Jesus to be seen in a man. He said it is by entering into the kingdom of God. It is after you enter the kingdom that you see the kingdom in you. That is, the qualities that Nicodemus observed in Jesus are actually attributes of the kingdom of God. Meaning, anyone in the kingdom of God can express such supernatural possibilities (beyond human abilities), which is why in Luke 7:28 Jesus said:

“For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.”

What Jesus meant is that prior to His coming as a man, John the Baptist was the greatest man to have ever lived (even greater than Moses or Elijah), in terms of the degree of access he had to heaven. He (John) was “... the prophet of the Highest ...” (as said in Luke 1:76). He was the one who came ahead of Jesus (the Son of God) to announce His coming on earth as a man — a ministry and access-level greater than anyone else in the Old Testament. Yet, Jesus said that the least in the kingdom of God

is greater than John (the greatest prophet prior to Jesus). Meaning, anyone in the kingdom of God, while on earth, can live a heavenly life — a life of access to supernatural possibilities — greater than what anyone in the Old Testament could have experienced. This is because the kingdom of God was not available to them in the Old Testament. Only few persons tasted [a little] of the kingdom life ahead of its time.

Part of what Jesus came to do (in addition to paying for our sins) was to open the door for men to ascend beyond the natural into heavenly beings, as citizens of the kingdom of God, which is why the first message He began to preach is:

“... **The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.**”

As Jesus explained to Nicodemus, it is by being born-again that one enters into the kingdom of God and begins to be a heavenly being while on earth. In other words, you were already a kingdom citizen right from milestone one (the Passover). And as you keep advancing from milestone two to milestone four to milestone seven, more and more of kingdom qualities will be seen in you, as Nicodemus saw in Jesus. That is the pattern of progression that God spoke of in Exodus 23:14-17. It reads:

“[14] Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year. [15] Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: (thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee, in the time appointed of the month Abib; for in it thou camest out from Egypt: and none shall appear before me empty:) [16] And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field. [17] Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord God.”

Although there are seven feasts, God highlighted three feasts as core appointments for appearing before Him. Each “appearing” is an “ascending” to a higher level in your Christian life, because, as Isaiah 57:15 says, God dwells “... in the high and holy place ...”. Meaning, the three feasts God mentioned — the Unleavened Bread (the second milestone), the Pentecost (the fourth milestone), and the Ingathering (the seventh milestone) — represent three major leaps of ascendance in your Christian life towards living as a heavenly being on earth.

Our Lord Jesus lived on earth as one who had attained to the seventh milestone (the third and final leap), and part of the seventh milestone’s kingdom qualities that He demonstrated is in Luke 9:27-31. It reads:

“[27] But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God. [28] And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, He took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. [29] And as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered, and His raiment was white and glistering. [30] And, behold, there talked with Him two men, which were Moses and Elias: [31] Who appeared in glory, and spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem.”

In this passage, Jesus showed to Peter, James and John that beyond His natural appearance, He could also express a heavenly form — something He had kept to Himself for a good while until God approved for Him to reveal it to the three of them. The Matthew account of this event describes the heavenly form as “... His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light” (Matthew 17:2).

Prior to Jesus, no other man could manifest such heavenly glory, which is part of the reason why in John 3:13, as part of His explanations to Nicodemus, for how it was possible for Him to do the supernatural things that Nicodemus had observed, Jesus said:

“And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven ...”

This is because He is the one that came to begin the kingdom life: where men can live on earth as ascended (heavenly) beings. And He went on to confirm this (and to shed light on the kind of ascendance He is referring to) by saying “... even the Son of man which is in heaven” to point out that though He was on earth He was actually an ascended man (not an earth-bound man) which is the reason He was able (as a man) to manifest heavenly possibilities beyond the natural, like the many miracles Nicodemus and the people observed, and the glory Peter, James and John saw.

By living such an ascended life, Jesus showed us an example that it is possible to live a fully heavenly life while still present among men on earth, and He showed the kind of discreet ethics you should maintain when you get there — He did not show His glory in the open, but in the privacy of His prayer times. It was one of such private prayer times that, at the Father’s approval, He invited Peter, James and John to come and witness His glory. Thank God they witnessed it and recorded it for us to read, so that we can better appreciate the level of glory Hebrews 6:19-20 is referring to when it calls Jesus our forerunner of the hope represented by the holiest place.

He only died to pay the price for our sins. But if He did not need to die, His life before the cross shows what the full Kingdom life looks like — active attendance on earth and active attendance in heaven, with a mandate to labour for the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth.

Such a Kingdom life on earth is what is symbolized by the seventh feast — the feast of tabernacles (which is also referred to as the feast of ingathering). It is the feast that celebrates the gathering in of the full harvest of the year. Exodus 23:16 mentions this saying:

“... the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field.”

The fact that the seventh feast is when they gather in the full harvest of the year for us means that the seventh milestone is where your life expresses the full harvest of all the virtues of Christ, including immortality (divinity). Leviticus 23:34-42 gives more detail on the feast of tabernacles. It says:

“[34] Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the Lord. ... [39] Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath. [40] And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days. [41] And ye shall keep it a feast unto the Lord seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month. [42] Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths:”

In this passage (in verse 42), booth means tent or tabernacle, which is why the feast is called the feast of tabernacles. God’s instruction for this feast is that, for the duration of the seven days of the feast, the people of Israel should live in **■ tents** different from their normal tents (or houses). Why?

God instructed them to do this as a sign that in the seventh milestone you would be living in a new house (the heavenly spiritual body). 2 Corinthians 5:1 (which we have looked at previously) talks about this new house. It says:

“For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

This heavenly house (your divine body) is what is represented by the new tent that God instructed the people of Israel to live in for the duration of the feast. For them, the duration of the feast was seven days, but for us, as we had mentioned previously, seven (in biblical prophetic numerology) is the number for perfection (or completeness). Meaning, “living in a new tent for seven days” for us represents “living in the new body forever as perfected beings”.

So, when you arrive at the seventh milestone (after passing through the sixth milestone), you would be living a life on earth where you have a new heavenly body, just like the Lord Jesus when He was on earth. Meaning, you too would be able to say that you are in heaven (as the Lord Jesus said in John 3:13); not symbolically, but bodily present and as an active participant in heavenly activities. You would be able to interact both in the earth community and in the heaven community (as Jesus did). Your new body would be able to appear human when you are on earth and also transform into glory when you are in heaven; although, following Jesus’ example, you would be discreet about it, focusing more on using your active attendance in heaven to engage in activities (led by the Holy Spirit) that aid the establishment of the Kingdom of God in earth. The burden of the Lord’s prayer (as stated in Matthew 6:10) would always be paramount in your operations — **“Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven”**, at least until Revelation 11:15 and Revelation 16:17 are fulfilled, after which you will have a new assignment. Revelation 11:15 says:

“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the

kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.”

And Revelation 16:17 says:

“And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.”

When these are fulfilled, the burden of the Lord’s prayer would have been satisfied. Then we all, as a heavenly senate called the Body of Christ, would proceed to accomplishing other matters in the heart of the Father, under the leadership of our Head, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now you may still be wondering:

Is this kind of life possible?

The truth is that such a life is what God intended for man from the beginning. It was to be a normal occurrence for people to live on earth and also be able to go to heaven. Heaven and earth were to be mutually accessible realms for humans, just as angels who are in heaven can also come to earth. Humans were not meant to be confined to the earth but were to also be present in heaven. But this was truncated by the fall. Only Adam experienced this kind of life before he fell into sin. We can see this by taking a look at the book of Genesis along with other passages. In Genesis 2:7-8, we are told that God made man and put him in a garden in Eden. It reads:

“[7] And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. [8] And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed.”

While we can interpret this physically, other prophetic passages show that there is more to this passage than Adam being placed in a nice garden. For example, in Ezekiel 28:11-19 (which symbolically talks about when Satan was cast out of heaven) heaven is referred to as Eden (the garden of God). It reads:

“[11] Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, [12] Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God ; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. [13] Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. [14] Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. [15] Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. [16] By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. [17] Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. [18] Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. [19] All they

that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee:
thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.”

In this passage, we see a dual prophecy. It is addressed to the king of Tyrus, but it is also actually referring to satan, similar to how in the book of Psalms, many places where it looks like David is talking about himself, his experiences are actually prophetically pointing to Jesus Christ. For example, in Psalm 16, David was lamenting for himself, but that lamentation was actually a prophetic foreshadowing of the experience of our Lord Jesus when He went to the cross and the grave. It reads:

“[1] Preserve me, O God: for in Thee do I put my trust. ... [5] The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: Thou maintainest my lot. [6] The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage. [7] I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel: my reins also instruct me in the night seasons. [8] I have set the Lord always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. [9] Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. [10] For Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. [11] Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”

Verses 10 and 11 clearly point to the Lord Jesus as Peter explained in Acts 2:25-32:

“[25] For David speaketh concerning Him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: [26] Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: [27] Because Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. [28] Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; Thou shalt make me full of joy

with Thy countenance. [29] Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. [30] Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; [31] He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption. [32] This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.”

So, we see that although in Psalms it looked like David was talking about himself, he was actually prophetically referring to the Lord Jesus.

In a similar manner, in Ezekiel 28:11-19, although it looked like it was talking about the king of Tyrus, it was actually prophetically referring to satan. King David on the one hand represents the King that God established over Israel and the world (which is Jesus), while the king of Tyrus on the other hand represents one who was made high and excellent but rebelled and was cast down (which is satan).

Also, just as it was obvious in Psalm 16 that David could not be referring to himself when (in verses 10 and 11) he spoke of resurrecting, so also it is obvious in Ezekiel 28:11-19 that the passage is not referring to a human person when (in verses 14 and 16) it refers to the person as the anointed covering cherub that was in Eden and walked among the stones of fire in the mountain of God.

The mountain of God, in this context, is a symbol for heaven. Physically speaking, a mountain is a high ground whose top reaches into the sky (the physical heaven). Likewise, spiritually speaking, a mountain is sometimes used to represent the higher ground that heaven is when compared to the low ground that earth is. Such is the usage in Ezekiel 28:14&16 which says “[14] ... thou wast upon the holy mountain of God

... [16] ... I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God ...”. It represents heaven from where satan was cast out when he rebelled.

In a similar manner, the Eden in this passage (Ezekiel 28:13) represents heaven. It is called the garden of God — the same thing it is called in 2 Corinthians 12:1-4 which says:

“[1] It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. [2] I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. [3] And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) [4] How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.”

In this passage, heaven (the third heaven) is referred to as paradise. The word “paradise” is translated from a Greek word that means “an Eden” or “a garden”. Meaning, when Genesis 2:7-8 says God made Adam and put him in a garden in Eden, beyond referring to a beautiful physical garden on earth, it is telling us that God made Adam to also be present in heaven (the Eden of God, as it is called in Ezekiel 28). So, when God told Adam and Eve in Genesis 1:28:

“... Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”

Such a call to authority and dominion over the earth meant that Adam and Eve were to rule the earth as a territory of heaven and as such were to also be present in heaven (Eden) as earth’s representatives and governors.

Thus, Adam and Eve were to easily participate in both the earth and heaven, but the fall of sin truncated that, making humanity to be earth-bound sinful beings. But because of the victory of our Lord Jesus, as you go through the curriculum of the Christian faith and arrive at the seventh milestone, you would experience what Adam lost and much more because you are now in a greater container (as we discussed in Module 1) which is Jesus Christ (the New and Last Adam). Your life will be an expression of divine possibilities that cannot be documented in this book, as they are beyond what the mind of man can comprehend.

May the Lord indeed bring you to this milestone and save you from anything that can truncate your progress in this curriculum of the Christian faith. Amen.

*Jesus is building His Church in every city:
And you are a key piece*

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By God's grace, as you read, you will learn that there are 7 milestones every Christian is meant to pass through as they ascend towards the experience of their full heavenly reality in Christ Jesus. They are:

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2. Victory in the battle of the mind
3. Expressing Christ's character
4. Expressing Christ's ministry ability
5. The call to move beyond Pentecost
6. De-emphasizing the natural
7. Full kingdom living in divine life



Knowing these will help you evaluate where you are in your ascension journey. It will also equip you to overcome the scenario of getting stuck at a certain phase by unpacking the details of each milestone and how to take advantage of God's grace to advance into them.

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