



# THE VOICE of ELIJAH

## “Die by Death”? What’s That Supposed to Mean?

And when she had exposed the falsehood, and simply related the command, as He had said, “From every tree of the garden we shall eat; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die:” when he had [thus] learned from the woman the command of God, having brought his cunning into play, he finally deceived her by a falsehood, saying, “Ye shall not die by death; for God knew that in the day ye shall eat of it your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.”

In the first place, then, in the garden of God he disputed about God, as if God was not there, for he was ignorant of the greatness of God; and then, in the next place, after he had learned from the woman that God had said that they should die if they tasted the aforesaid tree, opening his mouth, he uttered the third falsehood, “Ye shall not die by death.” But that God was true, and the serpent a liar, was proved by the result, death having passed upon them who had eaten. For along with the fruit they did also fall under the power of death, because they did eat in disobedience; and disobedience to God entails death. Wherefore, as they became forfeit to death, from that [moment] they were handed over to it.

Thus, then, in the day that they did eat, in the same did they die, and became death’s debtors, since it was one day of the creation. For it is said, “There was made in the evening, and there was made in the morning, one day.” Now in this same day that they did eat, in that also did they die. But according to the cycle and progress of the days, after which one is termed first, another second, and another third, if anybody seeks diligently to learn upon what day out of the seven it was that Adam died, he will find it by examining the dispensation of the Lord. For by summing up in Himself the whole human race from the beginning to the end, He has also summed up its death. From this it is clear that the Lord suffered death, in

Continued on back cover

Continued from front cover

obedience to His Father, upon that day on which Adam died while he disobeyed God. Now he died on the same day in which he did eat. For God said, "In that day on which ye shall eat of it, ye shall die by death."

The Lord, therefore, recapitulating in Himself this day, underwent His sufferings upon the day preceding the Sabbath, that is, the sixth day of the creation, on which day man was created; thus granting him a second creation by means of His passion, which is that [creation] out of death. And there are some, again, who relegate the death of Adam to the thousandth year; for since "a day of the Lord is as a thousand years," he did not overstep the thousand years, but died within them, thus bearing out the sentence of his sin.

Whether, therefore, with respect to disobedience, which is death; whether [we consider] that, on account of that, they were delivered over to death, and made debtors to it; whether with respect to [the fact that on] one and the same day on which they ate they also died (for it is one day of the creation); whether [we regard this point], that, with respect to this cycle of days, they died on the day in which they did also eat, that is, the day of the preparation, which is termed "the pure supper," that is, the sixth day of the feast, which the Lord also exhibited when He suffered on that day; or whether [we reflect] that he (Adam) did not overstep the thousand years, but died within their limit,—it follows that, in regard to all these significations, God is indeed true.

Irenæus, "Against Heresies," Book 6, Chap. xxiii, in Roberts and Donaldson (Eds.), *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (1867), Vol. 1, pp. 551–552.

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## *A Note From the Editor*

We have received numerous questions and comments as a result of our asking for input in the last newsletter. Thank you for taking the time to write or email your thoughts on a variety of issues. We appreciate your input. It lets us know what you are thinking, what you would like to know, and/or what concerns you might have. We especially appreciate your suggestions on how we can improve our ministry. Although we can't possibly implement every suggestion, we do read and evaluate every one of them. Many of the questions and comments we received have been addressed in this issue of *The Voice of Elijah*<sup>®</sup> newsletter—some in this column and others in "Questions & Answers."

Your suggestions were especially helpful in regard to our "new and improved" website. To one degree or another, we incorporated most of your ideas. If you have not visited *The Voice of Elijah*<sup>®</sup> website recently ([www.voiceofelijah.org](http://www.voiceofelijah.org)), check it out. You will find a new look and some new features that were not part of the previous site. For instance, you can now read selected articles from past newsletters online, as well as place orders using a credit card. In time, we intend to add even more features to enhance the dynamics of our site. Just don't expect everything to be completed overnight. There is an appointed time for everything (Eccl. 3:1-8) and everything takes time, so please be patient.

Feel free to continue sending us your questions, comments, and suggestions by mail or email ([webmaster@voiceofelijah.org](mailto:webmaster@voiceofelijah.org)). We are always looking for ways to improve what we do, so don't hesitate to tell us what you think. But don't feel offended if we don't implement your suggestion immediately. There is a method to our madness, and sometimes we will do things differently than you might think we should. For instance, we often receive suggestions that we tone down the sarcasm and "negative" comments we direct at those who refuse to believe our message. While we appreciate the sincerity of these suggestions, there is a reason we try to push people's hot buttons. By saying things others deem inappropriate or find hard to believe, we are driving away those who do not accept our ministry. We do that because, based on Larry Harper's understanding of his calling, we believe God requires it of us. We realize many will disapprove of our methods, but understand this: No matter how we do it, all we are doing is disseminating the Truth. Unfortunately for Pretenders, the Truth is the one thing they can't abide. Why? Because the Truth strips away the lies they hide behind to avoid the conviction of the Holy Spirit in regard to the sin in their lives (John 16:8).

The great sin of humanity has always been and continues to be that men refuse to believe the Truth of God's Word when given opportunity to hear it. Instead, they choose to believe Satan's lies—lies that allow them to do what they want to do. That's why Pretenders—that is, those

*Continued on page 29*

*Continued from inside front cover*

who claim to know God yet despise the Truth of His Word—are offended by how we say things. They are so accustomed to being told what they want to hear in the sugar-coated manner in which they want to hear it that they simply can't tolerate our "religiously incorrect" approach. It's not just what we say that they find intolerable; it's the unyielding way in which we say it. So when we refuse to soft-pedal the Truth and make them feel good about being sinners, they claim our approach is "unchristian."

How long would they have us tiptoe around the Truth before we can state the facts in a straightforward manner? Doesn't the Truth—regardless of how uncomfortable it makes people feel—need to be stated plainly so as to benefit those who are honestly seeking to understand the Truth? There will always be those who find the Truth objectionable or offensive. If we allowed those who can't handle the Truth to dictate the manner in which we speak the Truth, we would never be able to speak the Truth. That's why we don't concern ourselves with those who would have us tone down our sarcasm; they obviously have no love of the Truth. Instead, we will focus on those who do.

Unfortunately, God expects us to drive away Pretenders because they are stumbling blocks to True Believers. Listen to what Jesus said:

*"Woe to the world because of {its} stumbling blocks! For it is inevitable that stumbling blocks come; but woe to that man through whom the stumbling block comes! And if your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame, than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out, and throw it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye, than having two eyes, to be cast into the fiery hell."*  
(Matthew 18:7-9)

Anyone with a smidgen of common sense should be able to see that Jesus is not advocating self-mutilation here. He is parabolically describing

the manner in which He expects His parabolic Body—God's Church—to deal with those who cause dissension because they do not believe the Truth. Jesus is essentially saying to Believers, "Remove such people from your midst lest they cause you to stumble and ultimately go to Hell." Jesus' harsh attitude is based on His understanding that unbelievers have nothing of value to bring to the table in their relationship with True Believers. The only thing they have to offer is their skepticism toward the Truth and their love of the world, which is why Jesus warned us to be wary of them. The Apostle Paul also recognized that unbelievers would undermine the faith of True Believers. That's why he warned Believers to not bind themselves together with unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14-15).

The point is, God seeks unity among His People. But He knows (as do we) that commonality among Christians is only possible if everyone is of one mind and one Spirit (Eph. 4:4-6). This is only possible if everyone believes and holds to the same Teaching—The Apostolic Teaching. Those in the Early Church who refused to believe the Truth of The Apostolic Teaching presented "stumbling blocks" to True Believers. Therefore God expected them to be "cut off from" (that's an idiom) the Body of Jesus Christ lest they contaminate the Truth and ultimately destroy the whole Body (Matt. 18:7-9). They weren't. That's why the Church is what it is today.

Speaking the Truth serves a twofold purpose in our ministry: We are not only able to instruct True Believers in "The Way" of the Lord, we are also able to expose Pretenders for what they are at the same time. That's because those who believe the Truth will react to it as they should react and those who don't believe will react to it in ways they shouldn't. Consequently, each person will demonstrate by their actions whether or not they believe what we teach. So if you don't have a genuine desire to know the Truth, you will eventually make yourself known to us in one way or another. All we have to do is keep speaking the Truth.

*Allen Fries*

# He's Coming in Clouds of Glory (Whatever That Means)

**I**n “Questions & Answers” in this issue of *The Voice of Elijah*®, I respond to a question concerning the logo *The Voice of Elijah*® uses as its masthead. I have not explained the *parabolic significance* of that piece of artwork before for one very simple reason: I was waiting for someone to ask. Now that someone has, I assume the time has arrived for me to clarify a few things about my calling. So in this article, I will provide insight into the *parabolic imagery* of that part of *The Teaching*.

As I explain in “Questions & Answers,” the One Who is the Glory of the Almighty God deliberately chose to appear to the sons of Israel in the *parabolic pantomime* of the Passover Parable as a burning fire that resided in a mushroom cloud. (See “Questions & Answers” in this issue of *The Voice of Elijah*®.) One can learn a lot from the passages of Scriptures where Moses *talks about* that phenomenon. However, a whole lot more can be learned from an incident in which Nadab and Abihu, the brainless sons of Aaron, chose to ignore the awesome presence of that burning fury and rather quickly found themselves hapless participants in yet another of God’s *parabolic pantomimes*. They learned the hard way that God does not suffer fools easily. That became obvious when He immediately lashed out at them in anger from that awesome, billowing cloud:

*Then Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people and blessed them, and he stepped down after making the sin offering and the burnt offering and the peace offerings. And Moses and Aaron went into the tent of meeting. When they came out and blessed the people, the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people. Then fire came out from before the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the portions of fat on the altar; and when*

*all the people saw {it}, they shouted and fell on their faces. Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. And fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD.*

*(Leviticus 9:22–10:2)*

In case you hadn’t noticed, idiots like Nadab and Abihu are still among us—religious zealots who rather stupidly believe it doesn’t matter what fire they offer in their *parabolic* firepans. Such folks simply cannot understand that if they have not been *baptized* in the blazing fire of the One Who is the illuminating, all-consuming Lord of Glory, they have no way at all of offering the fire that God requires. (I am speaking *parabolically*, of course.) Given those circumstances, it would be best that they not even try. Otherwise, they might end up like their compatriots in stupidity, Nadab and Abihu. Those two fools roasted themselves in the fire of God’s wrath because an abject ignorance of the Truth compelled them to act stupidly.

In spite of the bad example set by the ignorant sons of Aaron, similarly minded dolts in our own time continue to assume that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will accept them no matter what—just because they *say* they believe in Jesus Christ. The Truth is, they believe in a mythical, ever-loving, all-forgiving god of grace—the one they hear taught in the Church. Amazingly enough, Pretenders actually *think* that god is described in the pages of their Bible, but—can you believe the depth of this stupidity?—they have never bothered to check. If they had, they would have encountered the angry God of Israel before they got

through the first three chapters of the Book of Genesis. God forbid that they should ever read Chapter 6.

Evidently, somebody forgot to tell the Pretenders in the Church today—and they certainly could never figure it out for themselves—that the angry God of Israel doesn't work "The Way" they ignorantly assume He does. One extremely important fact has apparently eluded them: Salvation is by faith alone—not faith in the sense of *that you believe* in some goofy god of unconditional grace, but faith in the sense of *what you believe* about the angry God of Israel. It has never occurred to those who have made some idiotic "profession of faith" that only unwavering belief in the Truth can save them. Belief in a lie won't even provide temporary relief from a hangnail.

## Parabolic Pantomimes of the man Adam

For forty years, the angry fire of God's wrath danced upon the Earth in *parabolic pantomime* as the "angel" Who inhabited that billowing "pillar of cloud" showed the sons of Israel "The Way" they were to "walk." The astounding presence of that fiery mushroom cloud towered over them as their constant companion from the time Israel, the Firstborn Son of God, *parabolically* entered the realm of the dead and passed through the Sea of Reeds until He arose from the dead in the *parabolic pantomime* in which Israel, the resurrected Firstborn Son of God, "went up" from the Jordan River to *inherit* the Promised Land. (See *The Passover Parable*.) Yet what are we to make of all that *parabolic imagery*? How does it relate to the situation we face today—a situation in which we can only watch and wait until that cunningly deceptive little man finally rebuilds the Temple in Jerusalem and ushers in the destruction of the man Adam. (See "That's Why He's Called AntiChrist!" *The Voice of Elijah*®, April 1992; *The AntiChrist*; and *The Advent of Christ and AntiChrist*.) The answer to that question may surprise you.

To understand the message of the Scriptures, one needs to know that God orchestrated the entire life of the Man Jesus Christ as a *parabolic pantomime*—a *parabolic* depiction—of the biblical history of the man Israel. (See "They Got God at a Fire Sale Price (and a Whole Lot More Than They Bargained For)—Part II," *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 1999; "There Is Nothing More Amazing Than Dead Men Walking (in 'The Way')," *The Voice of Elijah*®, January 2000; "Questions & Answers,"

*The Voice of Elijah*®, July 2000; "Questions & Answers," *The Voice of Elijah*®, October 2000.) That is, embedded in Matthew's record of the life of Christ is a *parabolic* chronicle of events which Moses and the other Prophets of Israel tell us befell (or would befall) Jacob and his descendants. However, God had long since made sure that the biblical history of the man Israel was also a *parabolic pantomime*. In it, He chronicles the entire history of the man Adam. So the biblical account of what Jesus said and did *parabolically* depicts the history of Adam and all his descendants from the day of Adam's creation to the time when the fire of God's wrath finally removes the descendants of Adam from the face of the Earth (Zeph. 1:2-3).

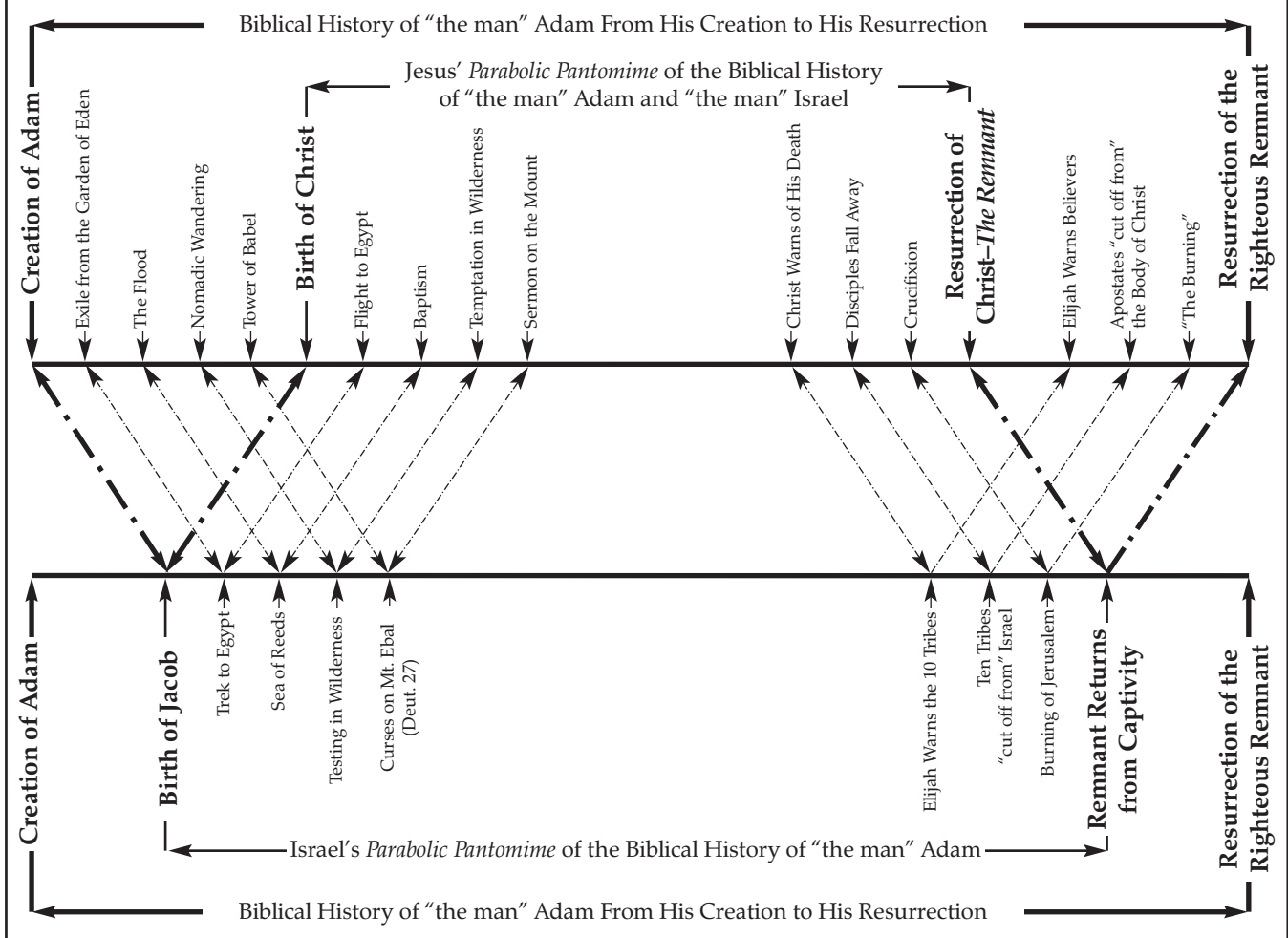
Although the life of Christ covered but a few short decades, the *parabolic pantomime* of the man Israel spanned nearly two millennia. Yet both of those *parabolic pantomimes* depict specific historical events that have happened and will happen while the descendants of Adam (the man) inhabit the Earth. The diagram on page 3 ("Reflections in the Mirror of the Word of God, *This Is LIKE That: Parabolic Images of 'the man'*") illustrates how the *parabolic pantomimes* of the man Israel and the Man Jesus Christ reflect a *parabolic image* of the man Adam. The purpose of that diagram, as well as those on pages 5, 7, 9, and 11 is to point out some of the *parabolic equivalencies* the Prophets and Apostles had in mind when they made the *parabolic statements* one finds in their writings. Hopefully, the diagrams will help you "see" how those men were able to "see" the future of the man Adam.

The key to reading the diagrams in this article is knowing that each arrow defines a *parabolic equivalency*, which can be summed up in the statement "This IS LIKE that." The direction of the arrows in each of the diagrams discloses the direction of the *parabolic equivalency* in the *parabolic statements* of the Prophets and Apostles. That is, a line with an arrow pointing in only one direction indicates that they *parabolically* compare one historical event to another, but the reverse is not true. A line with arrows pointing both ways denotes two historical events which *parabolically* compare to each other:

This ——— Is LIKE ———> That  
 This/That <—— Is LIKE >—— That/This

## Reflections in the Mirror of the Word of God

*This Is LIKE That: Parabolic Images of "the man"*



In the diagram above as well as in the diagrams on the pages that follow, the arrows represent the direction of *parabolic equivalency* between the *parabolic pantomimes* of the Scriptures. For example, in the diagram above, the *parabolic pantomime* of the man Israel points back to the historical reality experienced by the man Adam. But it also points forward to the historical realities that were—at that time—yet to be experienced by the Man Jesus Christ and by the man Adam. In that, the *parabolic pantomimes* are essentially the same as the writings of the Prophets and Apostles in which they are found. They are a mixture of both historical record and prophecy. (See "I's Just Wonderin', Is Anybody Headin' That Way Yet?" *The Voice of Elijah*®, October 1995; "Questions & Answers," *The Voice of Elijah*®, January 1997; "The Holy Bible: What Is It? What Does It Mean? Who Wrote It? When and Why?" *The Voice of Elijah*®, April 1997; "Contrary to What You May Have Heard, Jeremiah Was No Bullfrog," *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 1997.)

The historical reality experienced by the Man Jesus Christ was, like the reality of the man Israel, also a *parabolic pantomime*. As such, it points directly back to the reality experienced by the man Israel. However, the *parabolic pantomime* of the man Israel reflects the *parabolic imagery* of the reality that had been and

would be experienced by the man Adam. Therefore, LIKE an image in a mirror, the *parabolic pantomime* of the Man Jesus Christ points indirectly—through the *parabolic pantomime* of the man Israel—to the entire span of the historical reality experienced by the man Adam. That is why the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ is a harbinger—a *symbolic* representation—of "the Death" of the man Adam at the Second Coming. I have drawn that *parabolic equivalency* in the diagram on page 7.

The *parabolic equivalencies* illustrated in the diagram above are foundational to all the other *parabolic equivalencies* standing behind the parables of the Prophets and Apostles. The diagram explains why the Prophets included many of the historical events that one finds in the biblical record. More than that, however, it contains one of the essential keys to understanding the things the Prophets of Israel said concerning the End of the Age. The diagram on page 7 provides the only other *parabolic equivalency* that one needs in order to understand what lies ahead for the man Adam. Taken together with the diagram on this page, it discloses the *parabolic equivalency* that exists between the Crucifixion of Christ, the sacking and burning of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., and "the Burning" of *The Harlot Babylon* in Revelation 17:1–18:24. ■

Can you see how neatly the *parabolic pantomimes* in the diagram on page 3 fit together? The complete history of the man Adam is portrayed in the *parabolic pantomime* conducted by the man Israel. Both of those biblical accounts are even more succinctly depicted in the *parabolic pantomime* which Jesus Christ conducted over His lifetime. If you can “see” the basic *parabolic imagery* depicted in that illustration, please don’t get overconfident. We are about to get out into some rather deep water (*parabolically* speaking). I am going to show you how the Prophets and Apostles to whom God revealed the Truth of *The Teaching* use the *parabolic equivalencies* (“this IS LIKE that”) that flow between those three sets of *parabolic images*—as well as others—to explain what specific historical events in the history of the man Adam are (or will be) LIKE. To be more specific, I am going to explain how the *parabolic image* in which the Glory of God lashed out in anger at Nadab and Abihu from the mushroom cloud relates to our own time.

The Prophets and Apostles casually allude to, or explicitly refer to, hundreds of *parabolic images* in the Scriptures. Yet one needs insight into only a relatively few *parabolic equivalencies* to “see” how all those *parabolic images* fit together. In this article, we are going to begin at the beginning—with the most basic of all the *parabolic pantomimes* described in the Scriptures. Things will undoubtedly become increasingly more difficult for you to understand as we go along. However, without insight into the things I have just explained about the *parabolic equivalency* (“this IS LIKE that”) that exists between specific events in the biblical accounts of the man Adam, the man Israel, and “*The Man*” Jesus Christ, it will be impossible for anyone to understand even the most elementary of the things which Moses and the other Prophets of Israel hid in the seven sealed messages of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Some folks will be able to easily understand and accept the things I am about to explain; some won’t. The inability of some of those who cannot understand and accept what I have been called to teach is entirely their own fault. They don’t want to understand the Truth because the Truth requires more of them than they are willing to give. However, the inability of others to understand the Truth could just as easily be my fault. I had a devil of a time (pun intended) trying to put this information down in a concise and easily understood form, so bear with me. My explanations

may not be as neat and tidy as they could be, but we will all get there—eventually.

## *The Hurdle of “The One” and “The Many”*

As I explained in the article “The Passover Parable” (*The Voice of Elijah*®, July 1991) and the booklet with the same title, the Exodus and wilderness wandering is a mocking, taunting *parabolic pantomime* in which the sons of Israel traipsed around the desert for forty years to depict what the ancient Egyptians ignorantly thought their own death and resurrection—in the death and resurrection of the Pharaoh—was LIKE. However, one important detail of that *parabolic pantomime* resides in the fact that “*The Way*” in which God expected Israel to “walk” was illuminated by the light of the Glory of God shining out of a mushroom cloud. If one understands the *meaning* and *significance* of the Hebrew idiom “to walk in *The Way*” (see *The Way, The Truth, The Life*), it should be obvious why the Apostles quite often draw a *parabolic equivalency* between the *parabolic pantomime* of the Passover Parable and the reality the True Believer confronts on a daily basis. If one does not understand how those two realities are *parabolically equivalent*, an essential part of the Passover Parable has obviously fallen on deaf ears.

As a grandly designed and divinely orchestrated *parabolic pantomime*, the Passover Parable works remarkably well at both concealing and revealing the Truth concerning the death and Resurrection of the man Adam and “*The Man*” Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, a considerable degree of difficulty will creep into anyone’s ability to understand the *meaning* and *significance* of the *parabolic imagery* of the Passover Parable if one does not keep in mind that the *parabolic image* of Israel always includes Israel, “*The Many*”—that is, the individual members of Israel—as well as Israel, “*The One*”—that is, *Corporate* Israel, the Firstborn Son of God. However, the Truth of the Passover Parable will remain totally obscure if one does not realize that same *parabolic image* overlays the reality experienced by the man Adam and the *parabolic pantomime* conducted by the Man Jesus Christ. (For example, the *parabolic image* of “*The One*” and “*The Many*” stands behind the phrase “*Body of {Jesus} Christ*” in the New Testament.)

In the Passover Parable, the sons of Israel, who were *parabolically* depicting the death and Resurrection of the Firstborn Son of God in a *parabolic pantomime*,

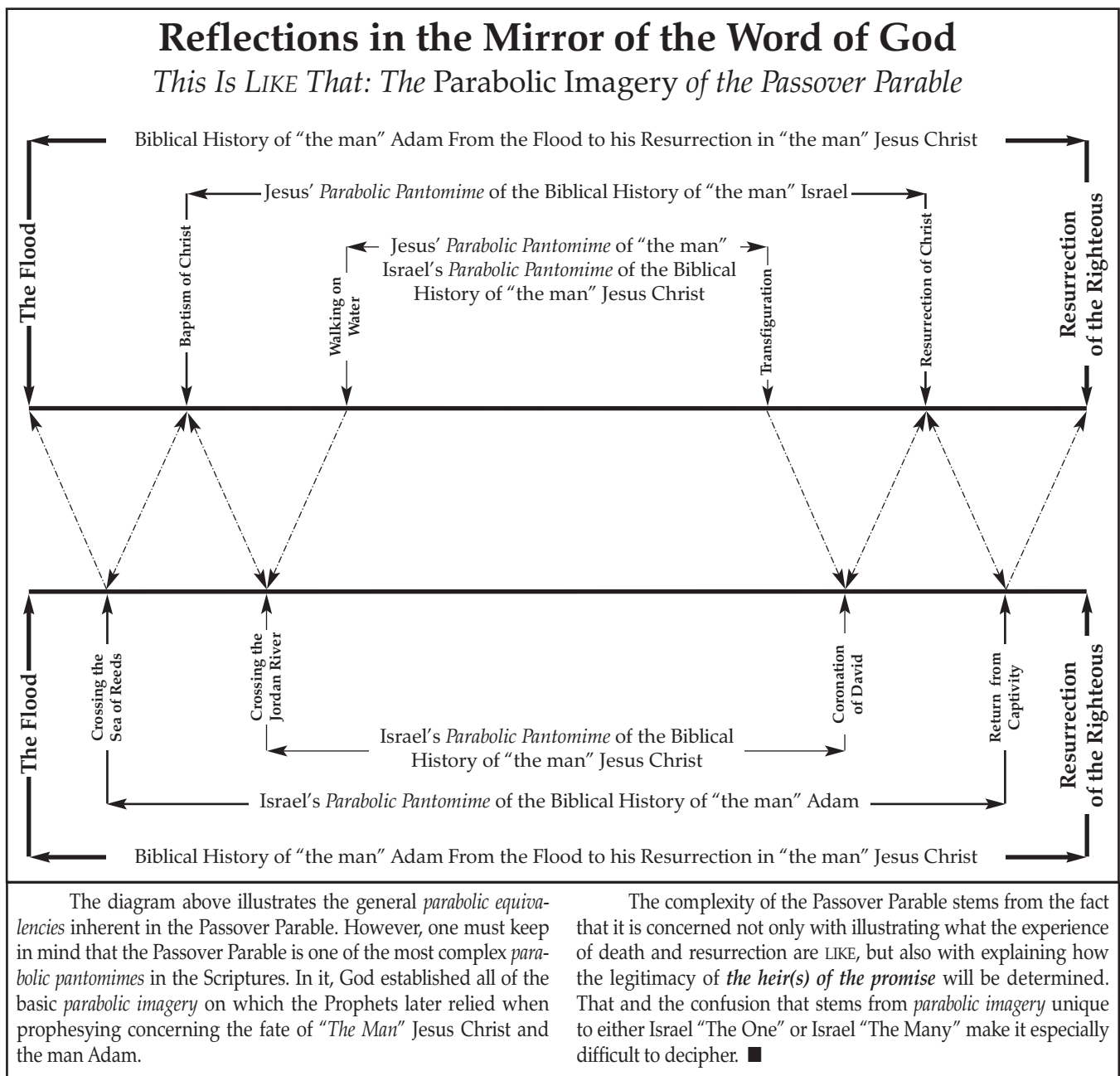


died and left Egypt, the Land of the Living. They then passed dry-shod through the hazardous Sea of Reeds in the realm of the dead. (See *The Passover Parable*.) In that *parabolic pantomime*, God expected Israel—the Firstborn Son of God—to leave the realm of the dead soon thereafter and “go up” to the Promised Land. Israel, “The One,” was forced to wander in the wilderness for forty years only because “The Many” in Him refused to “go up” (Num. 13–14).

At the end of the wilderness wandering, Israel, the Firstborn Son of God, once again (in *parabolic pantomime*) triumphed over the mythical Sea of Reeds—the Jordan River—in the realm of the dead and at long last “went

up” to *inherit* the Promised Land. (See “Circumcision Is Better the Second Time Around,” *The Voice of Elijah*® *Update*, May 1998; and “When Those Stones Start Talking, It Will Be Futile to Dispute Their Testimony,” *The Voice of Elijah*® *Update*, November 1998.) Yet in that *parabolic pantomime*, only a *remnant* of “The Many” in Israel *inherited* the Promised Land. All others *parabolically* fell victim to the “second death” in the wilderness.

Time and again, the burning wrath of God lashed out at Israel from the “pillar of cloud” until only Joshua and Caleb remained of all the members of Israel who had ratified the covenant with God at Mt. Sinai (Num. 26:63–65). The biblical record plainly



states that nearly all the other members of Israel had been “cut off from” Israel by the time Israel crossed the Jordan River. (See *Not All Israel Is Israel*.) That *parabolic imagery* does not bode well for those fools in our time who *think* the angry God of Israel would never do such a thing to them.

Consider this: If the Firstborn Son of God *parabolically* triumphed over the mythical Sea of El twice in the *parabolic pantomime* of the Passover Parable (once at the Sea of Reeds and a second time at the Jordan River), which of those two events do you suppose Jesus was depicting when He was baptized in the Jordan River by John in His *parabolic pantomime* of the Passover Parable? Would it surprise you to learn that He was depicting both? That is so because He was portraying both “The One” and “The Many” in His Own Person.

In the *parabolic pantomime* of the sons of Israel crossing the Reed Sea, the emphasis is on “the Death” of Israel, “The One.” That is, the pantomime portrays the death of the Firstborn Son of God Who *parabolically* died as a Passover sacrifice when the Angel of the Lord passed over Egypt at midnight. By contrast, the death of Moses—who was at that time Israel, “The One”—on Mt. Nebo carries that same *parabolic image* when “The Many” in Israel, the Firstborn Son of God, cross the Jordan River to *inherit* the Promised Land at the conclusion of the Passover Parable.

Even with insight into the *parabolic imagery* which stands behind the Passover Parable, the *parabolic imagery* in the *parabolic pantomime* of Jesus’ Baptism by John may still appear to be *parabolically equivalent* to two entirely different sets of *parabolic images*—that of the Passover Parable and that in the *parabolic pantomime* of the Babylonian Captivity. (See “Reflections in the Mirror of the Word of God, *This Is LIKE That: Recurring Parabolic Images of the Passover*” on page 7.) The Truth is, those *parabolic equivalencies* are just pointing out how the realities experienced by two entirely different entities—“The One” and “The Many” in “*The Man*” Jesus Christ—are ALIKE.

In the Passover Parable, “The Many”—who were the individual members of Israel, the Firstborn Son of God—were baptized in the Sea, yet because they disobeyed God, they were consigned to suffer for forty years in the realm of the dead, *parabolically* enduring the fire of God’s wrath until all but a *remnant* succumbed to the “second death.” Jesus Christ, “The One”—Who was, likewise, Israel, the Firstborn Son of

God—was also *parabolically* baptized in the Sea (at His Crucifixion), but He obeyed God and immediately thereafter “went up” to *inherit* the Promised Land.

That *parabolic imagery* is all just so much nonsense to the fool, but the wise will be able to recognize that it must somehow be *parabolically* describing the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ. And it is. But the True Believer can only understand the details of that message if he is able to “see” (mentally) how all the details of the *torah*—that is, the *symbolic rituals*—that God gave to Moses fit together. (See *The Mystery of Scripture, Volume 1*.) The key which unlocks that particular part of the *parabolic imagery* of *The Teaching* is the *parabolic pantomime* in which Aaron offered the Levites as a “wave offering” (Num. 8:5–22). However, if one does not know what a “wave offering” is, one cannot reasonably expect to understand the *meaning* and *significance* of that particular *parabolic pantomime*, much less the *meaning* and *significance* of the Passover Parable itself.

If you do not know how the *parabolic image* of “The One” and “The Many” pertains to the generally—but philosophically—understood concept of atonement, it might be a good idea to study what Paul has already explained about “The One” and “The Many” in the Book of Romans. Just keep in mind that there is a whole lot more to what he says there than readily meets the eye. Like all the other Prophets and Apostles, he is speaking in terms of some extremely specific *parabolic imagery*. (See “We Know the Law Is Holy. But What About the Commandment?” *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 1998; and “There Is Nothing More Amazing Than Dead Men Walking (in ‘*The Way*’),” *The Voice of Elijah*®, January 2000.)

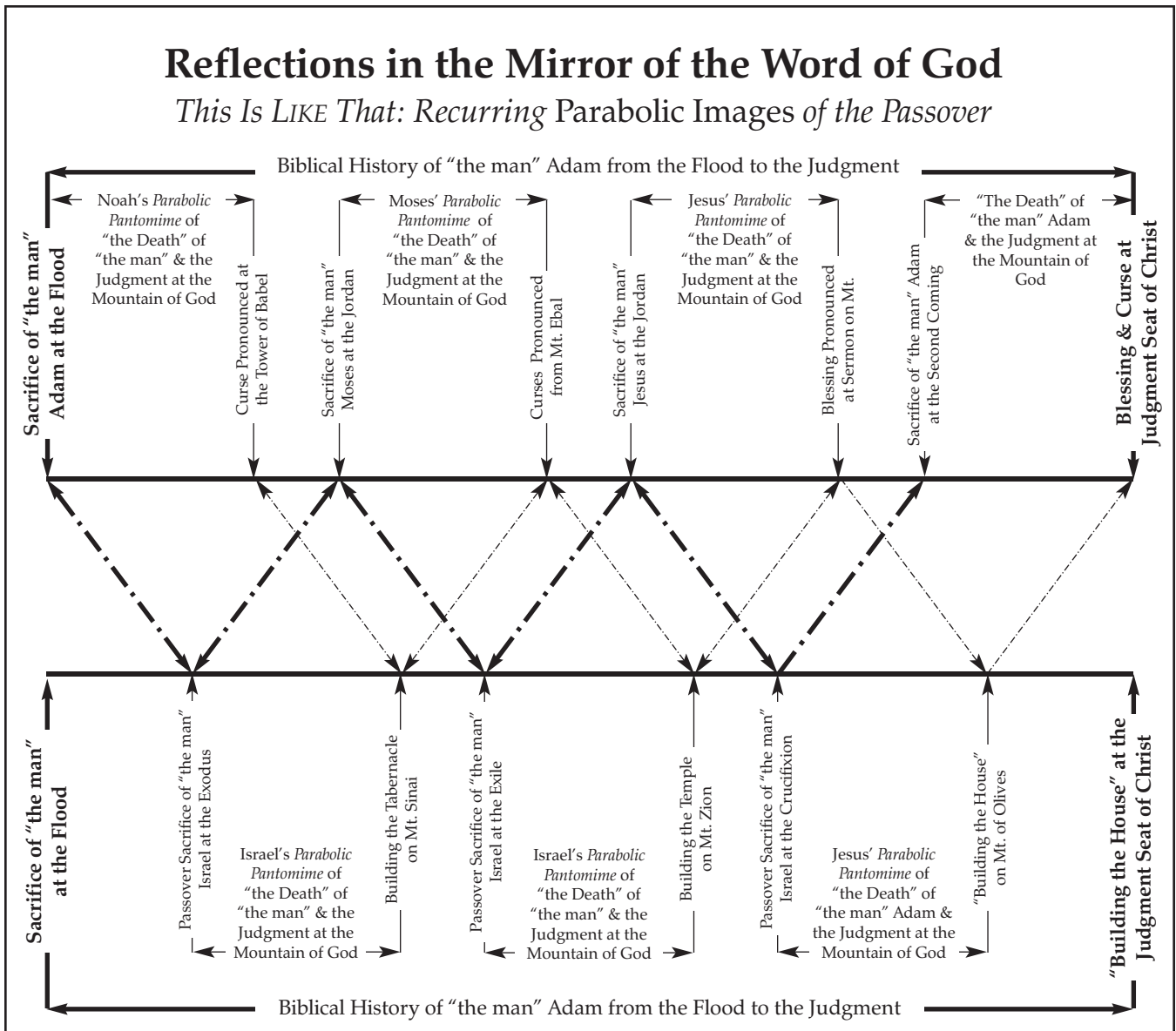
## *Jesus and the Baptism of John*

The Baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist is part of a *parabolic pantomime* in which Jesus was *parabolically pantomiming* the Passover Parable. As Paul explains in Romans 4–6, He was depicting the reality of “the Death” experienced by both “The One” and “The Many.” For that reason in His *parabolic pantomime* of the Passover Parable, Jesus is depicting two entirely different baptisms—the baptism of “The One” and the baptism of “The Many.” The message conveyed by the *parabolic imagery* makes a bit more sense if you step back and view His entire life as a *parabolic pantomime* of the biblical

history of the man Adam from his creation to the Resurrection of his righteous *remnant*. The diagram on page 3 illustrates the *parabolic equivalencies* ("this IS LIKE that") in that *parabolic imagery*.

The most confusing thing about the *parabolic images* of *The Teaching* in general and of the Passover Parable in specific lies in the fact that just when it appears one has finally pinned down which historical event is depicted in one *parabolic pantomime*, the sudden realization dawns that God orchestrated that event as a *parabolic pantomime* which points to yet a third event.

Even then, it is more than likely that the third event is a *parabolic pantomime* which points to yet a fourth. Or worse yet, one finds that the *parabolic imagery* of two similar *parabolic pantomimes* dissolves into a confusing jumble of *parabolic images* that seem to point back and forth at each other LIKE images in two opposing mirrors. Such is the case with the *parabolic pantomime* in which the Prophet known as John the Baptist baptized Jesus Christ in the Jordan River. (See "Reflections in the Mirror of the Word of God, *This Is LIKE That: Recurring Parabolic Images of the Passover*" below.)



The diagram above charts the various *parabolic equivalencies* in statements the Prophets and Apostles make. The basic *parabolic image* is best reflected in the Passover Parable. The tendency is to assume the ultimate reality to which that *parabolic image* points is the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

However, that is only partially true. The Prophets and Apostles understood that the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ was itself a *parabolic pantomime* which points to specific events in the biblical history of the man Adam—that is, in the history of mankind. ■

If you didn't catch the tongue-in-cheek reference to "two opposing mirrors" in the last paragraph, or if you failed to grasp its *significance*, you should probably read what I have written concerning "the riddle in a mirror." The *parabolic image* of that "mirror"—which is the true *meaning* of the Scriptures—underlies everything I explain in this article. Without insight into the *parabolic image* of the Scriptures as a mirror, it is impossible to "see" the same *parabolic images* the Prophets and Apostles "saw." (See "Questions & Answers," *The Voice of Elijah*®, October 1997; "I Tell You What: Odds Are, You'll Never Beat God at His Shell Game," *The Voice of Elijah*®, October 1998; "They Got God at a Fire Sale Price (and a Whole Lot More Than They Bargained For)—Part I," *The Voice of Elijah*®, April 1999; "Making the Monkey Sit Up Straight in Sunday School," *The Voice of Elijah*® *Update*, November 1999; "There Is Nothing More Amazing Than Dead Men Walking (in 'The Way')," *The Voice of Elijah*®, January 2000; "Questions & Answers," *The Voice of Elijah*®, April 2000; "Questions & Answers," *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 2000; and "Questions & Answers," *The Voice of Elijah*®, October 2000.)

The Baptism of Jesus is a perfect example of the incredibly confusing interplay that goes on between the *parabolic pantomimes* of the Scriptures. His Baptism not only points back to the *parabolic image* of Noah and "The Remnant" of "The House" of Adam riding out the Flood in an ark, "The Remnant" of "The House" of Israel crossing the Reed Sea and the Jordan River on dry ground, and "The Remnant" of "The House" of Israel returning from the Babylonian Captivity. It also points forward to His Own death and Resurrection—the Resurrection of "The Remnant" of "The House" of Israel—as well as to the death and Resurrection of all Believers—"The Remnant" of the man Adam—in Him. (See "Reflections in the Mirror of the Word of God, *This Is LIKE That: Recurring Parabolic Images of the Passover*" on page 7.)

The greatest difficulty in understanding the *parabolic imagery* related to baptism arises in connection with the fact that nearly every one of the events I just mentioned points to every other event on that list in a barrage of interconnected *parabolic statements* from which God expects the True Believer to gain insight into what the ultimate reality He is describing IS LIKE. The question is, To what ultimate reality was God pointing when He inspired the Prophets and Apostles to record all the historical events one finds recorded in the Scriptures? If one knows the answer to that fundamental

question, one can easily understand the Truth which is bound up in the *parabolic image* of baptism.

In the diagram on page 5, Noah escaping the Flood, Israel crossing the Sea of Reeds and the Jordan River on dry ground, Jesus' Baptism in the Jordan, and His walking on water are all *parabolically equivalent* historical events. They represent a deceased person successfully crossing the mythological Sea in the realm of the dead. That is, all of these *parabolic pantomimes* serve to tell us what the reality of "the Death" IS LIKE. Although all are obviously depicting the death of Jesus Christ, the diagrams on pages 3 and 5 do not draw a direct *parabolic equivalency* ("this IS LIKE that") between the Baptism of Christ and His Crucifixion. Nonetheless, one must exist because the Gospels depict Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God Who was sacrificed on the Passover. Moreover, the Apostle Paul is obviously referring to that *parabolic image* in Romans 6:3–11 and also in the following verse, where he urges Believers to *parabolically* rid their "house" of leaven in preparation for the flight from Egypt (pun intended) on the night of the Passover. If you understand the *meaning* and *significance* of that *parabolic imagery*, you would do well to heed Paul's admonition. He is obviously speaking *parabolically* in terms of the Church—the Body of Jesus Christ—as Israel:

*Clean out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, just as you are {in fact} unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.*  
(1 Corinthians 5:7)

The diagrams on pages 7, 9, and 11 illustrate the *parabolic equivalency* ("this IS LIKE that") that exists between the Exodus of the Israelites and the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ. That shows why, in the *parabolic pantomime* of His Baptism by John, Jesus is not only pointing back in time to Noah escaping the Flood and Israel crossing the Reed Sea, He is also pointing forward to His Own death and Resurrection. That is, He is pantomiming His personal "exodus" (Luke 9:31) and triumph over the one who is the personified "Sea" who seeks to hold the dead captive forever. (See "They Got God at a Fire Sale Price (and a Whole Lot More Than They Bargained For)—Part I," *The Voice of Elijah*®, April 1999; "They Got God at a Fire Sale Price (and a Whole Lot More Than They Bargained For)—Part II," *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 1999; "The Forecast" and "Questions & Answers,"

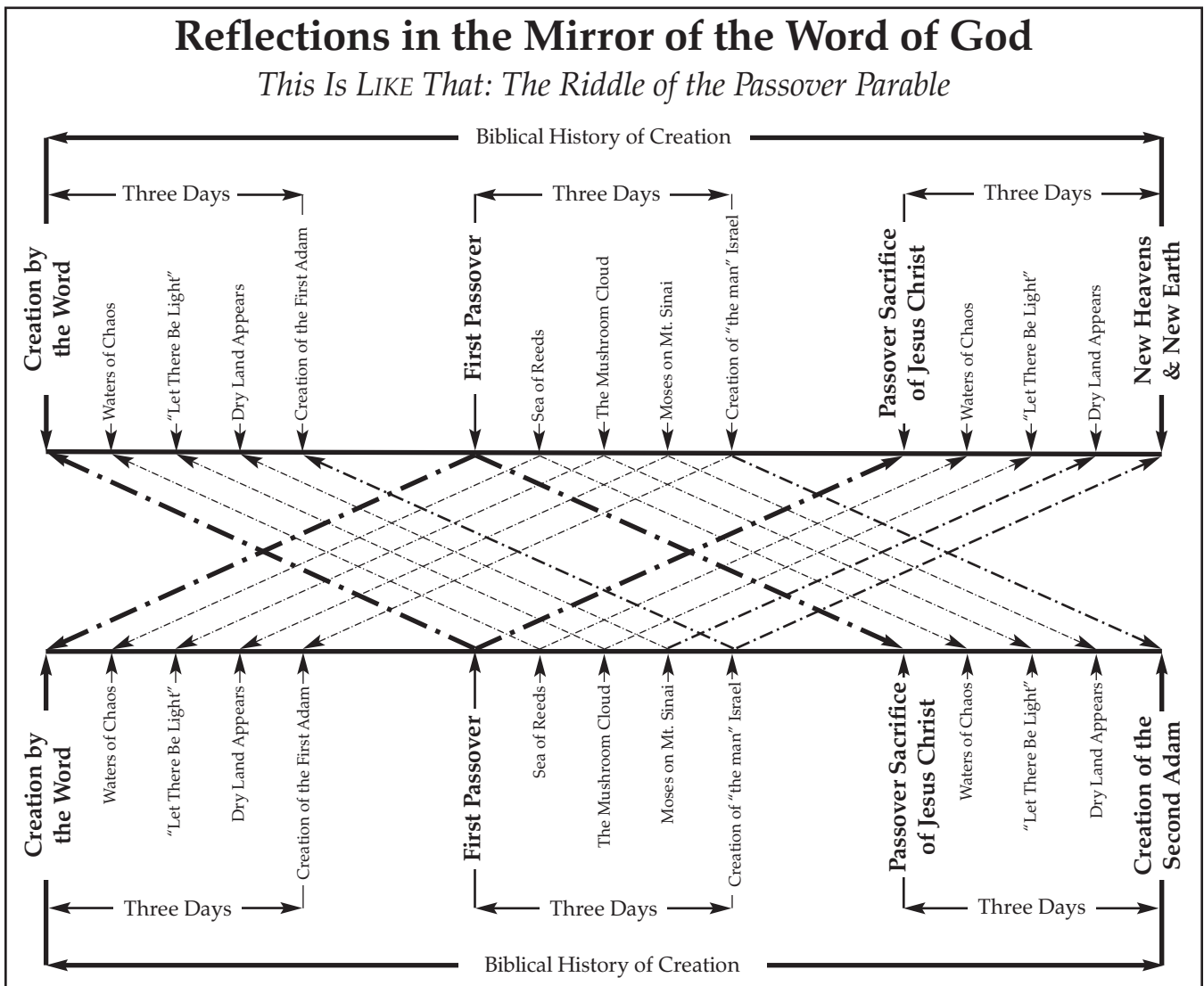
*The Voice of Elijah*®, October 1999; "Questions & Answers," *The Voice of Elijah*®, April 2000; "The Forecast," *The Voice of Elijah*®, October 2000.)

Although the Baptism of Jesus is undoubtedly pointing forward to His Own death and Resurrection, it also *parabolically* reenacts "The Remnant" of the sons of Israel crossing the Jordan River to *inherit* the Promised Land. It, likewise, *parabolically* depicts the return of "The Remnant" of Israel from the Babylonian Captivity to rebuild "The House" of God. That is where "the riddle in a mirror" rears its ugly head and refuses to allow the *parabolic imagery* of *The Teaching* to fit neatly together in the mind of anyone who is willing to believe a lie. It is absolutely impossible to see the Truth until one is willing

to admit that the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ must have been a *parabolic pantomime* of the entire history of Creation. Knowing that, one can use simple syllogistic reasoning to determine that the Passover Parable must, likewise, be a *parabolic pantomime* of that same thing. (See "Reflections in the Mirror of the Word of God, *This Is LIKE That: The Riddle in a Mirror*" on page 11.) Only then does all the *parabolic imagery* of *The Teaching* fit seamlessly together once again.

### "The Burning"

Even without insight into the things I just explained, it should be obvious (even to a fool) that



The diagram above presents a variant form of the *parabolic equivalencies* drawn in the diagram of "the riddle in a mirror" on page 11. Without insight into the *parabolic equivalencies* in this diagram, it is impossible to understand many of the statements the

Prophets make concerning the End of the Age. "The riddle" describes "The Way" God looks at time as opposed to our linear view. This diagram merely folds "the riddle" into the *parabolic image* of Christ as the Passover. ■

God orchestrated the Passover Parable as a *parabolic pantomime* which was meant to depict the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. However, since the entire life of Jesus Christ was itself a *parabolic pantomime* of the biblical history of the man Adam, the final events in the life of Jesus Christ—His death and Resurrection—must be *parabolically* pointing forward to the final events in the history of the man Adam. That fact becomes even more evident from the role that God played in the *parabolic pantomime* of Jesus' Baptism.

According to the mythology God was mocking in the Passover Parable, Osiris, the Egyptian god of the blessed dead, adopted the Pharaoh as his son and gave him the name Horus at the time of his resurrection. Therefore, in Jesus' *parabolic pantomime* of the Passover Parable, God *parabolically* adopted Jesus Christ, Who was—as I have explained elsewhere—born the son of David, not the Son of God. (See "I Tell You What: Odds Are, You'll Never Beat God at His Shell Game," *The Voice of Elijah*®, October 1998.) The following passage relates the *parabolic pantomime* in which God *parabolically* adopted the Son of David as His Own:

*Now it came about when all the people were baptized, that Jesus also was baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well-pleased."*  
(Luke 3:21–22)

In that *parabolic pantomime*, God is *parabolically* depicting what would happen after He resurrected Jesus Christ from the dead, having thereby fashioned "The Man" in His Own image and likeness just as Moses said He would (Gen. 1:26–27). At that point, Jesus Christ assumed His role as "The Name"—that is, the Firstborn Son—of God:

*Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, {and} being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW, of*

*those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*  
(Philippians 2:5–11)

There is much more to the *parabolic imagery* in Jesus' Baptism than I can explain here. However, the *parabolic equivalencies* in the diagrams in this article all come into focus in the Prophet Isaiah's *parabolic* description of the founding of the New Jerusalem:

*"For this is like the days of Noah to Me;  
When I swore that the waters of Noah  
Should not flood the earth again,  
So I have sworn that I will not be angry with you,  
Nor will I rebuke you.*

*For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake,  
But My lovingkindness will not be removed from you,  
And My covenant of peace will not be shaken,"*  
*Says the LORD who has compassion on you.*

*"O afflicted one, storm-tossed, and not comforted,  
Behold, I will set your stones in antimony,  
And your foundations I will lay in sapphires.  
Moreover, I will make your battlements of rubies,  
And your gates of crystal,  
And your entire wall of precious stones.  
And all your sons will be taught of the LORD;  
And the well-being of your sons will be great."*  
(Isaiah 54:9–13)

Isaiah is *parabolically* describing the Resurrection of the Body of Jesus Christ. How that is still remains to be shown. I have already explained some of the *parabolic imagery* in *The Isaiah Seminar* and will explain a few more things in this article. However, there is much more to the messages of "The Name" and "The Woman" than I am free to explain at this time. Needless to say, "The Woman" is an intricately detailed story of a *parabolic* "woman" who rejected God and has repeatedly sought to bear a "name" for God by functioning as a *zonah*.

Although it is not easy to discern, two *parabolic* "baptisms" are depicted in the Passover Parable. The Apostle Paul plainly tells us that is the case:

*For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and all ate the same spiritual food; and all*

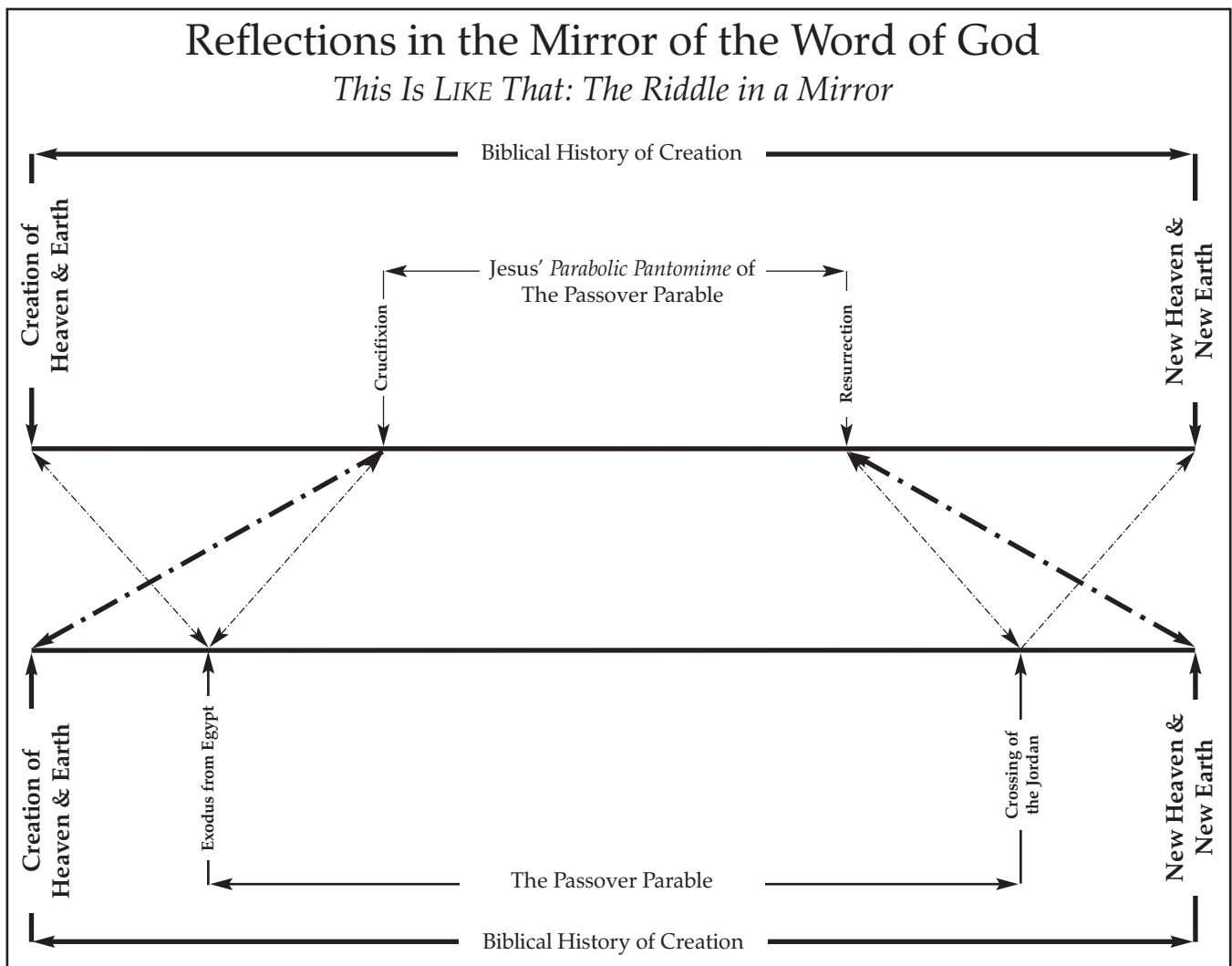
*drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ.*  
(1 Corinthians 10:1-4)

Pay attention to what Paul says. There are two *parabolic* baptisms described in the Passover Parable—one in water, the other in fire:

*And all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.*  
(1 Corinthians 10:2)

Lacking knowledge of the fact that the Glory of the Almighty God—the One Who is a consuming fire (Heb. 12:29)—inhabited the cloud that Paul mentions, one might fail to understand that he is *talking about* a baptism by fire. But given that information, one can easily “see” what the *parabolic imagery* points to. The Truth is, the baptism Paul mentions is the same baptism that John the Baptist mentions in this passage:

*Now John himself had a garment of camel's hair, and a leather belt about his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem was going out to him, and all Judea, and all the district around the Jordan; and they*



The most common mistake that people make in regard to the *parabolic equivalencies* of *The Teaching* is to view them as a statement of WHAT some reality IS rather than as a statement of WHAT that reality IS LIKE. Because of that tendency on the part of dimwits, *The Teaching* has gone through various permutations and distortions since Adam and Eve carried it with them out of the Garden of Eden. For example, the *parabolic equivalencies*

depicted in the diagram above stand behind the ancient mythological motif of the god of creation who spoke his own name and thereby brought himself into existence. It, likewise, contributed to the ancient belief that this creation had been fashioned from the body of the deceased god/goddess. The Truth is, “the riddle in a mirror” merely describes what reality IS LIKE when viewed from God’s perspective. ■

were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bring forth fruit in keeping with repentance; and do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father'; for I say to you, that God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. And the axe is already laid at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. And His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."  
(Matthew 3:4–12)

John was—like Paul—speaking *parabolically*. As he explains, the baptism by fire was yet to come at that point in time. So he was obviously describing some future historical event. What he said can easily be understood in terms of *parabolic equivalencies* drawn in the diagrams on pages 7 and 9. But even without consulting those, it should be obvious that the "baptism" of fire that John had in mind for the Pharisees and Sadducees is a *parabolic* description of "the burning" which will occur when Christ appears. That is made clear by the parable Jesus told about the burning of the "tares" at the End of the Age:

"Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, 'First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn.'"  
(Matthew 13:30)

The statements of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ concerning the "harvest" at the End of the Age are similar because both borrowed the *parabolic imagery* the Prophets used to describe those events (Is. 33:11; Zeph. 2:2; Mal. 4:1). The Prophets and Apostles describe the Second Coming of Jesus Christ in various ways. However, Paul concisely lays out the awesome, terrifying reality that men will face when the *Living Word of God* suddenly comes out of hiding:

For after all it is {only} just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and {to give} relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when **the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire**, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.  
(2 Thessalonians 1:6–8)

When Jesus Christ, the *Living Word of God*, is revealed, mankind will finally see the Glory of God, not *parabolically*, but as He actually is. As John puts it:

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, **when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is.**  
(1 John 3:2)

To understand what John had in mind, one needs to understand one fundamental fact:

By faith we understand that **the worlds were prepared by the word of God**, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.  
(Hebrews 11:3)

Are you able to see why, in the Passover Parable, the awesome, burning Glory of the Almighty God appeared in a mushroom cloud? He was mocking the stupidity of scoffers who will fail to believe *The Teaching* in our time. The Truth is actually quite easy to understand: The *Living Word of God* is *invisible*. The *visible* elements are made *visible* by the absolutely incredible power of that Word—the One Who is *The Teaching*. Consequently, if one were to somehow make the power of that *Living Word of God* assume a visible form—let's say by releasing His hold on a relatively few atoms of plutonium—He would assume the shape of a fiery mushroom cloud—the same cloud from which He lashed out to destroy Nadab and Abihu, two fools who offered "strange fire"—that is, fire which had nothing in common with the Word of God. That cloud is an example of the "clouds of glory" in which He will return. Which makes me pause to ask: Are you sure the "fire" you are offering God came from the same "fire" that He is? If not, perhaps you should make sure you have been (*parabolically*) "baptized" in that fire. ■





**T**he Voice of Elijah® includes this column to show you how some of the underlying parabolic images of the Gospel message of the Old Testament speak to the times in which we find ourselves. There are a variety of weather images to be found in the parables of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Most are associated in some way with the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

The recent election revealed some unseemly facts about the sad state of politics here in the United States. Since this nation holds an outsized influence around the world, now might be a good time to consider how Satan plans to use some of the lies and machinations we had opportunity to observe up close and firsthand. He obviously plans to use them. The question is, How?

Consider this scenario: Florida held an election. Since the law provided for a mandatory recount under specific circumstances, a recount was conducted according to Florida law. The law then provided that the recounted vote totals were to be certified before any contestant could *contest* the outcome and ask for a *manual* recount. But Democrats didn't like that law because it would give Republicans an edge in public opinion polls. So they asked the Florida Supreme Court to stop the Florida Secretary of State from certifying the vote totals.

The Democrats had nothing to gain except the deception of folks too ignorant to see through their deceit. But as it ultimately turned out, they had everything to lose. Their subterfuge cost them the election. Partisan Republicans undoubtedly think that is a good thing. But perhaps they should not rejoice overly much. Where Satan is as obviously involved as he was in the Florida imbroglio, the odds are better than even that he got exactly what he wanted.

Did it strike you as strange how quickly the Florida Supreme Court came back with a decision in favor of the Democrats? That was obviously because

they are an "activist" court, ready and willing to correct "errors" on the part of the legislative or administrative branch of government by "legislating from the bench." Unfortunately, *activist* is just a euphemism for the less-benign term *liberal*. And there is a whole lot more to the liberal vs. conservative battle for control of the courts than meets the eye. Satan has been carefully tending that cow for more than a century now, and you need to be careful that you don't get taken in by his goofiness.

The Democrats' fight to win the Florida election was part of the ongoing battle for control of the Federal court system. The President selects Supreme Court nominees, and the Democrats need an "activist" court so they can get their way even when conservatives won't let them enact laws they favor. Remember *Roe vs. Wade*? That is not a law. The Supreme Court "legislated from the bench" just like the Florida Supreme Court did. Consequently, the United States is the only major country in the world which has the ruling of a court as the only "law" governing abortion. Satan loves that illogical state of affairs. It is one small crack in the only government standing between him and world anarchy.

The liberal vs. conservative nonsense is just another example of ignorant people acting according to the lies that they believe. It is not possible to separate political views and theological beliefs. Every politician takes his personal beliefs concerning God (and the interpretation of the Bible) with him when he enters politics. So here's a dirty little secret you need to know: Republican politicians are the political heirs of the imbecile who spawned the idiotic *literal* theory of biblical interpretation. By contrast, the Democrats had *handed down* to them the goofy Darwin-inspired belief that it doesn't matter what the authors of the Bible *meant* to say, it only matters what the Bible *means* to the reader. Now you know why, when the Democrats accuse a certain Supreme Court Justice of being a "strict constructionist," they are actually accusing him of interpreting laws and legal decisions in accordance with what he believes they *meant* when they were written.

The Republicans' belief concerning the proper method of interpretation is rather benign. But the Democrats' view is absolutely deadly. After all, if legislation or a court ruling does not *mean* what its author(s) *meant*, it has no inherent *meaning*. It can *mean* whatever a majority of justices *want it to mean*. But lest you think I favor Republicans in this Pharisee vs. Sadducee struggle, just remember, the Pharisees had Jesus executed. ■



**T**he Voice of Elijah® publishes articles based on the findings of The Elijah Project, a private research group headed by Larry D. Harper. In this column we seek answers to general-interest questions concerning the findings, purpose, and philosophy of this project.

*Editor: I have received several questions from subscribers that I want to ask you about, but first I have a question of my own. In John 8:1–11 there is the account where the Pharisees and scribes bring an adulterous woman to Jesus and test Him by asking Him what should be done with her. In that account, Jesus stoops down and writes in the dirt and then makes the statement, “Let him who is without sin cast the first stone.” Then He begins to write in the dirt again, at which point everyone walks away without casting a stone. There has always been speculation as to what Jesus wrote in the dirt, although many think He probably wrote the Ten Commandments (or an abbreviated version of them). Do the Scriptures provide any evidence as to what Jesus wrote in the dirt? Also, do you believe His actions were a parabolic pantomime?*

*Elijah:* That last question is a bit like asking me if I believe Jesus drank water and breathed air. Certainly, I believe His actions were *parabolic pantomime*. *Parabolic pantomime* was what Jesus was ALL about. I have already explained on other occasions that His entire life was a *parabolic pantomime* of the history of Israel, the Firstborn Son of God, which had itself been orchestrated by God as a *parabolic pantomime* of the entire history of the man, that is, the first man, Adam. In the account of the adulterous woman (John 7:53–8:11), Jesus is mocking the

ignorance of those leaders “in Israel” who should have understood, but undoubtedly didn’t understand, the *parabolic significance* of what and why He wrote in the dirt. Take a look at the passage you mentioned:

*[And everyone went to his home. But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. And early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people were coming to Him; and He sat down and {began} to teach them. And the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery, and having set her in the midst, they said to Him, “Teacher, this woman has been caught in adultery, in the very act. Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do You say?” And they were saying this, testing Him, in order that they might have grounds for accusing Him. But Jesus stooped down, and with His finger wrote on the ground. But when they persisted in asking Him, He straightened up, and said to them, “He who is without sin among you, let him {be the} first to throw a stone at her.” And again He stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And when they heard it, they {began} to go out one by one, beginning with the older ones, and He was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the midst. And straightening up, Jesus said to her, “Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?” And she said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you; go your way. From now on sin no more.”]*  
(John 7:53–8:11)

Before I get into explaining why Jesus did what He did on that occasion, let me explain a few things about the passage. It is generally recognized by those who are familiar with the Greek text of the New Testament that the account of the adulterous woman was not originally a part of the Gospel written by the Apostle John. That is why the New American Standard Bible has enclosed it in brackets. However, the account has been a part of the English Bible ever since the King James Version was published in 1611. Consequently, those unfortunate, unthinking souls who have no concern at all for the Truth and most likely no knowledge of the storied origin of the “Textus Receptus,” that is, the first commercially printed edition of the Greek New Testament—on which the King James Version was unfortunately based—will adamantly insist that the Apostle John wrote it.

The fact is, John 7:53–8:11 cannot be found in any of the earliest (second- to fourth-century) manuscripts

of the New Testament. Even in later manuscripts it is often set off by asterisks, which indicates that the copyist knew it had been added. Then there is the problem of the passage floating from place to place in the Scriptures. In some manuscripts, it is found at the end of the Gospel of John. In others, it occurs right after Luke 21:38. Those facts are difficult to explain if the passage was originally at its current position in the original Greek text of the Gospel of John.

To understand how it is possible to say with almost absolute certainty that the account of the adulterous woman was not originally a part of what John wrote, however, one needs to know a bit about the extant biblical manuscripts which provide mute testimony concerning the transmission of the biblical text. So let me explain a few things about that.

### *A Bit of Basic Logic*

There are four basic “families” into which all existing manuscripts of the New Testament fall. The first, and most reliable, of the four textual families is the *Alexandrian text*. This family of manuscripts includes not only the Codex Vaticanus but also the Codex Sinaiticus, both of which are Greek uncial manuscripts copied sometime around the middle of the fourth century. Evidence as to the reliability of this family—and these two texts—in attesting to the original Greek text of the New Testament comes from the Bodmer Papyri, which are a collection of Greek manuscripts dating from about A.D. 200. The early date of these papyrus manuscripts indicates that the Greek text from which the *Alexandrian text* family arose must have been in existence by at least the early second century—not long after John, the last of the Apostles, died. Significantly for our concerns here, none of the best texts in the *Alexandrian text* family contain John 7:53–8:11. That includes Codex Vaticanus, Codex Sinaiticus, and the Bodmer Papyri—all of which are *Greek texts*. The *significance* of that statement—should anyone need it spelled out in detail—lies in the fact that these are not *translations* of the original Greek text. They are *copies*.

The next most reliable textual family of New Testament manuscripts is the *Western text*, which apparently originated in Italy, most likely in Rome. Most of these texts are Latin *translations* of the original Greek text. However, the most distinctive feature of these texts lies in the fact that the copyists of this family

of texts tended to paraphrase the text they were copying rather than sticking to a literal word-for-word copy of the original they had in front of them. If you think in terms of the Living Bible, you can get some idea of the problems that nasty habit might cause someone who wanted to try to determine for himself what the Apostles themselves *meant* rather than relying on what some other fool *thought* they *meant*. Not only does a paraphrase sometimes obscure the *meaning* of the original text, it normally produces a rather prolix copy. The Book of Acts, for example, is about 10 percent longer in the manuscripts of the *Western text* family than it is in the *Alexandrian text* family.

If you keep in mind the fact that the *Western text* is the second most reliable of the four families of texts, you might have good reason to wonder how far down this change-the-biblical-text thing could go. Quite a ways, as it turns out. Several second-century writers—including the Church Fathers Tatian, Irenæus, and Tertullian, as well as the heretic Marcion—quote from what appears to be an incipient *Western text*. And the writings of later Church Fathers indicates that this paraphrased Latin text was in widespread use by A.D. 250.

For our purposes here, it is enough to know that most—but certainly not all—manuscripts in the *Western text* family include the floating account of the adulterous woman. The most notable exceptions are the Old Latin texts on which Jerome seems to have based *The Latin Vulgate*, the New Testament portion of which he completed sometime around A.D. 388. Moreover, evidence from the best copies of *The Latin Vulgate* indicates Jerome did not include the account in his translation of the Greek New Testament, even though he comments on it elsewhere, proving that he certainly knew of its presence in other Latin translations of John’s Gospel.

The third most reliable New Testament textual family is the *Caesarean text*. The original Old Egyptian text from which this family sprang seems to have originated in Alexandria, Egypt. However, someone (some say it may have been Origen the Idiot) carried a copy of that text to Caesarea, where additional copies were made. From there, it went out to Georgia—after a brief stopover with Armenian Christians in Jerusalem. One of the primary characteristics of the manuscripts in the *Caesarean textual* family is the tendency on the part of the copyist to mix readings from the *Alexandrian text* with those taken from the *Western text*. The resulting manuscript was a sort of eclectic mishmash to which

later copyists contributed their own spit and polish in a misguided effort to increase the literary elegance of the biblical text. Even then, some manuscripts in this family omit the account of the adulterous woman.

The *Byzantine* (or *Syrian*) text is the fourth and final family of texts. It is also the least reliable family of texts simply because the person with whom this family originated obviously had several unstated goals in mind when he took liberties with the biblical text: (1) He wanted to make a more readable text, so he modified the text accordingly; (2) he intended to do away with variant readings, so he included them all; and (3) he sought to harmonize parallel passages, so he changed them wherever necessary. Yet, in spite of these obvious objectives, the oldest and best manuscripts in the *Syriac* text family do not contain the account of the adulterous woman.

It should be clear from the above that the four families of texts are listed in order of decreasing importance. That is, the *Alexandrian* text appears first because it is the most reliable family of texts; the *Byzantine* text appears last because it is the least reliable. That being the case, in determining what form the original Greek text of the New Testament took, it is logical to look first for those readings which are attested in all four textual families. Then, to resolve disputes when the different families provide divergent testimony, it makes good sense to give added weight to the reading contained in the *Alexandrian* text—which clearly appears to contain the most original form of the biblical text—and to be wary of any reading that is not otherwise strongly attested in all four families. If one follows that process in trying to determine whether John 7:53–8:11 was a part of the original text, it quickly becomes obvious there is little evidence to indicate it was, yet an extremely large amount of evidence which indicates it was not.

If those are the facts concerning John 7:53–8:11, why would anyone continue to insist that John wrote the passage? For one reason, and one reason alone: an over-zealous religious superstition based totally on ignorance—ignorance not only concerning the human transmission of the biblical text but also concerning the divine purpose of the Scriptures and the nature of revelation. That is, their fatal error stems from a failure to make a clear distinction between the subjective revelation the Prophets and Apostles *received* from God and the objective revelation those men of God recorded in the

Scriptures. (See *The Mystery of Scripture, Volume 1*, Chapter 1; “Questions & Answers,” *The Voice of Elijah*®, January 1996 and July 1996; “Just to Summarize, for Those Who Missed It ...,” *The Voice of Elijah*® Update, August 1995; “The Assumption of a Fool: The Hand of God Is Always Outstretched in Love,” *The Voice of Elijah*® Update, November 1997; *The Way, The Truth, The Life*, p. 138, n. 12.)

Anyone who wants to ignorantly insist that the Apostle John wrote John 7:53–8:11 apparently has chosen to remain oblivious to the fact that *The Apostolic Teaching* the Early Church lost included a whole lot more information than one finds recorded in the New Testament. He probably also prefers to believe that the passage must have always been a part of the Scriptures just because it is in whatever version of the Bible he has been reading. That being the case, let me shed some light on this particular text so that you don’t have to “go down the road” with those who insist on walking blindly in their own distorted understanding of “The Way” (Prov. 1:10–19).

## The Adulterous Woman

Having come to the obvious conclusion that the account of the adulterous woman was not originally a part of the Gospel of John, the logical question to ask is, “Then why would someone have wanted to include it?” That is, anyone who wants to know the Truth should at least try to determine what possible purpose some anonymous copyist of the biblical text might have had for adding such an extended passage to it. A bit of insight into the *parabolic imagery* of *The Apostolic Teaching* as well as a rudimentary knowledge of Early Church history not only provides a logical motive for the inclusion of the account but also points to a likely window of opportunity.

First of all, I have no doubt that the account of the adulterous woman is an accurate representation of what Jesus actually said and did on the occasion described in the text. But that is not the issue. Jesus did and said a lot of things which are not recorded in the Scriptures. Moreover, the writings of the Early Church Fathers disclose that *oral* accounts of His many exploits circulated through the Early Church as part of the *oral tradition* that was being *handed down* in the Church until well into the third century. So the very fact that the account of the adulterous woman could make its

way into the Gospel of John after that Gospel was already in widespread circulation testifies to the fact that it must have already been an integral part of the Early Church's *oral tradition*.

The essential question regarding John 7:53–8:11 is not concerned with whether the account of the adulterous woman contains factual information, it only seeks to understand why someone obviously wanted to give an *oral tradition* added weight and authority by making it a part of the Scriptures. The answer to that question has to do with the *meaning* and *significance* of the *parabolic image* of the adulterous woman. Someone, for his own extremely narrowly defined reasons, wanted to remind the Church that Jesus Christ had—in *parabolic pantomime*—refused to judge the adulteress; so they should, likewise, refrain. To understand why anyone would want that point emphasized, one must understand not only what *The Apostolic Teaching* has to say concerning the *parabolic image* of the adulteress, but also the circumstance in the Early Church to which the *parabolic image* applied.

To understand the Truth, one needs to know that the *parabolic image* of the adulterous woman is one the Prophets used to scathingly denounce the sons of Israel for their unfaithfulness in breaking the covenant God had made with them at Mt. Sinai. However, in that *parabolic image*, Corporate Israel is not only depicted as having conducted herself as an adulteress, she is also graphically described as having done so as a *zonah*. If you do not understand the *significance* of that statement, I suggest you read (or reread) the things I have written concerning the cultic ritual in which the Canaanite sacred prostitute (the *zonah*) participated. (See "Questions & Answers," *The Voice of Elijah*®, October 1995; "The Sad, Sordid History of the People of God," *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 1996; "Questions & Answers," *The Voice of Elijah*®, January 1997; "Questions & Answers," *The Voice of Elijah*®, April 1997; "So Why Would a Nomad 'Build a House' And Settle Down?" *The Voice of Elijah*®, October 1997; and "Pay Close Attention to 'The Way' That Woman Walks," *The Voice of Elijah*®, October 1999.)

Insight into the things I have written concerning the Canaanite *zonah* is absolutely essential to an accurate understanding of the seven sealed messages that Moses and the other Prophets of Israel hid in the Hebrew Scriptures. Without knowledge of those things, one cannot even begin to comprehend what

the Prophet Ezekiel had in mind when he recorded this particular part of the Word of the Lord:

*"How could your heart [mind] be so feeble?" The Lord, His Majesty, declares: "In your doing all these things (the activity of a domineering zonah woman), in your building your sacred place at the head of every way (You even made your high place in every open area!), you were not like a zonah to refuse a gift. (The woman of adultery takes strangers instead of her man!) They give a tip to every zonah, but you have given your tips to all your lovers. You bribed them from all around to enter you during your practice of the zonah ritual. There was more perversity in you than the {other} women during your practice of the zonah ritual. (The zonah ritual was not practiced on your behalf when you gave a gift and a gift was not given to you.) You were {just doing it} to be perverse." Therefore, zonah! Hear the word of His Majesty. This is what the Lord, His Majesty, has said: "Because your brazenness was poured out and your nakedness was revealed during your practice of the zonah ritual for the benefit of your lovers and for the benefit of all the ancestral idols of your abominations, and because of the blood of your sons whom you gave to them, therefore, look! I am going to gather all your lovers for whose benefit you gave a pledge—even all those you loved—for the benefit of all those you hated. I will gather them against you from all around and I will reveal your nakedness to them so that they see all your nakedness."*

(Ezekiel 16:30–37) —my interim translation

If Ezekiel were the only Prophet to use the *parabolic image* in which Israel is depicted as the wife of God who commits adultery by practicing the ancient Canaanite ritual of the *zonah*, the imagery might be easily dismissed as a metaphor. But he isn't. His contemporary, Jeremiah, uses exactly the same *parabolic image*:

*{God} says, "If a husband divorces his wife,  
And she goes from him,  
And belongs to another man,  
Will he still return to her?  
Will not that land be completely polluted?  
But you are a harlot {with} many lovers;  
Yet you turn to Me," declares the LORD.  
"Lift up your eyes to the bare heights and see;  
Where have you not been violated?"*

By the roads you have sat for them  
 Like an Arab in the desert,  
 And you have polluted a land  
 With your harlotry and with your wickedness.  
 Therefore the showers have been withheld,  
 And there has been no spring rain.  
 Yet you had a harlot's forehead;  
 You refused to be ashamed."  
 (Jeremiah 3:1–3)

You can see from what Ezekiel and Jeremiah say that the Prophets knew of a *parabolic image* in which "The Woman," Israel, was both an adulteress and a *zonah*. They also knew of a *parabolic image* in which Israel was a *virgin*, but since that *parabolic imagery* is not entirely relevant here, we'll pass. If you want to know how the *parabolic image* of the adulterous woman relates to the life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, you need to read Isaiah 47–55. He explains (*parabolically*) how the *zonah* became "The Virgin" who "built a house," "raised up a seed," and "made a name" for God.

The *parabolic pantomime* the Lord instructed the Prophet Hosea to conduct with an adulteress is particularly enlightening—provided you understand the *meaning* and *significance* of the *parabolic imagery* of *The Apostolic Teaching* in which Israel, the adulteress, is also depicted as a *zonah*. I especially like the passage where Hosea describes what it will be *LIKE* when "The Remnant" of the Lord finally comes to an understanding of the Truth right before the Second Coming:

Then the LORD said to me, "Go again, love a woman {who} is loved by {her} husband, yet an **adulteress**, even as the LORD loves the sons of Israel, though they turn to other gods and love raisin cakes." So I bought her for myself for fifteen {shekels} of silver and a homer and a half of barley. Then I said to her, "You shall stay with me for many days. You shall not play the **harlot**, nor shall you have a man; so I will also be toward you." **For the sons of Israel will remain for many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or {sacred} pillar, and without ephod or household idols. Afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king; and they will come trembling to the LORD and to His goodness in the last days.**  
 (Hosea 3:1–5)

I'll not waste your time or mine trying to explain why there was nothing wrong with Hosea *taking* a woman who was not only an adulteress but also a *zonah*. Folks who defend such actions on the part of the men God used in the Old Testament have a craven need to see those men as somehow "Christian" or "saints of God." The Truth is, Hosea and men like him were just acting in accordance with their understanding of the Truth of *The Teaching of Moses* and doing what God demanded of them—nothing less, nothing more. But fools who have no insight at all into the Truth the Prophets understood have a difficult time getting past the goofy belief that one must somehow *do this* or *do that* to become (or remain) righteous or holy. They simply cannot understand that true godliness consists in *being* righteous and holy. (See *The Way, The Truth, The Life*.) Furthermore, they would never believe how easy it is to attain righteousness and holiness. All that is required is to *hear* the Truth and *believe* it.

The passage above tells us God ordered Hosea to conduct a *parabolic pantomime* in which the Prophet portrayed what God's relationship to the sons of Israel was *LIKE*. However, that *parabolic pantomime* was not the first time God had Hosea *take* a woman to depict what He was going to do with the adulteress/*zonah* that Israel had become. Hosea begins his prophetic work with a description of another occasion on which the Lord told him to do that. He indicates the *taking* of a *zonah* for the purpose of "raising up a seed," "building a house," and "making a name" was the very first thing the Lord told him to do:

The word of the LORD which came to Hosea the son of Beeri, during the days of Uziah, Jotham, Ahaz, {and} Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and during the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel. When the LORD first spoke through Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea, "Go, take to yourself a wife of **harlotry**, and {have} children of **harlotry**; for the land commits flagrant **harlotry**, forsaking the LORD." So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son. And the LORD said to him, "Name him Jezreel; for yet a little while, and I will punish the house of Jehu for the bloodshed of Jezreel, and I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel. And it will come about on that day, that I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel." Then she conceived again and gave birth to a daughter. And the LORD said to him, "Name her Lo-ruhamah, for I will no

longer have compassion on the house of Israel, that I should ever forgive them. But I will have compassion on the house of Judah and deliver them by the LORD their God, and will not deliver them by bow, sword, battle, horses, or horsemen." When she had weaned Lo-ruhamah, she conceived and gave birth to a son. And the LORD said, "Name him Lo-ammi, for you are not My people and I am not your God."  
(Hosea 1:1-9)

On the basis of that passage, one could easily conclude that the Prophet Hosea meant God was through dealing with Israel because she had committed adultery by practicing the *zonah* ritual. However, Hosea goes on to explain that was not the case:

Yet the number of the sons of Israel  
Will be like the sand of the sea,  
Which cannot be measured or numbered;  
And it will come about that, in the place  
Where it is said to them,  
"You are not My people,"  
It will be said to them,  
"{You are} the sons of the living God."  
And the sons of Judah and the sons of Israel  
will be gathered together,  
And they will appoint for themselves one leader,  
And they will go up from the land,  
For great will be the day of Jezreel.  
(Hosea 1:10-11)

If you know why the Apostle Peter alluded to that passage in 1 Peter 2, you already understand the basics of how *The Apostolic Teaching* applies the *parabolic image* of the adulterous woman to the Church. However, *The Apostolic Teaching* nests the *parabolic images* of "The Man" one within the other. That can make it difficult to see how everything that the Prophets said about Israel describes not only the Body of Jesus Christ but also the "body" of the first Adam. Then, to make things even more complicated, one has to keep in mind that "The Man" Israel and "The Woman" Israel are *parabolically* "one flesh" in which "The Woman" is only a "member" of "The Man" and can easily be "cut off from" "The Man" if she commits adultery.

That's the gist of the *parabolic imagery* the Prophets use in which Israel is described as both male and female. There is no inherent contradiction in those two images,

provided one understands the underlying mind-set. The Prophets tell us the Man Israel—Jesus Christ— is destined to die as a sacrifice and to be resurrected as "The Name" of God. The fate of "The Woman"—an adulteress who garbs her adultery in the pious disguise of a *zonah*—is also foreordained. She will certainly be "cut off from" "The Man" because of her adultery. However, she will again be joined to "The Man" "in that day." Hosea explains it *parabolically* this way:

Say to your brothers, "Ammi,"  
and to your sisters, "Ruhamah."  
"Contend with your mother, contend,  
For she is not my wife, and I am not her husband;  
And let her put away her *harlotry* from her face,  
And her *adultery* from between her breasts,  
Lest I strip her naked  
And expose her as on the day when she was born.  
I will also make her like a wilderness,  
Make her like desert land,  
And slay her with thirst.  
Also, I will have no compassion on her children,  
Because they are children of *harlotry*.  
For their mother has played the *harlot*;  
She who conceived them has acted shamefully.  
For she said, 'I will go after my lovers,  
Who give {me} my bread and my water,  
My wool and my flax, my oil and my drink.'  
Therefore, behold, I will hedge up her way with thorns,  
And I will build a wall against her  
so that she cannot find her paths.  
And she will pursue her lovers, but she will not overtake them;  
And she will seek them, but will not find {them.}  
Then she will say, 'I will go back to my first husband,  
For it was better for me than now!'  
For she does not know that it was I  
who gave her the grain, the new wine, and the oil,  
And lavished on her silver and gold,  
{Which} they used for Baal.  
Therefore, I will take back My grain at harvest time  
And My new wine in its season.  
I will also take away My wool and My flax  
{Given} to cover her nakedness.  
And then I will uncover her lewdness  
In the sight of her lovers,  
And no one will rescue her out of My hand.  
I will also put an end to all her gaiety,  
Her feasts, her new moons, her sabbaths,

And all her festal assemblies.  
 And I will destroy her vines and fig trees,  
 Of which she said,  
 'These are my wages  
 Which my lovers have given me.'  
 And I will make them a forest,  
 And the beasts of the field will devour them.  
 And I will punish her for the days of the Baals  
 When she used to offer sacrifices to them  
 And adorn herself with her earrings and jewelry,  
 And follow her lovers, so that she forgot Me,"  
 declares the LORD.  
 "Therefore, behold, I will allure her,  
 Bring her into the wilderness, And speak kindly to her.  
 Then I will give her her vineyards from there,  
 And the valley of Achor as a door of hope.  
 And she will sing there as in the days of her youth,  
 As in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt.  
 And it will come about in that day," declares the LORD,  
 "That you will call Me Ishi  
 And will no longer call Me Baali.  
 For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth,  
 So that they will be mentioned by their names no more.  
 In that day I will also make a covenant for them  
 With the beasts of the field,  
 The birds of the sky,  
 And the creeping things of the ground.  
 And I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land,  
 And will make them lie down in safety.  
 And I will betroth you to Me forever;  
 Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and in justice,  
 In lovingkindness and in compassion,  
 And I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness.  
 Then you will know the LORD.  
 And it will come about in that day  
 that I will respond," declares the LORD.  
 "I will respond to the heavens,  
 and they will respond to the earth,  
 And the earth will respond to the grain,  
 to the new wine, and to the oil,  
 And they will respond to Jezreel.  
 And I will sow her for Myself in the land.  
 I will also have compassion  
 on her who had not obtained compassion,  
 And I will say to those who were not My people,  
 'You are My people!'  
 And they will say, '{Thou art} my God!'"  
 (Hosea 2:1–23)

Other than the fact that the translator had absolutely no idea what Hosea is *talking about* in that passage, that's not a bad translation. It would have helped a bit if he had been more consistent in translating the Hebrew word he translated as both "land" and "earth." He should have translated it as "earth" a little more often. But if he had, the *meaning and significance* of what Hosea said would not have remained quite so well hidden. The Prophet is using the *parabolic image* in which Israel is a *zonah* to speak beyond the man Israel—whether Jacob or Jesus Christ, it doesn't matter—to describe the fate of the man Adam, that is, the fate of the totality of the descendants of Adam. That becomes a bit clearer if you change "land" to "earth" in this verse:

"Go, take to yourself a wife of *harlotry*, and {have} children of *harlotry*; for the land commits flagrant *harlotry*, forsaking the LORD."  
 (Hosea 1:2b)

Hosea has in mind a *parabolic image* in which the Man, Israel, that is, Jesus Christ, the Firstborn Son of God, becomes "one" with "The Woman" under the terms of the New Covenant; and "The Woman" then faithlessly functions as a *zonah* in an idiotic bid to "raise up a seed" for a foreign god. If you keep in mind the fact that the Prophet is speaking *parabolically* to describe how one set of historical events IS LIKE another set of events, you should be able to see that he is speaking in terms of the same *parabolic imagery* the Apostle John uses when he describes the fate of the *zonah* (*harlot*) in this passage:

And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I shall show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed {acts of} immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality." And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality, and upon her forehead a name {was} written, a mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS



AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And when I saw her, I wondered greatly. And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? I shall tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. The beast that you saw was and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come. Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. And the beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is {one} of the seven, and he goes to destruction. And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings, who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour. These have one purpose and they give their power and authority to the beast. These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him {are the} called and chosen and faithful." And he said to me, "The waters which you saw where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues. And the ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire. For God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose by having a common purpose, and by giving their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God should be fulfilled. And the woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth."

(Revelation 17:1–18)

If one understands how God has nested the parabolic images of "The Man" in *The Apostolic Teaching*, it is not all that difficult to see that the parabolic image of the *zonah* who is burned at the End pertains only to those members of the man Adam who are eventually "cut off from," that is, disinherited by, "The Man" Who holds sole title to *the promise*. (We are, after all, talking about the *inheritance of the promise*, which was supposed to have been—but wasn't—*handed down* as an *inheritance* to all the descendants of the man, that is, the first man, Adam.) Conversely, those members of His Body

who remain "in Him" and *inherit the promise* are not depicted parabolically as a *zonah* but as a *virgin*. Such are the intricately intertwined images of *The Teaching*.

Here, my only interest in the parabolic image of the adulteress (who is also a *zonah*) is how, in *The Apostolic Teaching*, it applies to the Church (as "The One") and to individual Believers (as "The Many"). That appears to be, after all, the concern of whoever added John 7:53–8:11 to the Scriptures. He apparently wanted it known that those who denied Christ during persecution—that is, those who had proven themselves to be parabolically LIKE the adulterous woman—should be treated leniently, not harshly. In his view, what Jesus said to the men who wanted to stone the adulteress meant that those who committed apostasy should be allowed to rejoin the Church in spite of their having denied the Faith to avoid becoming martyrs. If you are not aware of the controversy the actions of such people raised in the Early Church, perhaps you should spend a little more time rummaging around in Church History. (See "The Apostles' Creed and the Search for Orthodoxy," *The Voice of Elijah*®, October 1993; "Puritans and Pretenders: Cyprian, Novatian, and the Lapsed," *The Voice of Elijah*®, January 1994; and "How the West Became 'Christian': Constantine and the Church," *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 1994.)

It is not difficult to see why someone would insert the account of the adulterous woman at its current location. As you can see from the passages which precede and follow John 7:53–8:11, the original text includes statements about not judging others:

Now on the last day, the great {day} of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.'" But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet {given,} because Jesus was not yet glorified. {Some} of the multitude therefore, when they heard these words, were saying, "This certainly is the Prophet." Others were saying, "This is the Christ." Still others were saying, "Surely the Christ is not going to come from Galilee, is He? Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the offspring of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?" So there arose a division in the multitude because of Him. And some of them wanted to seize Him, but no one laid hands on Him. The officers

therefore came to the chief priests and Pharisees, and they said to them, "Why did you not bring Him?" The officers answered, "Never did a man speak the way this man speaks." The Pharisees therefore answered them, "You have not also been led astray, have you? No one of the rulers or Pharisees has believed in Him, has he? But this multitude which does not know the Law is accursed." Nicodemus said to them (he who came to Him before, being one of them), "Our Law does not judge a man, unless it first hears from him and knows what he is doing, does it?" They answered and said to him, "You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee." (John 7:37–52)

Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life." The Pharisees therefore said to Him, "You are bearing witness of Yourself; Your witness is not true." Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true; for I know where I came from, and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from, or where I am going. You people judge according to the flesh; I am not judging anyone. But even if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone {in it,} but I and He who sent Me. Even in your law it has been written, that the testimony of two men is true. I am He who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me." And so they were saying to Him, "Where is Your Father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither Me, nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also." These words He spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one seized Him, because His hour had not yet come. (John 8:12–20)

There is quite a lot of evidence in the text of John 7:37–8:20 to indicate that the account of the adulterous woman was almost certainly not a part of the original text of the Gospel of John. If you are interested in such things, I suggest you consult a textual commentary. For example, two statements tell us Jesus wrote on the ground (John 8:6, 8) when the text plainly says on two other occasions (John 8:2, 20) that He was teaching in the Temple at the time. Unless I am mistaken, the Temple had a floor of stone rather than one of dirt in the time of Christ. That is a rather small detail, and it may be easily explained. Nonetheless, I see it as

somewhat significant in light of the *parabolic pantomime* Jesus conducted.

Jesus was undoubtedly in the Temple when they brought the adulterous woman to Him, but He almost certainly did not write on the ground. He wrote in the dust on the floor of the Temple. Whoever added the account of the adulterous woman to the Scriptures was evidently not aware of that because he did not understand the *parabolic significance* of the dust on the floor of the Temple or why Jesus wrote in it. That can only mean that he added the account to the Scriptures after *The Apostolic Teaching* concerning the adulteress had been lost. But that must have been before the *significance* of the *parabolic image* had been completely forgotten.

If I were to hazard a guess as to when the account of the adulterous woman was added to the Scriptures, I would have to say it would have been after the Church lost *The Apostolic Teaching* (ca. A.D. 200) and before Constantine put an end to the persecution of the Church (A.D. 313). The persecution under Decius (A.D. 249–251) or the one under Valerian (A.D. 257–260) would have provided an ideal climate for someone to include it as an apologetic for the view that the Church should readmit apostate Christians. (See "Puritans and Pretenders: Cyprian, Novatian, and the Lapsed," *The Voice of Elijah*®, January 1994.)

The account of the adulterous woman was undoubtedly added to the Latin text first and only later translated into Greek, since no Greek Church Father comments on the text until the twelfth century. Even then, Euthymius Zigabenus flatly states that, in his day, no accurate copy of John's Gospel includes it. That contrasts markedly with the fact that the account was a favorite among Latin Church Fathers from the fifth century on. Interestingly, both Jerome (ca. A.D. 340–420) and Augustine (A.D. 354–430), both Latin Fathers, comment on the text, whereas John Chrysostom (ca. A.D. 345–407), who was Greek, does not.

## The Curse

The *parabolic pantomime* in which Jesus wrote something in the dust on the floor of the Temple does not actually concern the adulterous woman who was brought to Him that day. The text makes it clear that she had been caught in the very act of adultery. So it should be obvious to everyone that *The Law of Moses* required that she and the man be executed:

*"If {there is} a man who commits adultery with another man's wife, one who commits adultery with his friend's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death."*

*(Leviticus 20:10)*

To understand what Jesus meant by His parabolic pantomime, it is important to know that God demanded the execution of an adulterer and adulteress as a parabolic pantomime that depicted what He would do to "The Woman" if she was ever caught in the act of being unfaithful to Him. However, it is just as important to know that God ordained another parabolic pantomime which depicts how He will deal with "The Woman" when she is only suspected of adultery:

*Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the sons of Israel, and say to them, 'If any man's wife goes astray and is unfaithful to him, and a man has intercourse with her and it is hidden from the eyes of her husband and she is undetected, although she has defiled herself, and there is no witness against her and she has not been caught in the act, if a spirit of jealousy comes over him and he is jealous of his wife when she has defiled herself, or if a spirit of jealousy comes over him and he is jealous of his wife when she has not defiled herself, the man shall then bring his wife to the priest, and shall bring {as} an offering for her one-tenth of an ephah of barley meal; he shall not pour oil on it, nor put frankincense on it, for it is a grain offering of jealousy, a grain offering of memorial, a reminder of iniquity. Then the priest shall bring her near and have her stand before the LORD, and the priest shall take holy water in an earthenware vessel; and he shall take some of the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle and put {it} into the water. The priest shall then have the woman stand before the LORD and let {the hair of} the woman's head go loose, and place the grain offering of memorial in her hands, which is the grain offering of jealousy, and in the hand of the priest is to be the water of bitterness that brings a curse. And the priest shall have her take an oath and shall say to the woman, "If no man has lain with you and if you have not gone astray into uncleanness, {being} under {the authority of} your husband, be immune to this water of bitterness that brings a curse; if you, however, have gone astray, {being} under {the authority of} your husband, and if you have defiled yourself and a man other than your husband has had intercourse with you" (then*

*the priest shall have the woman swear with the oath of the curse, and the priest shall say to the woman), "the LORD make you a curse and an oath among your people by the LORD's making your thigh waste away and your abdomen swell; and this water that brings a curse shall go into your stomach, and make your abdomen swell and your thigh waste away." And the woman shall say, "Amen. Amen." The priest shall then write these curses on a scroll, and he shall wash them off into the water of bitterness. Then he shall make the woman drink the water of bitterness that brings a curse, so that the water which brings a curse will go into her and {cause} bitterness. And the priest shall take the grain offering of jealousy from the woman's hand, and he shall wave the grain offering before the LORD and bring it to the altar; and the priest shall take a handful of the grain offering as its memorial offering and offer {it} up in smoke on the altar, and afterward he shall make the woman drink the water. When he has made her drink the water, then it shall come about, if she has defiled herself and has been unfaithful to her husband, that the water which brings a curse shall go into her and {cause} bitterness, and her abdomen will swell and her thigh will waste away, and the woman will become a curse among her people. But if the woman has not defiled herself and is clean, she will then be free and conceive children. This is the law of jealousy: when a wife, {being} under {the authority of} her husband, goes astray and defiles herself, or when a spirit of jealousy comes over a man and he is jealous of his wife, he shall then make the woman stand before the LORD, and the priest shall apply all this law to her. Moreover, the man shall be free from guilt, but that woman shall bear her guilt."*

*(Numbers 5:11-31)*

If you were paying attention as you read that passage, you already know that there were only two things in the "water of bitterness" the suspected adulteress was forced to drink: words that were symbolically scraped off a scroll and dirt that was symbolically taken from the floor of the Tabernacle. I hardly think either one of those two would make water turn bitter. So I suggest you look elsewhere for the significance of the parabolic "water of bitterness." In your search, you should, perhaps, consider these two passages:

*And the third angel sounded, and a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters; and the name of the*

star is called Wormwood; and a third of the waters became wormwood; and many men died from the waters, **because they were made bitter.**

(Revelation 8:10–11)

And the voice which I heard from heaven, {I heard} again speaking with me, and saying, “Go, take the book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the land.” And I went to the angel, telling him to give me the little book. And he said to me, “Take it, and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey.” And I took the little book out of the angel’s hand and ate it, and **it was in my mouth sweet as honey; and when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter.**

(Revelation 10:8–10)

Let me explain why Jesus said, “He who is without sin among you, let him {be the} first to throw a stone at her.” (John 8:7b). He knew that the men who brought the woman to Him that day were members of “The Woman” who had been unfaithful to God. Consequently, they were even more guilty than she was because they were, in fact, due the sentence which her death was only intended to depict *parabolically*. Jesus also understood the *significance* of the *parabolic pantomime* which depicts the time when God will demand that “The Woman”—who is both an adulteress and a *zonah*—drink the “water of bitterness” which will render her totally incapable of bearing children. Therefore, Jesus casually knelt down and, in *parabolic pantomime*, began preparing their bitter “drink.”

If you don’t know what “drink” “The Harlot” will be made to drink—the one in which dust from the floor of the Temple is mixed with curses which have been written on a scroll, the same scroll the Apostle John was forced to eat in *parabolic pantomime*—you would be wise to consider whether you actually understand the message of the Scriptures. And you might want to do that before “The Woman” who is both an adulteress and a *zonah* is forced to “drink” the “drink” that will reveal just how unfaithful to God she has been.

**Editor:** We had an inquiry from a subscriber who wanted to know what you could tell him about the Hebrew term *toledoth*, which is usually translated “generations” in the Scriptures, and whether this term has special significance in the Book of Genesis.

**Elijah:** I wouldn’t say it has any special *significance*. However, if one is not aware of how Moses used the term to conceal and reveal the Truth concerning what he wrote about “The Man,” Jesus Christ, the term does take on added *importance*. Otherwise, it’s just another one of the ways that Moses, the Master Prophet, made fools out of all those down through the centuries who have confidently claimed to understand “the book” he started and left for the other Prophets and the Apostles to finish.

Moses used the Hebrew term *toledoth*, which is translated “generations,” to divide the Book of Genesis into logical segments. Look at how the following verses introduce each new section of his work:

*This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made earth and heaven.*

(Genesis 2:4)

*These are {the records of} the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God.*

(Genesis 6:9)

*Now these are {the records of} the generations of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah; and sons were born to them after the flood.*

(Genesis 10:1)

*These are {the records of} the generations of Shem. Shem was one hundred years old, and became the father of Arpachshad two years after the flood.*

(Genesis 11:10)

*Now these are {the records of} the generations of Terah. Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran; and Haran became the father of Lot.*

(Genesis 11:27)

*Now these are {the records of} the generations of Ishmael, Abraham’s son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah’s maid, bore to Abraham. And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, in the order of their birth: Nebaioth, the first-born of Ishmael, and Kedar and Adbeel and Mibsam.*

(Genesis 25:12–13)

*Now these are {the records of} the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham became the father of Isaac.*  
(Genesis 25:19)

*Now these are {the records of} the generations of Esau (that is, Edom).*  
(Genesis 36:1)

*These are {the records of} the generations of Jacob. Joseph, when seventeen years of age, was pasturing the flock with his brothers while he was {still} a youth, along with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives. And Joseph brought back a bad report about them to their father.*  
(Genesis 37:2)

You can tell the translator of those verses wasn't exactly sure what Moses *meant* by what he said. In Genesis 2:4, he translated *toledoth* as "account." Then he felt compelled to add "the records of" to the text in nearly every other instance. Yet there was no need for him to try to help the English reader understand anything. The translation "generations" works just fine. Actually, it allows the reader to more easily see the divisions of the Book of Genesis and the Hebrew text that lies behind the English translation. That information is essential to anyone who wants to understand the Truth of what Moses wrote about "The Man," Jesus Christ. But we will get to that a bit later. Right now, it is important to note that, on two other occasions, Moses uses the term *toledoth* to emphasize the information he has already provided:

*These are the families of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, by their nations; and out of these the nations were separated on the earth after the flood.*  
(Genesis 10:32)

*These then are {the records of} the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in the hill country of Seir.*  
(Genesis 36:9)

In light of the way that Moses uses the term *toledoth* throughout the Book of Genesis, this next use of *toledoth* sticks out like a sore thumb:

*This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created. When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of {a son} in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth. Then the days of Adam after he became the father of Seth were eight hundred years, and he had {other} sons and daughters. So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died.*  
(Genesis 5:1-5)

It would be naïve to assume that Moses is using the term *toledoth* to introduce his account of the "generations" of Adam and Eve. He already used it that way in Genesis 2:4. Moreover, he does not use the stylized formula "these are the generations of," he says "this is the book of the generations of." So he must have something else in mind. And, indeed, he does.

I have mentioned elsewhere that, in that passage, Moses is mocking those who weren't paying attention when he *talked about "The Man"* earlier. The Apostle Paul clearly understood what he said, but folks have gotten confused since the Church lost *The Apostolic Teaching*. They no longer understand that Paul is speaking in terms of what Moses wrote when he says this:

*So also it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam {became} a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. And just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.*  
(1 Corinthians 15:45-49)

Obviously, if folks do not understand where Paul came up with his insight concerning "the first Adam" and "the last Adam," or what he is *talking about* when he mentions "the image of the earthy" and "the image of the heavenly," they are trailing a bit behind the curve. Since I have spent the last several years explaining those things to the participants in The Next Step program, I can hardly be expected to explain them here in a few short paragraphs. I will, however, refer you to what I wrote in "Questions & Answers," *The Voice of*

*Elijah*®, July 1997. To put it in a nutshell, what I said there is that the following passage of Scripture cannot—in any way, shape, or form—be referring to Adam and Eve:

*Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*

(Genesis 1:26–27)

Anyone with even a bare minimum of common sense should be able to read what I have already written about that passage and see why Moses cannot be describing the creation of Adam and Eve in those two verses. Since I've already explained why that cannot be, I won't bother explaining it again here. Anyone who is interested in the Truth can take a look at the facts I have already pointed out.

The Truth is, in those two verses Moses is not *talking about* the creation of "the first Adam" that the Apostle Paul mentions, he is describing the creation of "the last Adam," Jesus Christ, "The only Man" (Hebrew: *'Adam*) Who has ever been created in the image and likeness of God. And since it becomes important a bit later, I should tell you that Paul calls Adam the "first Adam" because he was created on the third "day" of Creation. Jesus Christ, the "last Adam" was created on the sixth "day." But I have already explained that in "Questions & Answers," *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 1997, so I'll continue.

If your readers are curious as to how anyone in his right mind could come to such an outrageous conclusion concerning what Moses wrote, they can check out the things I have already explained in The Next Step program. Maybe then they will be able to see through the incredible delusion that Satan has imposed on us all. But they should be prepared to slog through the nearly seven years of monthly tapes I have already prepared. If they have not, will not, or are not prepared to look at that information, then—not having even heard my argument—they have no basis at all on which to dispute my conclusion.

It does not matter one way or the other whether anyone accepts my explanation of Genesis 1:26–27. At

the very least, it should be obvious from the facts I presented in "Questions & Answers," *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 1997, that Moses cannot be describing the creation of the man (Hebrew: *'Adam*) from which He created Eve (Gen. 2:21–22). And since "The Man" (Hebrew: *'Adam*) Moses mentions in Genesis 1:26–27 clearly cannot be the same as the man (Hebrew: *'Adam*) we call "Adam," only a fool would insist that the following passage must be *talking about* that *'Adam* rather than the *'Adam* mentioned in Genesis 1:26–27. After all, the last *'Adam* is the only *'Adam* that Moses describes as having been created in the image and likeness of God:

*This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created.*

(Genesis 5:1–2)

If you can't see the Truth I have explained, I pity you. Moses is mocking you and all those other fools who want to go on stupidly believing Satan's lie even after hearing the Truth. As the Master Prophet that he was, Moses did his best to conceal the Truth. He calls the man created on the third "day" "man" (Hebrew: *'Adam*) just two verses before Genesis 5:1 (Gen. 4:25). That leads the uninformed reader to assume that he is *talking about* the first *'Adam*, the one created on the third "day." The Truth is, he intentionally confuses those who can't accept the Truth by *talking about* the first *'Adam* only in verses 3–5 of Chapter 5. In verses 1–2, He is *talking about* the Last *'Adam*, the One created on the sixth "day," the One Whom he also calls *'Adam* in Genesis 1:26. After all, "the book" he mentions in Genesis 5:1 is the scroll on which he wrote the entirety of the Pentateuch. That "book" is indeed "the book of the generations of the {last} Adam." However, Moses only wrote the first few chapters of that "book." The Prophets and Apostles wrote the rest.

*Editor: We also had an inquiry from a subscriber who wanted to know if any progress has been made in producing more books in The Resurrection Theology Series. Since it has been over two years (October '98) since I last asked you about your progress on this series, I think it's fair to ask you again how things are going. Can you update our readers on your progress? Has anything*

*changed that might lead you to believe these books won't be written?*

**Elijah:** I can't tell you much more than what I stated the last time you asked. I still intend to write those books. However, I have come to realize that some things are well beyond my control. The only thing I can do is to focus on the immediate task at hand and let God take care of the rest. The death of Susan Clay this past March, for example, severely tested my faith. However, I realized after she was gone that I doubted my beliefs only because I had come to depend on her skills and abilities far more heavily than I should have. I had assumed she would be a part of my calling until the End because she was so strongly committed to it. That was quite obviously an error on my part. Having learned from that experience, I am not as willing to make assumptions as I used to be.

I have been trying to complete the final edit on *The Mystery of Scripture, Volume 1* for nearly six months. I hope to get that done this year. I also intend to try to catch up on the backlog of Next Step tapes. I am not sure that I can accomplish any more than that. I would like to videotape *The Isaiah Seminar*, but we'll have to see how things go. If my health continues to improve, who knows what we might get done?

**Editor:** *Finally, another subscriber wanted to know why the logo for The Voice of Elijah® is a mushroom cloud. Would you explain what that image represents?*

**Elijah:** That's the first time anyone has asked about that graphic, which is somewhat interesting since the intention in creating it was to arouse curiosity. Obviously, it has not been very successful. But I'm glad that someone finally asked. Better now than never. *The Voice of Elijah®* logo is, as your subscriber accurately concluded, a mushroom cloud. And as everyone knows, that very distinctive cloud results from a nuclear explosion. So why do you suppose anyone would use it as a religious/parabolic symbol of some sort? The short answer is, "Because God did." But maybe I'm just imagining that. See what you think:

*Now it came about when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines, even though it was near; for God said, "Lest the people change their minds when they see war, and*

*they return to Egypt." Hence God led the people around by the way of the wilderness to the Red Sea; and the sons of Israel went up in martial array from the land of Egypt. And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, "God shall surely take care of you; and you shall carry my bones from here with you." Then they set out from Succoth and camped in Etham on the edge of the wilderness. And the LORD was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.*

*(Exodus 13:17-22)*

If one has any insight at all into the *parabolic imagery* of *The Apostolic Teaching*, it is obvious that the "pillar of cloud," which is also a "pillar of fire," is part of some sort of *parabolic pantomime*. But it is not at all obvious what that *parabolic pantomime* might be. It is fairly clear, however, that God appeared to the sons of Israel as a cloud which sat atop a "pillar of cloud"—the two together forming the basic outline of a mushroom cloud. That can be seen from the fact that Moses quite often mentions the cloud alone:

*Now on the day that the tabernacle was erected the cloud covered the tabernacle, the tent of the testimony, and in the evening it was like the appearance of fire over the tabernacle, until morning. So it was continuously; the cloud would cover it {by day,} and the appearance of fire by night. And whenever the cloud was lifted from over the tent, afterward the sons of Israel would then set out; and in the place where the cloud settled down, there the sons of Israel would camp. At the command of the LORD the sons of Israel would set out, and at the command of the LORD they would camp; as long as the cloud settled over the tabernacle, they remained camped. Even when the cloud lingered over the tabernacle for many days, the sons of Israel would keep the LORD's charge and not set out. If sometimes the cloud remained a few days over the tabernacle, according to the command of the LORD they remained camped. Then according to the command of the LORD they set out. If sometimes the cloud remained from evening until morning, when the cloud was lifted in the morning, they would move out; or {if it remained} in the daytime and at*

night, whenever the cloud was lifted, they would set out. Whether it was two days or a month or a year that the cloud lingered over the tabernacle, staying above it, the sons of Israel remained camped and did not set out; but when it was lifted, they did set out. At the command of the LORD they camped, and at the command of the LORD they set out; they kept the LORD'S charge, according to the command of the LORD through Moses.  
(Numbers 9:15–23)

On one occasion, Moses makes a clear distinction between the pillar and the cloud which sits on top of it:

But Moses said to the LORD, "Then the Egyptians will hear of it, for by Thy strength Thou didst bring up this people from their midst, and they will tell {it} to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that Thou, O LORD, art in the midst of this people, for Thou, O LORD, art seen eye to eye, while **Thy cloud stands over them; and Thou dost go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night.**"  
(Numbers 14:13–14)

The essential piece of information that one needs to know, but one which Moses expects the informed reader to glean from scattered references, is the fact that the fire burning within both the pillar and cloud above it was the Glory of God. He provides the facts that one needs to know in these passages:

And it came about as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the sons of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, **the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud.**  
(Exodus 16:10)

Then Moses went up to the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. And the glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; and on the seventh day He called to Moses from the midst of the cloud. **And to the eyes of the sons of Israel the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the mountain top.** And Moses entered the midst of the cloud as he went up to the mountain; and Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.  
(Exodus 24:15–18)

**Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.** And throughout all their journeys whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the sons of Israel would set out; but if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out until the day when it was taken up. For throughout all their journeys, the cloud of the LORD was on the tabernacle by day, and there was fire in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel.  
(Exodus 40:34–38)

Now that you know what visible form the Glory of the Lord assumed when God appeared to the sons of Israel, you are sufficiently informed to understand what Jesus was talking about when He said these things:

"Behold, I have told you in advance. If therefore they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go forth, {or,} 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe {them.} **For just as the lightning comes from the east, and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be.**"  
(Matthew 24:25–27)

"And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. **And then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory.** But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."  
(Luke 21:25–28)

Everything is in place for Jesus Christ to return, riding on clouds of glory in the image and likeness of the Father. We are just waiting for that perverted little man to rebuild the Temple and become the "abomination of desolation" the Prophet Daniel mentions (Dan. 11:31, 12:11; Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14). When the nations see through his deception and abject betrayal of the human race, they will themselves summon forth the clouds from which the One Who is the Glory of God will lash out to burn "The Harlot" with fire (Rev. 18:8). Such are the parabolic images of The Apostolic Teaching. ■