



THE VOICE of ELIJAH

Restoring the hearts of the fathers to the children

Whence Cometh "Once-Sabed-Always-Sabed"?

But, beloved brethren, not only must we beware of what is open and manifest, but also of what deceives by the craft of subtle fraud. And what can be more crafty, or what more subtle, than for this enemy, detected and cast down by the advent of Christ, after light has come to the nations, and saving rays have shone for the preservation of men, that the deaf might receive the hearing of spiritual grace, the blind might open their eyes to God, the weak might grow strong again with eternal health, the lame might run to the church, the dumb might pray with clear voices and prayers—seeing his idols forsaken, and his fanes and his temples deserted by the numerous concourse of believers—to devise a new fraud, and under the very title of the Christian name to deceive the incautious?

He has invented heresies and schisms, whereby he might subvert the faith, might corrupt the truth, might divide the unity. Those whom he cannot keep in the darkness of the old way, he circumvents and deceives by the error of a new way.

He snatches men from the Church itself; and while they seem to themselves to have already approached to the light, and to have escaped the night of the world, he pours over them again, in their unconsciousness, new darkness; so that, although they do not stand firm with the Gospel of Christ, and with the observation and law of Christ, they still call themselves Christians, and, walking in darkness, they think that they have the light, while the adversary is flattering and deceiving, who, according to the apostle's word, transforms himself into an angel of light, and equips his ministers as if they were the ministers of righteousness, who maintain night instead of day, death for salvation, despair under the offer of hope, perfidy under the pretext of faith, antichrist under the name of Christ; so that, while they feign things like the truth, they make void the truth by their subtlety.

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This happens, beloved brethren, so long as we do not return to the source of truth, as we do not seek the head nor keep the teaching of the heavenly Master.

If any one consider and examine these things, there is no need for lengthened discussion and arguments. There is easy proof for faith in a short summary of the truth. The Lord speaks to Peter, saying, "I say unto thee, that thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

And again to the same He says, after His resurrection, "Feed my sheep." And although to all the apostles, after His resurrection, He gives an equal power, and says, "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you: Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they shall be remitted unto him; and whose soever sins ye retain, they shall be retained;" yet, that He might set forth unity. He arranged by His authority the origin of that unity, as beginning from one.

Assuredly the rest of the apostles were also the same as was Peter, endowed with a like partnership both of honour and power; but the beginning proceeds from unity. Which one Church, also, the Holy Spirit in the Song of Songs designated in the person of our Lord, and says, "My dove, my spotless one, is but one. She is the only one of her mother, elect of her that bare her."

Cyprian, "The Treatises of Cyprian," Treatise i, Chaps. iii-iv, in Roberts and Donaldson (Eds.), *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (1886), Vol. 5, p. 422.

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Allen Friess, Executive Editor
Marcia Woody, Managing Editor

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A Note From the Editor

In the last issue of *The Voice of Elijah*® I pointed out that it is not technically correct to say that Believers have been “born again.” That’s because the parabolic imagery of The Teaching tells us that those who believe the Gospel have actually been “engendered again,” or, more precisely, “engendered from above.” I explained that the reason we continue to refer to those who have been “engendered again” as having been “born again” is because it is less confusing to those we are trying to reach if we speak in terms with which they are already familiar. And those we are trying to reach are Believers who think they have been “born again” when in fact they have only been “engendered from above” through the “seed” of the Word of God (the Gospel) they received from an Evangelist.

To understand how Bible translators helped create this confusion, I explained that they normally translate the Greek word *gemmao* as “born” because they assume it means “to give birth.” Unfortunately, this assumption is not completely accurate. The term *gemmao* can mean either “to bring forth” or “to beget.” Although it does imply birth when it relates to a woman “bringing forth” a child, it specifically denotes conception when it relates to a man “begetting” a child. That’s because in the ancient way of thinking a man became a father at the moment of conception, not at the time of delivery. That is, he became a father when his “seed” (his sperm) came to life in the fertile “seedbed” of a woman’s womb. (This agricultural mind-set provides insight into why the Hebrew idiom “raise up a seed” means “to engender a son.”)

In the parabolic imagery of The Teaching, God becomes the “Father” of a “child”—that is, He “engenders” a “child”—every time His “seed” (His Word) comes to life in the “heart” (mind) of the one who believes the Word of God (the Gospel) he receives. As the Apostle Peter puts it:

*For you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, {that is,} through the living and abiding word of God.
(1 Peter 1:23)*

The parabolic image of God’s Word as a “seed” is at the heart of two of Jesus’ better-known parables—the Parable of the Sower and the Parable of the Tares (Matt. 13). From what I have just explained, it should be apparent that these two “seed” parables pertain, in some way, to the “engendering” of parabolic “children.” What should also be apparent is that faith (belief) in a specific body of knowledge is central to the “engendering” process. What is less apparent and seldom contemplated, however, is that there are two specific types of knowledge one can believe. There is true knowledge—the Truth of God’s Word—and false knowledge—Satan’s lies. That means the “seed” one chooses to believe will determine Who/who one’s parabolic “Father/father” is.

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If you were unaware that Satan has been “engendering” offspring for himself through the “seed” of his lying word for millennia, you apparently haven’t noticed what Jesus said when He had this discourse with the Pharisees:

*“I know that you are Abraham’s offspring; yet you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. I speak the things which I have seen with {My} Father; therefore you also do the things which you heard from {your} father.” They answered and said to Him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus said to them, “If you are Abraham’s children, do the deeds of Abraham. But as it is, you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God; this Abraham did not do. You are doing the deeds of **your father**.” They said to Him, “We were not born of fornication; we have one Father, {even} God.” Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me; for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand what I am saying? {It is} because you cannot hear My word. **You are of {your} father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father.** He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own {nature;} **for he is a liar, and the father of lies.** But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me. Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me? He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear {them,} because you are not of God.”*

(John 8:37–47)

By my count, Jesus used the words *hear* and *speak* five times each (and implied their use several more times) in His discourse with the Pharisees. Do you know why? Because that’s how the parabolic “engendering” process works. Someone speaks (either the Truth or a lie) and another hears what was spoken (either the Truth or a lie) and chooses to accept (believe) or reject (disbelieve) what he heard. Jesus said the Pharisees were “of {your} father the

devil” because they chose to reject the Word of Truth He spoke so they could continue to hold fast to the lies that had been handed down to them. That should serve as a sober warning to all who want to stubbornly cling to the lies that are being handed down (via the spoken word) in the Church today.

Those who want to continue believing Satan’s lies are certainly free to do so. But the result of that decision is, they are going to spend eternity with the Pharisees and their “father” the devil. A word to the wise is sufficient. But let’s get back to the parabolic imagery of The Teaching.

In the last issue of *The Voice of Elijah*®, I closed with this question: If God is “engendering” offspring for Himself through the “seed” of His Word, who is the parabolic “woman” carrying His “children” in her “womb” and waiting to give “birth” to those “children” in the Resurrection? If you weren’t able to answer that question, don’t fret. The Apostle Paul sheds some light on the subject. But before we look at what he said, it is imperative that you remember one thing: Parabolic imagery does not depict spiritual reality as it actually is; it merely illustrates what spiritual reality is like. That is, it provides a mental image that allows Believers to “see” with the mind’s eye—that is, with the “eyes of our heart”—what spiritual reality is like, comparatively speaking. With that in mind, may those with “eyes” to “see” gain insight into the mystery of the “birth” of God’s “children” that is yet to take place:

*For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. **For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.** And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for {our} adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.*

(Romans 8:19–23)

Allen Fries

Glory Be!

What's That I See?

This is the third in a series of articles in which I will eventually explain the meaning of all of Jesus' parables. My purpose is to show that the parables of Jesus do not stand alone as isolated units. Each one of them is related in some way to an ongoing discourse in which Jesus was privately explaining The Teaching to His disciples.

The series actually began with a question in the "Questions & Answers" section of the January 1998 issue of **The Voice of Elijah**®. I was asked to explain what Jesus was talking about in the Parable of the Talents (Matt. 25:14–30), which I did. Then, in the "Questions & Answers" section of the April 1998 issue, I was asked to explain the meaning of the Parable of the Sower. I did that in the article "If You Plan to Reap What You Sow, You Had Better Watch What You Plant," which was the first article in this series of articles.

The second article in the series appeared in the October 1998 issue of **The Voice of Elijah**® with the title "I Tell You What: Odds Are, You'll Never Beat God at His Shell Game." In that article, I explained the parables in which Jesus uses parabolic imagery which depicts Him as the Son of God.

In this, the third article in the series, I will explain the parables of Jesus in which He uses the parabolic image of God's "harvest." The image itself can appear complex, depending on how it is used. Yet the Truth concerning the image is both simple and easy to understand. It not only stands behind some of the most well-known parables of Jesus, it also provides the basis for various other statements found in the New Testament. Therefore, I will explain those things as well. Since I have already made some introductory comments concerning the parabolic image in the "Questions & Answers" section of this issue, I will begin by summarizing what I said there.

The Sabbath and the three annual feasts of Israel are some of the most important *symbolic rituals* that Moses established at Mt. Sinai. Together with Israel's observance of the Passover, they explain the purpose of the second covenant God made with Israel at Mt. Sinai:

*Then God said, "Behold, I am going to make a covenant. Before all your people I will perform miracles which have not been produced in all the earth, nor among any of the nations; and all the people among whom you live will see the working of the LORD, for it is a fearful thing that I am going to perform with you. Be sure to observe what I am commanding you this day: behold, I am going to drive out the Amorite before you, and the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite. Watch yourself that you make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land into which you are going, lest it become a snare in your midst. But {rather,} you are to tear down their altars and smash their {sacred} pillars and cut down their Asherim—for you shall not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God—lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land and they play the harlot with their gods, and sacrifice to their gods, and someone invite you to eat of his sacrifice; and you take some of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters play the harlot with their gods, and cause your sons {also} to play the harlot with their gods. You shall make for yourself no molten gods. **You shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread.** For seven days you are to eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in the month of Abib you came out of Egypt. The first offspring from every womb belongs to Me, and all your male livestock, the first offspring from cattle and sheep. And you shall redeem with a lamb the first offspring from*

a donkey; and if you do not redeem {it,} then you shall break its neck. You shall redeem all the first-born of your sons. And none shall appear before Me empty-handed. **You shall work six days, but on the seventh day you shall rest; {even} during plowing time and harvest you shall rest. And you shall celebrate the Feast of Weeks, {that is,} the first fruits of the wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the turn of the year.** Three times a year all your males are to appear before the Lord GOD, the God of Israel. For I will drive out nations before you and enlarge your borders, and no man shall covet your land when you go up three times a year to appear before the LORD your God. **You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread, nor is the sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover to be left over until morning.** You shall bring the very first of the first fruits of your soil into the house of the LORD your God. You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk." Then the LORD said to Moses, **"Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel."**

(Exodus 34:10–27)

That passage should raise an obvious question in the mind of anyone who knows the cultic rituals of Israel were *parabolic pantomime*: What possible *meaning* and *significance* could there be in a series of *symbolic harvest rituals* in which three times each year every male in Israel was to appear before the Lord at His Sanctuary? I have already addressed that question in the "Questions & Answers" section of this issue. The answer resides in the fact that a census of Israel was taken on these three occasions.

Anyone who failed to appear before the Lord at any of the appointed times with the amount of money required for atonement would be "cut off from" Israel. (See *Not All Israel Is Israel*.) Consequently, the Prophets use the *parabolic image* of harvest to refer to those times when God will "cut off from" Israel all those who have no part in Israel's *inheritance of the promise* and "gather in" the remaining members of Israel. For example, the Prophet Isaiah says this about the *parabolic "harvest"* that will occur at the End of the Age:

*Alas, oh land of whirring wings
Which lies beyond the rivers of Cush,
Which sends envoys by the sea,
Even in papyrus vessels on the surface of the waters.*

*Go, swift messengers, to a nation tall and smooth,
To a people feared far and wide,
A powerful and oppressive nation
Whose land the rivers divide.
All you inhabitants of the world and dwellers on earth,
As soon as a standard is raised on the mountains,
you will see {it,}
And as soon as the trumpet is blown, you will hear {it.}
For thus the LORD has told me,
"I will look from My dwelling place quietly
Like dazzling heat in the sunshine,
Like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest."
For before the harvest, as soon as the bud blossoms
And the flower becomes a ripening grape,
Then He will cut off the sprigs with pruning knives
And remove {and} cut away the spreading branches.
They will be left together for mountain birds of prey,
And for the beasts of the earth;
And the birds of prey
will spend the summer {feeding} on them,
And all the beasts of the earth
will spend harvest time on them.*
(Isaiah 18:1–6)

Isaiah is *parabolically* describing what will happen to the *parabolic "vine"* of Israel immediately before the harvest season ends, right before the *parabolic "grapes"* on that "vine" are harvested in the fall. God will "prune" the "vine" of Israel and discard the "branches" He has "cut off from" Israel just as Jesus said He would:

"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every {branch} that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither {can} you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch, and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and {so} prove to be My disciples."
(John 15:1–8)

The Apostle John also *parabolically* depicts the grape harvest which will occur at the End of the Age. But he presents a slightly different perspective:

And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud {was} one like a son of man, having a golden crown on His head, and a sharp sickle in His hand. And another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle and reap, because the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe." And He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. And another angel, the one who has power over fire, came out from the altar; and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Put in your sharp sickle, and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe." And the angel swung his sickle to the earth, and gathered {the clusters from} the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God. And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles.

(Revelation 14:14–20)

John is describing the fate of those who end up in the *parabolic* "harvest" of "the vine of the earth" rather than in the "harvest" of "the vine of Israel." In case you were not aware, there is a BIG difference between the fates of those two.

For those True Believers in Israel who faithfully observed the cultic rituals that Moses established, the three feasts of harvest time were *meant* to be occasions of rejoicing. If a man presented himself before the Lord and brought the money required for atonement, he could be sure his "house" was still numbered among those in Israel. Therefore, because he and his "house" remained in Israel, he knew that he and his family were still eligible to participate in *the inheritance of what was promised* when God finally *fulfilled the promise*.

A feast was celebrated at the beginning and end of the grain harvest in the spring and at the end of the grape harvest season in the fall because each harvest feast *parabolically* depicts a different point in God's *fulfillment of the promise*. Unfortunately, Jeremiah—speaking *parabolically*—indicates the time will eventually come when—because the Truth of *The Teaching* has

been totally corrupted and made into a lie—those who were once a part of Israel (the Body of Christ/the Church) will suddenly realize God's "harvest" is over and they have not been "gathered in." That is, they will suddenly be made aware that they have been "cut off from" Israel because they did not bring the *parabolic* "money" (*The Teaching*) that God requires of all who are counted in the final census of Israel:

*"How can you say, 'We are wise,
And the law of the LORD is with us'?
But behold, the lying pen of the scribes
Has made {it} into a lie.
The wise men are put to shame,
They are dismayed and caught;
Behold, they have rejected the word of the LORD,
And what kind of wisdom do they have?
Therefore I will give their wives to others,
Their fields to new owners;
Because from the least even to the greatest
Everyone is greedy for gain;
From the prophet even to the priest
Everyone practices deceit.
And they heal the brokenness
of the daughter of My people superficially,
Saying, 'Peace, peace,'
But there is no peace.
Were they ashamed because of the abomination
they had done?
They certainly were not ashamed,
And they did not know how to blush;
Therefore they shall fall among those who fall;
At the time of their punishment
they shall be brought down,"
Declares the LORD.
"I will surely snatch them away," declares the LORD;
"There will be no grapes on the vine,
And no figs on the fig tree,
And the leaf shall wither;
And what I have given them shall pass away."
Why are we sitting still?
Assemble yourselves, and let us go into the fortified cities,
And let us perish there,
Because the LORD our God has doomed us
And given us poisoned water to drink,
For we have sinned against the LORD.
{We} waited for peace, but no good {came};
For a time of healing, but behold, terror!
From Dan is heard the snorting of his horses;*

At the sound of the neighing of his stallions
 The whole land quakes;
 For they come and devour the land and its fulness,
 The city and its inhabitants.
 "For behold, I am sending serpents against you,
 Adders, for which there is no charm,
 And they will bite you," declares the LORD.
 My sorrow is beyond healing,
 My heart is faint {within me!}
 Behold, listen! The cry of the daughter of my people
 from a distant land:
 "Is the LORD not in Zion?
 Is her King not within her?
 Why have they provoked Me
 with their graven images, with foreign idols?
**Harvest is past, summer is ended,
 And we are not saved.**"
 (Jeremiah 8:8–20)

We can be certain that Jeremiah is *parabolically* describing the fate of those who believe the delusion that the Antichrist is Jesus Christ because the Early Church Fathers Irenæus and Hippolytus both indicate that is what he is *talking about* in this passage. (Irenæus, "Against Heresies," Book V, Chap. xxx, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1; Hippolytus, "Treatise on Christ and Antichrist," *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 5.) Their understanding of the passage is corroborated by the Apostle Paul, who alludes to what Jeremiah says when he says this about those who believe Satan's nonsense:

Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. But since we are of {the} day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we

are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him.
 (1 Thessalonians 5:1–10)

Quite obviously, Paul understood that some who are absolutely convinced they are a part of the Body of Jesus Christ/Church are going to be horribly surprised when they realize too late that they have believed one of Satan's most convincing lies. But Paul just as plainly insists those who know the Truth will not suffer that fate. Daniel tells us the same thing:

As for me, I heard but could not understand; so I said, "My lord, what {will be} the outcome of these {events?}" And he said, "Go {your way,} Daniel, for {these} words are concealed and sealed up until the end time. Many will be purged, purified and refined; but the wicked will act wickedly, and none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand."
 (Daniel 12:8–10)

If you were not aware that some who once had the Truth of the Gospel in their possession will fall far short of what God requires at the End of the Age, perhaps you should take another look at the warning Jesus issued in regard to the "harvest" which will occur at the Second Coming:

And while they were listening to these things, He went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately. He said therefore, "A certain nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and {then} return. And he called ten of his slaves, and gave them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business {with this} until I come {back}.' But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.' And it came about that when he returned, after receiving the kingdom, he ordered that these slaves, to whom he had given the money, be called to him in order that he might know what business they had done. And the first appeared, saying, 'Master, your mina has made ten minas more.' And he said to him, 'Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, be in authority over ten cities.' And the second came, saying, 'Your mina, master, has made five minas.' And he said to him also, 'And you are to be over five cities.' And another came, saying, 'Master, behold your mina, which I kept put away in a handkerchief; for I was afraid

of you, because you are an exacting man; you take up what you did not lay down, and reap what you did not sow.' He said to him, 'By your own words I will judge you, you worthless slave. Did you know that I am an exacting man, taking up what I did not lay down, and reaping what I did not sow? Then why did you not put the money in the bank, and having come, I would have collected it with interest?' And he said to the bystanders, 'Take the mina away from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.' And they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas {already.}' I tell you, that to everyone who has shall {more} be given, but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them in my presence."
(Luke 19:11–27)

Specifically, Jesus is describing His *delivery* of *The Teaching*, which is *parabolically* depicted as money, to His disciples. (See "Questions & Answers," *The Voice of Elijah*®, January 1998.) But generally, He is describing the obligation that all Believers have to see that their knowledge of *The Teaching* is duplicated in others. He does not necessarily *mean* they have to do that by teaching or preaching themselves. If they have not been called to teach or preach, they can just as easily do it by giving of their time or money to assist someone who has been called to those ministries. As Jesus said, it doesn't matter all that much what someone does. The important thing is getting the "harvest" in while there is still time:

In the meanwhile the disciples were requesting Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." But He said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." The disciples therefore were saying to one another, "No one brought Him {anything} to eat, did he?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work. Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, and {then} comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest. Already he who reaps is receiving wages, and is gathering fruit for life eternal; that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this {case} the saying is true, 'One sows, and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have

entered into their labor."
(John 4:31–38)

The "Seed" of God

Now that you know the *parabolic imagery* related to God's "harvest" depicts the separation of Believers from unbelievers at the End of the Age, there are a few other things you need to know before you can fully understand the *parabolic statements* concerning God's "harvest" that are made by the Prophets and Apostles, not to mention those made by Jesus Himself. As I have already explained, the only "Seed" which God has ever "planted" or intended to "reap" is the "Seed" of the Word of God. (See "If You Plan to Reap What You Sow, You Had Better Watch What You Plant," *The Voice of Elijah*®, April 1998.) I have also told you the *parabolic image* of God "planting" that "Seed" in Believers provides the basis for the Parable of the Sower:

And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, "Behold, the sower went out to sow; and as he sowed, some {seeds} fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up. And others fell upon the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth of soil. But when the sun had risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out. And others fell on the good soil, and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty. He who has ears, let him hear."
(Matthew 13:3–9)

"Hear then the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, the evil {one} comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road. And the one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word, and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no {firm} root in himself, but is {only} temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away. And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man

who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit, and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty."

(Matthew 13:18–23)

The "Plant" Which "Sprouts"

It is fairly easy to see that, in the Parable of the Sower at least, Jesus is using *parabolic imagery* in which the Word of God is a "Seed" that has been "planted" in those who believe it. But consider the implications of that *parabolic imagery*: The "Seed" of the Word of God which is "planted" in the Believer is not the same as the "plant" which grows from that "Seed." That "plant" will produce the same "Seed" from which it "sprouted" only after it becomes fully mature and is "harvested." Until then, it is just a "plant" in which the "Seed" of the Word of God is developing. And that "plant" is vulnerable to being "uprooted" before it can produce the "Seed" that God desires. That is what Jesus is *talking about* in the Parable of the Tares:

He presented another parable to them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares also among the wheat, and went away. But when the wheat sprang up and bore grain, then the tares became evident also. And the slaves of the landowner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' And he said to them, 'An enemy has done this!' And the slaves said to him, 'Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?' But he said, 'No; lest while you are gathering up the tares, you may root up the wheat with them. 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 13:24–30)

As I have already explained on various other occasions, in that parable, Jesus is describing what would eventually happen to the Truth of *The Apostolic Teaching* after Satan began to "sow" his lies as "tares" in the Church. Jesus said the "plants" produced by those tare "seeds" would be allowed to remain alongside the "plants" produced by the "Seed" of the Word of God. As He indicated, the "tares" who believe Satan's lies will

not be separated from the "plants" who believe the Truth of *The Teaching* until the "harvest" at the End of the Age:

Then He left the multitudes, and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field." And He answered and said, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, and the field is the world; and {as for} the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil {one;} and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels. Therefore just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear."

(Matthew 13:36–43)

The Necessity of Producing "Fruit"

The *parabolic image* of the Word of God as a "Seed" that is "planted" in the Believer is not restricted just to that in which it is a grain of wheat. The "Seed" can also be *parabolically* depicted as that of a tree:

Therefore He was saying, "What is the kingdom of God like, and to what shall I compare it? It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and threw into his own garden; and it grew and became a tree; and THE BIRDS OF THE AIR NESTED IN ITS BRANCHES."

(Luke 13:18–19)

If the *parabolic* "plant" which "sprouts" from the "Seed" of the Word of God is a fruit tree, the "fruit" produced by that tree is not the same as the "Seed" which was planted either. But the production of "fruit" is a necessary part of the propagation process because the "seed" is in the "fruit." So if a *parabolic* "tree" does not produce *parabolic* "fruit," it certainly cannot produce the *parabolic* "Seed" that God requires. But as Paul explains, the "plants" of Satan "bear" a completely different "fruit" than those which "sprout" from the "seed" of the Word of God:

Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control;** against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. (Galatians 5:19–25)

Jesus even indicates it is possible to determine whether someone actually believes the Truth of the Word of God just by examining the “fruit” he produces:

“Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn {bushes,} nor figs from thistles, are they? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit; but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits. Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.’” (Matthew 7:15–23)

The Fate of Unproductive “Trees”

Jesus’ warning that unproductive “trees” would be “cut down” (literally: “cut off”) echoes the warning John the Baptist issued to the Jews:

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 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)

The point John makes has to do with the fact that his baptism was just a *parabolic pantomime* in which God is depicted “cutting off” the Jews in Israel who could not produce the “fruit” that God required. But he warned everyone that the “baptism” of Jesus Christ will hold much more serious consequences because it is not just *parabolic pantomime*. It is, in fact, the reality to which the *parabolic pantomime* of water baptism points. In explaining those things, John uses *parabolic imagery* which depicts Judgment Day as the time of God’s “harvest” at the End of the Age:

Now while the people were in a state of expectation and all were wondering in their hearts about John, as to whether he might be the Christ, John answered and said to them all, “As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. And His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” (Luke 3:15–17)

On at least one occasion, Jesus conducted a simple *parabolic pantomime* to show how strongly He felt about unproductive “trees”:

And seeing a lone fig tree by the road, He came to it, and found nothing on it except leaves only; and He said to it,

*"No longer shall there ever be {any} fruit from you." And at once the fig tree withered.
(Matthew 21:19)*

On another occasion, Jesus told a parable in which He depicted Himself as an unproductive fig tree which would be "cut off" after His three-year ministry:

*And He {began} telling this parable: "A certain man had a fig tree which had been planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it, and did not find any. And he said to the vineyard-keeper, 'Behold, for three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree without finding any. Cut it down! Why does it even use up the ground?' And he answered and said to him, 'Let it alone, sir, for this year too, until I dig around it and put in fertilizer; and if it bears fruit next year, {fine;} but if not, cut it down.'"
(Luke 13:6-9)*

In that parable, Jesus is using the *parabolic image* in which Corporate Israel is God's "vineyard" and He is a lone fig tree in that "vineyard." He is explaining the irony in His Own death as the Messiah of Israel: God is only interested in "trees" that produce a "harvest," and He could not produce what God was seeking until He (as Corporate Israel) was "cut off" as a sacrifice for the sins of those in Israel. Daniel alludes to the same *parabolic imagery* in the following passage, but he speaks a bit more plainly:

*"So you are to know and discern {that} from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince {there will be} seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end {will come} with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined."
(Daniel 9:25-26)*

The Resurrection of the Body

I have only hit the high points in regard to the *parabolic image* in which God is going to "harvest" the "Seed" of *The Apostolic Teaching* which has been "planted" in those who believe. That "harvest" will occur

when the Righteous are resurrected at the End of the Age. But to be intellectually honest, you must admit there has to be more to the *parabolic image* in which the "Seed" that God plans to "harvest" is *The Teaching*. That is patently obvious from what the Apostle Paul says about the Resurrection:

*But someone will say, "How are the dead raised? And with what kind of body do they come?" You fool! That which you sow does not come to life unless it dies; and that which you sow, you do not sow the body which is to be, but a bare grain, perhaps of wheat or of something else. But God gives it a body just as He wished, and to each of the seeds a body of its own. All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one {flesh} of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fish. There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the {glory} of the earthly is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable {body}, it is raised an imperishable {body}; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual {body.} 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.** Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.
(1 Corinthians 15:35-53)*

Paul is obviously speaking in terms of a somewhat different *parabolic image* in which the flesh, that is, the *physical body*, of the Believer is a "seed" which is

“sown” when it dies. That *physical body* takes on a different flesh when it *parabolically* “sprouts” in the Resurrection. Paul explains that before death, the *physical body* was mortal and perishable; after resurrection, it will be immortal and imperishable. Where it was previously a “natural” body, it will become a “spiritual” body. But pay attention! The “it” he refers to is still the same body. “It” has just been changed.

Beware of Paul’s statements concerning the “natural” body and the “spiritual” body. They have misled many into believing the Resurrection does not involve the transformation of the *physical body* of Believers. However, the Greek term translated “natural” *literally means* “of or pertaining to the soul” just as the term translated “spiritual” *literally means* “of or pertaining to the spirit.” Paul is referring to the source from which each *physical body* draws its life. He makes that point clearly when he distinguishes between the “earthly” nature of the mortal body we derive from Adam, and the “heavenly” nature of the resurrected body we derive from Christ. But again I remind you, the “it” to which he refers is obviously the same *physical body*:

It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual {body.} 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.
(1 Corinthians 15:44–47)

Make note of the fact that Paul also says the immortal, resurrected body has a different “glory” than the mortal body from which it “sprouts.” He compares that “glory” to the light of the sun, moon, and stars:

There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the {glory} of the earthly is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead.
(1 Corinthians 15:40–42a)

The “Glory” of the Sun, Moon, and Stars

Don’t underestimate the importance of the *parabolic imagery* Paul has in mind when he mentions the

“glory” associated with the resurrected body. Perhaps you will recall that Daniel said something similar about the resurrection of those who have insight at the End of the Age:

“Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands {guard} over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace {and} everlasting contempt. And those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.”
(Daniel 12:1–3)

Jesus evidently thought that passage held some special *significance*. He is clearly alluding to it when He explains the Parable of the Tares to His disciples:

*Then He left the multitudes, and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.” And He answered and said, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, and the field is the world; and {as for} the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil {one;} and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels. Therefore just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. **Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father.** He who has ears, let him hear.”*
(Matthew 13:36–43)

On another occasion, when Jesus refers to His Own death and Resurrection, He uses the same *parabolic imagery* that Paul uses in 1 Corinthians 15—in exactly the same way. And just like Daniel, He points to the “glory” which is somehow associated with that event. Specifically, He speaks in terms of the resurrection of His *physical body* as being “glorified”:

Now there were certain Greeks among those who were going up to worship at the feast; these therefore came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and {began to} ask him, saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Philip came and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip came, and they told Jesus. **And Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it; and he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall My servant also be; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him. Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Thy name." There came therefore a voice out of heaven: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."** The multitude therefore, who stood by and heard it, were saying that it had thundered; others were saying, "An angel has spoken to Him." Jesus answered and said, "This voice has not come for My sake, but for your sakes. Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world shall be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself." But He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die. The multitude therefore answered Him, "We have heard out of the Law that the Christ is to remain forever; and how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?" **Jesus therefore said to them, "For a little while longer the light is among you. Walk while you have the light, that darkness may not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. While you have the light, believe in the light, in order that you may become sons of light."** These things Jesus spoke, and He departed and hid Himself from them.
(John 12:20–36)

The "Glory" of Man

Paul's explanation in regard to the nature of the resurrected body and John's account of what Jesus said about "walking in the light" doesn't make a whole lot of sense unless one knows that the "Glory" of God is a blindingly brilliant light. Even then, the *meaning* and *significance* of most of what they have said remains ambiguous unless one understands the *parabolic imagery* involved. So let me explain the basics.

You see, today we believe a person is tripartite. That is, we say he is made up of a body, a soul, and a spirit. Unfortunately, the Church borrowed that belief from Greek philosophers after Satan successfully enticed Church leaders into replacing the *parabolic imagery* of *The Teaching* with the philosophical concepts of Greek philosophers. (See *The Way, The Truth, The Life*.) The ancient Egyptians—and the Prophets who wrote the Hebrew Scriptures—had a slightly different view. They knew about the body, soul, and spirit. But they also believed there were five (5) other parts to the person. So you will find each of those parts mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures as well.

The belief at the time the Hebrew Scriptures were written was that each of the eight parts of the deceased had to somehow be kept from destruction so they could be reunited in the resurrection. Would you care to speculate as to what some of those parts are called? If you guessed either the *heart*, the *glory*, the *name*, or the *life*, you were right. But that is where the *parabolic imagery* that the Prophets, Apostles, and Jesus Christ used to depict God's "harvest" of resurrected Believers starts to get interesting. Because the final part that needed protection was the *seed*. Simply put, the ancient Hebrews believed the *heart* of a person resided in his *body*, his *life* in his *soul*, his *glory* in his *spirit*, and his *name* in his *seed*. But we can, and will, *talk about* how those things fit together another time. For now, I'll just show you a few places in the Old Testament where some of the parts of the deceased are mentioned.

If you have studied the Old Testament at all, you are already familiar with a simple poetic technique called "parallelism." In Hebrew parallelism, the Prophets use similar or nearly synonymous terms to say basically the same thing in a slightly different way. They also use terms with opposite *meaning* to compare and contrast one thing with another. That technique makes it fairly easy to identify terms that in some way have either a similar or opposite *meaning*. For example, in Elihu's self-righteous speech to Job, one can see that both the *soul* of the deceased and his *life* go down to *Sheol*, which is also considered to be a *pit* where "those who bring death" dwell:

*"Indeed God speaks once,
Or twice, {yet} no one notices it.
In a dream, a vision of the night,
When sound sleep falls on men,*

While they slumber in their beds,
 Then He opens the ears of men,
 And seals their instruction,
 That He may turn man aside {from his} conduct,
 And keep man from pride;
**He keeps back his soul from the pit,
 And his life from passing over into Sheol.**
 Man is also chastened with pain on his bed,
 And with unceasing complaint in his bones;
**So that his life loathes bread,
 And his soul favorite food.**
 His flesh wastes away from sight,
 And his bones which were not seen stick out.
**Then his soul draws near to the pit,
 And his life to those who bring death.**
 If there is an angel {as} mediator for him,
 One out of a thousand,
 To remind a man what is right for him,
**Then let him be gracious to him, and say,
 'Deliver him from going down to the pit,
 I have found a ransom';**
 Let his flesh become fresher than in youth,
 Let him return to the days of his youthful vigor;
 Then he will pray to God, and He will accept him,
 That he may see His face with joy,
 And He may restore His righteousness to man.
 He will sing to men and say,
 'I have sinned and perverted what is right,
 And it is not proper for me.
**He has redeemed my soul from going to the pit,
 And my life shall see the light.'**
 Behold, God does all these oftentimes with men,
**To bring back his soul from the pit,
 That he may be enlightened with the light of life."**
 (Job 33:14–30)

We can talk about the *parabolic imagery* standing behind Elihu's claim that the *life* of the Redeemed "shall see the light" and "be enlightened with the light of life" a little later. For now, we need to build on what the Prophet has recorded in the Book of Job with what we find written in the Psalms. When we do, it becomes patently obvious that the *soul* and the *life* of a person are in some way similar entities:

Do not take **my soul** away {along} with sinners,
 Nor **my life** with men of bloodshed.
 (Psalm 26:9)

For **my soul** has had enough troubles,
 And **my life** has drawn near to Sheol.
 (Psalm 88:3)

One could—as some do—easily assume that the ancient Hebrews considered the *soul* and the *life* of a person to be exactly the same thing. In this case, such a mistaken assumption would definitely kill you. That is, Satan's lie would send your *soul* and your *life* right on down to the *pit* so that your *glory, spirit, name, seed, heart,* and *body* would lose all hope of resurrection. Then the flesh of your *body* would decay in the dust because, *parabolically* speaking, your *soul* would remain in Hell where your *life* would succumb to *death*. But that's nothing more than *parabolic imagery*. The reality it describes is much more terrifying.

In Psalm 103, the psalmist is addressing his *soul*, and what he says to his *soul* makes it clear that the *life* of a person is completely different than the *soul*. Yet it apparently resides in the *soul* and imparts its essence to the *soul* because the psalmist tells his *soul* it is "your *life*":

{A Psalm} of David.
 Bless the LORD, O **my soul**;
 And all that is within me, {bless} His holy name.
 Bless the LORD, O **my soul**,
 And forget none of His benefits;
 Who pardons all your iniquities;
 Who heals all your diseases;
Who redeems your life from the pit;
 Who crowns you with lovingkindness and compassion.
 (Psalm 103:1–4)

In Psalm 16, the psalmist *parabolically* describes how his *heart* and *glory* rejoice in the knowledge that his *flesh* will be resurrected. He explains that they can be sure they will share in the Resurrection because they know the Lord will show him the "path of life" his *soul* must follow to make its way back out of *Sheol*:

I will bless the LORD who has counseled me;
 Indeed, my mind instructs me in the night.
 I have set the LORD continually before me;
 Because He is at my right hand,
 I will not be shaken.
**Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices;
 My flesh also will dwell securely.
 For Thou wilt not abandon my soul to Sheol;**

*Neither wilt Thou allow Thy Holy One
to undergo decay.*

*Thou wilt make known to me the path of life;
In Thy presence is fulness of joy;
In Thy right hand there are pleasures forever.
(Psalm 16:7–11)*

In Psalm 143, the psalmist uses various parts of his person to describe his total bewilderment:

*A Psalm of David.
Hear my prayer, O LORD,
Give ear to my supplications!
Answer me in Thy faithfulness, in Thy righteousness!
And do not enter into judgment with Thy servant,
For in Thy sight no man living is righteous.
For the enemy has persecuted **my soul**;
He has crushed **my life** to the ground;
He has made me dwell in dark places,
like those who have long been dead.
Therefore **my spirit** is overwhelmed within me;
My heart is appalled within me.
(Psalm 143:1–4)*

He does somewhat the same thing in Psalm 7:

*O LORD my God, if I have done this,
If there is injustice in my hands,
If I have rewarded evil to my friend,
Or have plundered him
who without cause was my adversary,
Let the enemy pursue **my soul** and overtake {it};
And let him trample **my life** down to the ground,
And lay **my glory** in the dust.
Selah.
(Psalm 7:3–5)*

When Jacob curses Simeon and Levi right before he dies, he mentions a couple of the parts of his being to clearly indicate he does not want those two sons to remain a part of his “house” in the Resurrection:

*“Simeon and Levi are brothers;
Their swords are implements of violence.
Let **my soul** not enter into their council;
Let not **my glory** be united with their assembly;
Because in their anger they slew men,
And in their self-will they lamed oxen.*

*Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce;
And their wrath, for it is cruel.
I will disperse them in Jacob,
And scatter them in Israel.”
(Genesis 49:5–7)*

The “Glory” of God

Now comes the interesting part of the *parabolic imagery* related to the Resurrection of the Believer. It is already possible to see the basic outlines in the Passover Parable. (See “The Passover Parable,” *The Voice of Elijah*®, July 1991.) As part of the *parabolic pantomime* of the Exodus, God claimed that *Corporate Israel* was His Firstborn Son, Who, LIKE the Pharaoh—the Egyptian god Horus—would one day die and become “one” with the god who passed through the realm of the dead and arose in the resurrection every morning *as the sun*. He would thereby ensure the safe passage of the members of Israel through the mythical Sea of Reeds in the realm of the dead so they could ascend in the resurrection.

The purpose of the *parabolic pantomime* God had Moses conduct was intended to teach the sons of Israel that they, too, could be resurrected in *Corporate Israel*—Jesus Christ—if they would just do what was necessary to avoid being “cut off from” *Corporate Israel*. But they could only do that by believing *The Teaching of Moses* and demonstrating their faith in *The Teaching* by participating in the *symbolic rituals* that explained how *Corporate Israel*—Jesus Christ—would eventually atone for the sins of the individual members of Israel.

That’s the short version. Now let’s consider a few of the details. Speaking in terms of the *parabolic imagery* of the Passover Parable I have just explained, the members of *Corporate Israel*—Jesus Christ—can only be resurrected if they are *parabolically* united with “*The Light*” that Christ is as He passes through the realm of the dead. That is why Paul says this:

Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with {Him} in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also {in the likeness} of

His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with {Him,} that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin.
(Romans 6:3-7)

Did you see what Paul said? He said, "Christ was raised from the dead through *the glory of the Father*." He is speaking *parabolically* in terms of the *parabolic imagery* I have already explained. But I only know that because Moses and the Prophets of Israel clearly explain how "The Light" of the "Glory" of God factors into the Resurrection. So let me explain a bit about that.

The "glory" of an ancient man consisted of all that he possessed in this life. Consequently, the modern western mind-set casually translates the Hebrew term *glory* as "wealth," as is the case in this passage:

*Now Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, "Jacob has taken away all that was our father's, and from what belonged to our father he has made **all this wealth**."*
(Genesis 31:1)

It is true that the "glory" of a man did include his material possessions. But it encompassed much more than that. At the heart of his "glory" lay the relationship he had with his god. That was so because the blessing or curse of his god would determine whether he was rich or poor. Under those circumstances, the "glory" of the blessed was nothing more or less than the "glory" of his god. Therefore, it is not surprising that the ancients considered a man's relationship to his god to be an *inheritance* that should be carefully protected and *handed down* to his children. Unfortunately, Jeremiah indicates the sons of Israel were not so careful with the "Glory" of God. He says they abandoned God's "Glory" and settled for something worth a whole lot less:

*"Therefore I will yet contend with you,"
declares the LORD,
"And with your sons' sons I will contend.
For cross to the coastlands of Kittim and see,
And send to Kedar and observe closely,
And see if there has been such {a thing} as this!
**Has a nation changed gods,
When they were not gods?
But My people have changed their glory
For that which does not profit.***

*Be appalled, O heavens, at this,
And shudder, be very desolate," declares the LORD.
"For My people have committed two evils:
They have forsaken Me,
The fountain of living waters,
To hew for themselves cisterns,
Broken cisterns,
That can hold no water."
(Jeremiah 2:9-13)*

The psalmist states it a little more bluntly:

*They made a calf in Horeb,
And worshiped a molten image.
Thus they exchanged their glory
For the image of an ox that eats grass.
They forgot God their Savior,
Who had done great things in Egypt,
Wonders in the land of Ham,
{And} awesome things by the Red Sea.
(Psalm 106:19-22)*

The Apostle Paul picks up that same theme and tells us exactly what the "Glory" of God is:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.
(Romans 1:18-23)

In case you didn't understand the *parabolic statements* Paul made concerning the "Glory" of God, let me state it plainly: The "Glory" of God is "The Light" of The Teaching. The ancients understood the Truth of The Teaching. That is, they "knew God." But they began to

speculate concerning the Truth of *The Teaching*, just like the fools who were responsible for the Early Church losing *The Teaching*. Consequently, “their foolish heart was darkened.” That is, because they considered themselves smart enough to figure out the Truth on their own, they exchanged the Truth of *The Teaching* they already had for an image of God in which He is something other than the *invisible, incorruptible* Word of God.

After the Early Church lost *The Apostolic Teaching*, they eventually settled for an image of God in which He is the Man Jesus Christ. Those who have insight here at the End can clearly see how pathetic that image of God is. Jesus Christ is no longer a Man. He is “*The Man*,” the One Moses said God would create in His very Own *invisible* image and likeness:

Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. And He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation. For by Him all things were created, {both} in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created by Him and for Him.
(Colossians 1:12–16)

If you can't “see” that Paul is speaking *parabolically* and talking about Believers seeing “*The Light*” of the “*Glory*” of the *resurrected* Jesus Christ, Who is now the *Living Word* of God, I pity you. You are certainly not prepared to withstand the delusion of the Antichrist. That is because, just as John said, the only way you will ever be able to escape Satan's grasp is by being “enlightened” by “*The Light*” of that “*Glory*”:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John. He came for a witness, that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but {came} that he might bear witness of the light. There was the true

light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, {even} to those who believe in His name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

(John 1:1–14)

Get this straight: The “*glory*” of a man can never and will never attain resurrection for anyone. Only the “*Glory*” of God can accomplish that. So let me tell you how the *parabolic image* in which *The Teaching* is the “*Glory*” of God pertains to the Resurrection.

Paul said that the only people who will participate in the Resurrection of the Righteous are those who are united with Christ “in the likeness of His death.” But he also said “Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father.” There's the catch. The only way anyone can be raised with Christ is to be united with Him in “*The Light*” of the “*Glory*” of *The Teaching*, which is the *Living Word* of God that raised Christ from the dead. The only way anyone can do that is to believe it. You probably already knew that. If not, you should have. Jesus put it this way:

These things Jesus spoke; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify Thy Son, that the Son may glorify Thee, even as Thou gavest Him authority over all mankind, that to all whom Thou hast given Him, He may give eternal life. And this is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. I glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou hast given Me to do. And now, glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, Father, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. I manifested Thy name to the men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world; Thine they were, and Thou gavest them to Me, and they have kept Thy word. Now they have come to know that everything Thou hast given Me is from Thee; for the words which Thou gavest Me I have given to them; and they received {them,} and truly understood that I came forth from Thee, and they believed that Thou didst send Me. I

ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine; and all things that are Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine; and I have been glorified in them. And I am no more in the world; and {yet} they themselves are in the world, and I come to Thee. **Holy Father, keep them in Thy name, {the name} which Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, even as We {are.}** While I was with them, I was keeping them in Thy name which Thou hast given Me; and I guarded them, and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy made full in themselves. **I have given them Thy word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.** I do not ask Thee to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil {one.} They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. **Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth.** As Thou didst send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, {art} in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me. **And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given to them; that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in unity,** that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and didst love them, even as Thou didst love Me. Father, I desire that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, in order that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me; for Thou didst love Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, although the world has not known Thee, yet I have known Thee; and these have known that Thou didst send Me; and I have made Thy name known to them, and will make it known; that the love wherewith Thou didst love Me may be in them, and I in them."

(John 17:1–26)

In that passage, Jesus uses three different parabolic images to refer to Himself as the Truth of the Living Word of God—*The Teaching*—that He became in the Resurrection. He now is "the Word," "the Glory," and "The Name." If you can't see that, it will be impossible for you to be "one" with "The Many" who "have

insight" at the End. You see, the Truth of God's Word is not the "maybe this" or "maybe that" preached by the agents of Satan who command the pulpits of the Church today. Not at all. Moses and the Prophets of Israel hid the Truth of *The Teaching* in the Hebrew Scriptures so that those who must face down the Antichrist here at the End would have complete confirmation that what they believe is true. And they will.

The Apostles were given insight into the Truth of *The Teaching* by revelation because the Scriptures had to remain sealed until our own day. But now that the seals are being removed, those who have been "born again" through belief in the Gospel will have opportunity to accept or reject their heritage. Their response will determine whether they remain a part of the Body of Jesus Christ—the Israel of God. What they decide will have no impact on this ministry one way or the other. God called me to restore *The Apostolic Teaching* and make it available so that those who are still seeking Truth would be able to find what they are seeking. He did not call me to try to convince anyone that what I teach is true. The reason for that is quite simple: True Believers are not looking for "proof." They are looking for Truth. And they are certainly able to recognize it when they see it. Pretenders? That's another matter:

Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we received mercy, we do not lose heart, but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves.

(2 Corinthians 4:1–7)

By the way: Parabolically speaking, the glory is the fire that warms the *spirit* that dwells in the *heart* ... ■



The 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.

Storms: I've always found the following statement of Jesus to be an interesting reference to the *parabolic imagery* of *The Teaching*. See what you think:

And He was also saying to the multitudes, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, 'A shower is coming,' and so it turns out. And when {you see} a south wind blowing, you say, 'It will be a hot day,' and it turns out {that way.} You hypocrites! You know how to analyze the appearance of the earth and the sky, but why do you not analyze this present time?"
(Luke 12:54–56)

Jesus is referring to the people's lack of insight into the *parabolic imagery* the Prophets used to depict His death and Resurrection. He is also alluding to the *parabolic image* in which He is—LIKE the resurrected god Baal—"the rider on the clouds" who escapes the clutches of Prince Sea to bring the early rain. The same holds true for this exchange as well:

And the Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and testing Him asked Him to show them a sign from heaven. But He answered and said to them, "When it is evening, you say, '{It will be} fair weather, for the sky is red.' And in the morning, '{There will be} a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot {discern} the signs of the times? An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and a sign will not be given it, except the

sign of Jonah." And He left them, and went away.
(Matthew 16:1–4)

On another occasion, Jesus explained a little about "the sign of Jonah." What He says clearly reveals He was *talking about* His death and Resurrection:

Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered Him, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and {yet} no sign shall be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; for just as JONAH WAS THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE BELLY OF THE SEA MONSTER, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall stand up with this generation at the judgment, and shall condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. {The} Queen of {the} South shall rise up with this generation at the judgment and shall condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here."
(Matthew 12:38–42)

The Preacher said something you might want to take to heart. He said:

He who watches the wind will not sow and he who looks at the clouds will not reap.
(Ecclesiastes 11:4)

Those with insight at the End of the Age won't be asking God for a sign; they will instead be looking for the sign of Jonah. That way, when the sign finally appears, they will be ready:

"But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other."
(Matthew 24:29–31) ■



The 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: In the April 1992 issue of The Voice of Elijah® you explained the parabolic significance of the final three feasts of Israel and how they relate to the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. What I don't completely understand, however, is how the first four feasts of Israel relate to the First Advent of Christ. I know Jesus Christ died as the Passover Lamb (in accordance with the first feast) and that the coming of the Holy Spirit took place on the Day of Pentecost (the fourth feast), but what events are associated with the second and third feasts? I have always assumed they pertained to Christ's burial and Resurrection, but I have never known this for a fact. Can you explain the significance of the second and third feasts and tie them together with the first and fourth feasts?

Elijah: Before I can answer your question, which is not actually a question concerning "feasts" but rather one concerning the meaning and significance of some extremely specific parabolic pantomimes, I first need to correct the terminology you are using. In the article you mention, I did not refer to seven "feasts" as you do in your question. Instead, I pointed to three different "cycles of cultic festivals." I also indicated the Feast of Unleavened Bread was a part of the same cycle of festivals as the Feast of Harvest/Weeks/Pentecost rather than a continuation of the Passover because my point in that article had to do not with the observance of the

"feasts" themselves but with the parabolic imagery which stands behind them:

Israel's sacred calendar had three separate cycles of cultic festivals. The first was Passover on the second Sabbath of the year. Its imagery relates to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as the Passover Lamb whose blood protects "The House" of Israel when they escape bondage. It derives its imagery from the Egyptian myth of Osiris. (See "The Passover Parable," in the July 1991 issue.)

The second cycle of Israel's festivals was based on a mockery of the agricultural pentecost calendar of the Canaanites. It began with the Feast of Unleavened Bread on the day after Passover and concluded with the Feast of Weeks on the Day of Pentecost. It derived its imagery from the Canaanite myth of Baal. That imagery portrays Jesus Christ, the Word of God, as the rain that waters the divine seed that contains the "secret" of eternal life.

*The time for the solemn observance of these first two cycles of cultic rituals has passed. The date of the eternal observance of Passover and the Feast of Weeks was calculated in accordance with God's sacred calendar of events, and they were observed by the People of God during the seventh (Sabbath) year of a sacred seven as Daniel indicates. However, there is yet a final cycle of sacred events to be observed by the People of God. They, too, will be observed in the seventh (Sabbath) year of the last sacred seven mentioned by Daniel. Their observance begins with the trumpet blowing of **Teruah** as a reminder on the first day of the seventh month, which is also a sacred Sabbath (Lev. 23:24).*

*The cycle continues on the tenth day of that month with the trumpet blowing of **Teruah** on the Day of Atonement, which is also the first day of the Jubilee Year (Lev. 25:9-10). It concludes with the observance of the Feast of Tabernacles/Booths from the fifteenth to the twenty-second of that seventh month. The first and last days of this feast are also Sabbaths.*

("When the Trumpet Sounds," The Voice of Elijah®, April 1992)

As you can see, I mentioned only three "feasts": the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles/Booths. I did not refer to any other symbolic cultic ritual as a "feast" simply because the biblical term *feast* is customarily used to refer to the three different times of the year when the sons of Israel were to appear before the Lord at His Sanctuary.

Under the terms of the first covenant the sons of Israel ratified at Mt. Sinai, Moses instituted the following ordinance concerning the observance of the three feasts:

*“Three times a year you shall celebrate a feast to Me. You shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread; for seven days you are to eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, at the appointed time in the month Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. And none shall appear before Me empty-handed. Also {you shall observe} the Feast of the Harvest {of} the first fruits of your labors {from} what you sow in the field; also the Feast of the Ingathering at the end of the year when you gather in {the fruit of} your labors from the field. **Three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord GOD.**”*
(Exodus 23:14–17)

Pay special attention to the statement, “And none shall appear before Me empty-handed.” It explains why God required all the males in Israel to appear before Him three times a year. But its *meaning* and *significance* only begins to come into focus in the following passage, where basically the same ordinance appears in connection with the second covenant God ratified with Israel at Mt. Sinai:

Then God said, “Behold, I am going to make a covenant. Before all your people I will perform miracles which have not been produced in all the earth, nor among any of the nations; and all the people among whom you live will see the working of the LORD, for it is a fearful thing that I am going to perform with you. Be sure to observe what I am commanding you this day: behold, I am going to drive out the Amorite before you, and the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite. Watch yourself that you make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land into which you are going, lest it become a snare in your midst. But {rather,} you are to tear down their altars and smash their {sacred} pillars and cut down their Asherim—for you shall not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God—lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land and they play the harlot with their gods, and sacrifice to their gods, and someone invite you to eat of his sacrifice; and you take some of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters play the harlot with their gods, and cause your sons {also} to play the harlot with their gods. You shall

*make for yourself no molten gods. You shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread. For seven days you are to eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in the month of Abib you came out of Egypt. The first offspring from every womb belongs to Me, and all your male livestock, the first offspring from cattle and sheep. And you shall redeem with a lamb the first offspring from a donkey; and if you do not redeem {it,} then you shall break its neck. **You shall redeem all the first-born of your sons. And none shall appear before Me empty-handed.** You shall work six days, but on the seventh day you shall rest; {even} during plowing time and harvest you shall rest. And you shall celebrate the Feast of Weeks, {that is,} the first fruits of the wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the turn of the year. **Three times a year all your males are to appear before the Lord GOD, the God of Israel.** For I will drive out nations before you and enlarge your borders, and no man shall covet your land when you go up three times a year to appear before the LORD your God. You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread, nor is the sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover to be left over until morning. You shall bring the very first of the first fruits of your soil into the house of the LORD your God. You shall not boil a kid in its mother’s milk.” Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.”*
(Exodus 34:10–27)

If you were paying close attention as you read that passage, you already know that the totality of the second covenant—the one that God made with Moses as the sole *heir of the promise* after all other members of Israel had been “cut off from” Israel—revolved around the *parabolic pantomimes* of the Passover, the Sabbath, and the three annual feasts. The statement “And none shall appear before Me empty-handed” is juxtaposed with the redemption of the firstborn because the Lord is referring to the price that each male in Israel must pay to be included in a census of Israel. That statement is clearly intended to point the reader to this passage:

The LORD also spoke to Moses, saying, “When you take a census of the sons of Israel to number them, then each one of them shall give a ransom for himself to the LORD, when you number them, that there may be no plague among them when you number them. This is what everyone who

is numbered shall give: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary (the shekel is twenty gerahs), half a shekel as a contribution to the LORD. Everyone who is numbered, from twenty years old and over, shall give the contribution to the LORD. The rich shall not pay more, and the poor shall not pay less than the half shekel, when you give the contribution to the LORD to make atonement for yourselves. **And you shall take the atonement money from the sons of Israel, and shall give it for the service of the tent of meeting, that it may be a memorial for the sons of Israel before the LORD, to make atonement for yourselves.**"

(Exodus 30:11–16)

That passage reveals the *meaning* of the statement "And none shall appear before Me empty-handed." It resides in the fact that a census was to be taken at the beginning of each of the three "feasts" of Israel. The Lord demanded that each male member of Israel over twenty years of age have the specified amount in his hand to make atonement for himself (and his family) so that he and his "house" could be included in God's census of "The House" of Israel. Anyone who failed to do what God required would be "cut off from" Israel at that time so that God's census resulted in an accurate count of Israel. (See *Not All Israel Is Israel*.)

Now that you know the *parabolic pantomime* of God numbering Israel is associated with each of the three annual feasts, their *meaning* and *significance* becomes somewhat easier to understand. Each feast is in some way or other a *parabolic* depiction of events that will occur at the beginning of the seventh "day" of Creation, when Israel is resurrected, enters the Promised Land, and begins "feasting" on the Word of God. That is why, although Moses plainly states the Feast of Unleavened Bread was a part of the *parabolic pantomime* of the Passover, he just as clearly indicates that it was not to be observed in conjunction with the Passover until *after* the sons of Israel had entered the land of Canaan:

"Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it {as} a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it {as} a permanent ordinance. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, but on the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses; for whoever eats anything leavened from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from

Israel. And on the first day you shall have a holy assembly, and {another} holy assembly on the seventh day; no work at all shall be done on them, except what must be eaten by every person, that alone may be prepared by you. You shall also observe the {Feast of} Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt; therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as a permanent ordinance. In the first {month,} on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. Seven days there shall be no leaven found in your houses; for whoever eats what is leavened, that person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether {he is} an alien or a native of the land. You shall not eat anything leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread." Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said to them, "Go and take for yourselves lambs according to your families, and slay the Passover {lamb.} And you shall take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood which is in the basin, and apply some of the blood that is in the basin to the lintel and the two doorposts; and none of you shall go outside the door of his house until morning. For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to come in to your houses to smite {you.} And you shall observe this event as an ordinance for you and your children forever. **And it will come about when you enter the land which the LORD will give you, as He has promised, that you shall observe this rite.**"

(Exodus 12:14–25)

Now you know why I said this in the article you mentioned:

The second cycle of Israel's festivals was based on a mockery of the agricultural pentacontad calendar of the Canaanites. It began with the Feast of Unleavened Bread on the day after Passover and concluded with the Feast of Weeks on the Day of Pentecost. It derived its imagery from the Canaanite myth of Baal.

("When the Trumpet Sounds," **The Voice of Elijah®**, April 1992)

As I explained in *The Passover Parable*, the *parabolic pantomime* of the Passover depicts the death and Resurrection of "The Man" Jesus Christ—the *Heir of the*

promise Who is the *fulfillment of the promise*. From what Moses tells us in the Pentateuch, we know the sons of Israel observed that *parabolic pantomime* in the first month of each year during the forty years they wandered in the wilderness. But they did not begin to offer the first sheaf of the harvest or celebrate the three annual feasts until they entered the land of Canaan simply because those *parabolic pantomimes* were concerned with harvesting crops:

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the sons of Israel, and say to them, 'When you enter the land which I am going to give to you and reap its harvest, then you shall bring in the sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest. And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD for you to be accepted; on the day after the sabbath the priest shall wave it. Now on the day when you wave the sheaf, you shall offer a male lamb one year old without defect for a burnt offering to the LORD. Its grain offering shall then be two-tenths {of an ephah} of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering by fire to the LORD {for} a soothing aroma, with its libation, a fourth of a hin of wine. Until this same day, until you have brought in the offering of your God, you shall eat neither bread nor roasted grain nor new growth. It is to be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwelling places. You shall also count for yourselves from the day after the sabbath, from the day when you brought in the sheaf of the wave offering; there shall be seven complete sabbaths. You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh sabbath; then you shall present a new grain offering to the LORD. You shall bring in from your dwelling places two {loaves} of bread for a wave offering, made of two-tenths {of an ephah;} they shall be of a fine flour, baked with leaven as first fruits to the LORD. Along with the bread, you shall present seven one year old male lambs without defect, and a bull of the herd, and two rams; they are to be a burnt offering to the LORD, with their grain offering and their libations, an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to the LORD. You shall also offer one male goat for a sin offering and two male lambs one year old for a sacrifice of peace offerings. The priest shall then wave them with the bread of the first fruits for a wave offering with two lambs before the LORD; they are to be holy to the LORD for the priest. On this same day you shall make a proclamation as well; you are to have a holy convocation. You shall do no laborious work. It is to be a perpetual statute in all your

dwelling places throughout your generations.'" (Leviticus 23:9–21)

It makes perfect sense that the sons of Israel would not conduct the *parabolic pantomimes* of the three annual feasts until after they were settled in the land of Canaan. The three feasts are harvest festivals. The sons of Israel were nomadic shepherds during the forty years they wandered in the wilderness. Shepherds don't plant and harvest crops. They move their flocks and herds from place to place in search of better pasture. That should be easy enough for anyone to understand. However, the key to understanding the *meaning* and *significance* of the *parabolic pantomimes* in which "all Israel" was required to appear before the Lord three times a year depends on insight into something I have already explained about the Book of Joshua:

The Book of Joshua is ostensibly an account of how God fulfilled the promise He made to the Patriarchs. That is exactly what Jeremiah wants the uninformed reader to think. The Truth is, Jeremiah is describing the conclusion to the parabolic pantomime that God orchestrated by forcing the sons of Israel to wander in the wilderness for forty years. (See The Passover Parable.) Jeremiah's point in the Book of Joshua is that after Moses—the heir of the promise—died, the sons of Israel parabolically inherited what was promised. Their parabolic pantomime, however, points to the death of Jesus Christ, the Heir of the promise Who died so that individual members of Israel might inherit what was promised.

When all is said and done, the individual members of Israel in Joshua's generation didn't inherit anything. Corporate Israel did. But the only thing it gained was equitable title to land that was being held in trust until the time when God would actually fulfill the promise. It held equitable title to that land as a mediator (Gal. 3:19–20) until Jesus Christ—the Heir of the promise—finally came along and He (as Israel) entered into a New Covenant with God. Then that equitable title became His alone under the terms of both the Old and New Covenants. When Christ died on the cross as a sacrifice for His Own sins (parabolically speaking) or if you prefer to state it parabolically, as a sacrifice for the sins of the members of His body, He gained legal title to the land and immediately began to transfer the promise to His heirs under the terms of His will. But since I have already

explained these things in Not All Israel Is Israel (pp. 46–49), I needn't get into them any further here.

The point is, if you ever intend to understand the significance of the Book of Joshua, you must begin to think parabolically. The events it describes are literal historical events. But, for the most part, Joshua did everything he did under the direct supervision of God. So don't make ignorant assumptions about his actions or you'll miss the point of the parabolic pantomime. I have said it before, and I am certain I will say it time and time again: Whenever God instructs someone to do something, chances are extremely high that parabolic imagery is involved in one way or another. In Joshua's case, God was merely wrapping up a few loose ends regarding the imagery that pertains to the Passover Parable.

(“Contrary to What You May Have Heard, Jeremiah Was No Bullfrog,” **The Voice of Elijah**®, July 1997)

I showed you what I stated earlier about the parabolic pantomime of Israel's entry into the land of Canaan because the meaning and significance of the three annual feasts has to do with the fact that the parabolic “plants” depicted as having been “harvested” in these three parabolic pantomimes have “sprouted” and “grown” to maturity after having been “planted” in the Promised Land. But they will be “threshed” and “winnowed” only after the resurrection of “all Israel.” Keep that parabolic imagery in mind. It is important to an accurate understanding of many of the things the Prophets and Apostles, not to mention Jesus Christ Himself, tell us about God's “harvest.”

The parabolic imagery inherent in the cultic ritual of numbering Israel at each of the three annual feasts depicts exactly the same spiritual reality: the time when God will determine who is qualified to attend the banquet which will immediately follow the census of “The Man” Israel. As Jesus indicates, that census will occur on Judgment Day:

“But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave

Me {something} to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.’ Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, {even} the least {of them,} you did it to Me.’ Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave Me {nothing} to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.’ Then they themselves also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?’ Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

(Matthew 25:31–46)

The Prophet Ezekiel parabolically describes that same event, when Jesus Christ begins to rule as King over Israel, in the following passage. As you read, make note of his various allusions to the parabolic imagery of the Exodus as well as his use of the Hebrew idiom “make someone pass under the rod,” which means “take a census”:

“As I live,” declares the Lord GOD, “surely with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out, I shall be king over you. And I shall bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out; and I shall bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I shall enter into judgment with you face to face. As I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you,” declares the Lord GOD. “And I shall make you pass under the

rod, and I shall bring you into the bond of the covenant; and I shall purge from you the rebels and those who transgress against Me; I shall bring them out of the land where they sojourn, but they will not enter the land of Israel. Thus you will know that I am the LORD. As for you, O house of Israel," thus says the Lord GOD, "Go, serve everyone his idols; but later, you will surely listen to Me, and My holy name you will profane no longer with your gifts and with your idols. For on My holy mountain, on the high mountain of Israel," declares the Lord GOD, "there the whole house of Israel, all of them, will serve Me in the land; there I shall accept them, and there I shall seek your contributions and the choicest of your gifts, with all your holy things. As a soothing aroma I shall accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the lands where you are scattered; and I shall prove Myself holy among you in the sight of the nations. **And you will know that I am the LORD, when I bring you into the land of Israel, into the land which I swore to give to your forefathers.** And there you will remember your ways and all your deeds, with which you have defiled yourselves; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight for all the evil things that you have done. Then you will know that I am the LORD when I have dealt with you for My name's sake, not according to your evil ways or according to your corrupt deeds, O house of Israel," declares the Lord GOD.
(Ezekiel 20:33-44)

This is the way Moses explains one of the basic *parabolic images* on which the three annual feasts are based:

*"All the commandments that I am commanding you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD swore {to give} to your forefathers. And you shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. **And He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD.** Your clothing did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell*

*these forty years. Thus you are to know in your heart that the LORD your God was disciplining you just as a man disciplines his son. Therefore, you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him. For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; a land where you shall eat food without scarcity, in which you shall not lack anything; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. **When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land which He has given you.**"*
(Deuteronomy 8:1-10)

In that last statement, Moses is mocking the uninformed reader by letting the enlightened reader know he is talking about *parabolic imagery* related to the time when Israel at long last enters the Promised Land and "feasts" on the Word of God.

As you indicated in your question, the Passover *parabolically* depicts the death of Jesus Christ, *the Heir of the promise* and legitimate King of Israel. The Feast of Unleavened Bread follows the Passover immediately because it *parabolically* depicts the banquet at which the twelve tribes of Israel celebrate His Resurrection from the dead. That feast begins with the offering of the first sheaf of the barley harvest on the day after the Passover Sabbath:

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the sons of Israel, and say to them, 'When you enter the land which I am going to give to you and reap its harvest, then you shall bring in the sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest. And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD for you to be accepted; on the day after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.'"
(Leviticus 23:9-11)

The *parabolic pantomime* in which the first sheaf of the barley harvest is brought into the Sanctuary of the Lord to be offered by the priest as a wave offering depicts the "harvest" of Jesus Christ as the first of the "plants" which "sprouted" and "grew" from the "seed" of the Word of God. The Apostle Paul is clearly alluding to that *parabolic image* when he says this about Jesus Christ as the "first-fruits" of God's "harvest":

But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. For since by a man {came} death, by a man also {came} the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming, then {comes} the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.
(1 Corinthians 15:20–24)

A bit later, Paul returns to the *parabolic imagery* related to the “planting” of God’s “harvest” when he says this:

But someone will say, “How are the dead raised? And with what kind of body do they come?” You fool! That which you sow does not come to life unless it dies; and that which you sow, you do not sow the body which is to be, but a bare grain, perhaps of wheat or of something else. But God gives it a body just as He wished, and to each of the seeds a body of its own. All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one {flesh} of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fish. There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the {glory} of the earthly is another.
(1 Corinthians 15:35–40)

That’s an interesting passage, isn’t it? Who would have thought that the *parabolic image* of God’s “harvest” at the End of the Age is somehow depicting the *physical* Resurrection of the Righteous and the Wicked? Not I. But that bit of information certainly does shed light on the *meaning* and *significance* of several of the parables of Jesus in which He points to Judgment Day. I’ll explain them in the main article. (See “Glory Be! What’s That I See?” in this issue.)

Editor: This question is based on comments recently sent in by a subscriber. You have often said The Teaching cannot be understood without insight into various ancient mythologies because God has mocked those foolish beliefs by using the terminology and religious images associated with those beliefs to create His Own Teaching—The Teaching. But that explanation creates a bit of a conundrum because you have also said that ancient mythology is essentially a distortion of the Truth

—The Teaching—that God first explained to Adam. Here’s the conundrum: If God spoke the Truth to Adam and Satan distorted it to create various mythologies, then how could The Teaching that God explained to Adam be a mockery of mythological beliefs that didn’t yet exist? Can you explain this?

Elijah: I have extreme difficulty believing that I have—at any time or in any context—made the statement you attributed to me:

“The Teaching cannot be understood without insight into various ancient mythologies because God has mocked those foolish beliefs by using the terminology and religious images associated with those beliefs to create His Own Teaching—The Teaching.”

I will readily admit that I have frequently stated something similar to the first two parts of the statement:

The Teaching cannot be understood without insight into various ancient mythologies.

God has mocked those foolish beliefs by using the terminology and religious images associated with those beliefs.

I may have even put those two statements together to make something like the first part of the statement you attributed to me:

The Teaching cannot be understood without insight into various ancient mythologies because God has mocked those foolish beliefs by using the terminology and religious images associated with those beliefs.

The only part of the statement I have difficulty believing I made is this:

“... to create His Own Teaching—The Teaching.”

I did a computer scan of the past issues of *The Voice of Elijah*® and *The Voice of Elijah*® Update, and I could not find any instance where I made a statement anything at all like that. If for some reason I missed it, please let me know. It needs to be corrected. From the very beginning, I have tried to draw a careful distinction between *The Teaching* and the seven sealed messages of

the Hebrew Scriptures in which Moses and the other Prophets of Israel hid their understanding of *The Teaching*. I have also repeatedly explained that the Hebrew Scriptures which Moses and the other Prophets created are not themselves *The Teaching*. They are at heart nothing more than an account of what God has done and intends to do in *fulfilling the promise*. Finally, I have tried to distinguish between the ridicule and mockery the Prophets heaped on their contemporaries and *The Teaching* they used to do that. My intention has always been to state that Moses and the other Prophets of Israel used the images and idioms associated with ancient mythology to teach the Truth concerning God and His plan of salvation rather than to say they somehow created *The Teaching* in which those things are explained:

We have dealt briefly with just a few of the images that God used to teach the Israelites about Himself and His plan of salvation. Those images were taken from the Egyptian beliefs concerning resurrection. But when the Israelites reached Mt. Sinai, God began to correct their beliefs concerning this doctrine as well as their assumptions concerning Himself as the Canaanite god El.

Through Moses, God taught the Israelites the requirements that must be met if they intended to enter the Resurrection. He did so not just with symbolic imagery from Egyptian religion, but also with images taken from Canaanite religion.

*("The Passover Parable," **The Voice of Elijah**®, July 1991)*

Although I will admit the possibility that I may have made a careless mistake as I grew in my own understanding of the Truth, I have consistently tried to explain things this way:

The Pentateuch is replete with the idioms and images Moses used to teach Israel about Jesus Christ and true resurrection from the dead. Yet these idioms and images are all grounded in Egyptian and Canaanite mythology. Although the mythology itself was completely untrue, God could still use the terminology and images associated with mythology to make comparisons that taught Israel what spiritual reality was LIKE.

You see, parables cannot tell us what spiritual reality IS. Parables can only teach what spiritual reality IS LIKE by means of comparison. Until we reach the here-

after, none of us has the ability to fully understand the realm of God as it truly IS. So the best we can do is strive to understand what spiritual reality IS LIKE by means of comparison.

*But remember: **If you don't adopt the mind-set of the ancient Israelites, you will never understand the parabolic statements made in the Old and New Testaments.** So it's important to recognize that Israel's mind-set was primarily influenced by Egyptian culture at the time of Moses.*

However, since Canaan was a neighbor to Egypt, the Israelites were also well aware of Canaanite beliefs. By Isaiah's time (centuries later), the sons of Israel were deeply immersed in the religious beliefs and practices of the Canaanites. Not surprisingly, when Isaiah tried to call them back to God, he spoke to them in parabolic statements based on Canaanite beliefs. Therefore, to understand the Book of Isaiah, you must adopt a Canaanite mind-set. The point is simply to say that if you truly want to understand the Old Testament, you need knowledge of Egyptian and Canaanite mythological beliefs.

Since the Bible is a single book which must be read as a continuous story, you must also take into account Egyptian and Canaanite mythology when you read the New Testament. That's because the New Testament is a continuation of the Old Testament. However, since the New Testament was written during a time of strong Greek influence, you must also take into account Greek religious beliefs and concepts along with Egyptian and Canaanite beliefs if you are ever to gain complete understanding.

*("By Way of Summary, Let Me Begin by Saying ..." **The Voice of Elijah**®, October 1995)*

The Scriptures' chronicle of how God "built The House" of Israel is, at its heart, a sarcastic mockery of the ridiculous religion the ancient Canaanites firmly believed and enthusiastically practiced. I'll tell you all about their religion over the next few years. It's a torrid tale of how idiot folk strived to attain eternal life by piously reciting religious pornography, religiously engaging in sexual intercourse with sacred prostitutes working out of the church-house, and inhumanely sacrificing bastard children intentionally conceived during sacred sex rites.

*("The Sad, Sordid History of the People of God," **The Voice of Elijah**®, July 1996)*

Some of the Prophets explain what God revealed to them using the same idioms and parabolic imagery that Moses established. Others quote what he wrote frequently and verbatim. But none of the Prophets do both of those things more energetically or more often than Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Those two seem driven to blast the sons of Israel continually by reminding them Moses had told them at the outset that they would spurn God. Therefore, perfectly in tune with the sarcastic Spirit that prompted all the Prophets to ridicule a mindless religiosity that is still with us to this day, the Prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel sang a mocking duet in a minor key with an extremely haunting refrain. God Himself gave them the melody. But Moses was the one who wrote the words.

(“Contrary to What You May Have Heard, Jeremiah Was No Bullfrog,” **The Voice of Elijah**®, July 1997)

The Prophets ridicule the Canaanite world view by measuring time not only “from ‘**olam**” but also “until ‘**olam**” just as the Canaanites did. (You do remember that we began this discussion by looking at the phrase “from everlasting {even} to everlasting” don’t you?) However, the Prophets had a completely different (parabolic) perspective concerning when ‘**olam** had occurred and what it was. Given those circumstances, all those folks today who have no idea what ‘**olam** is (parabolically speaking) or why they need to be on the lookout for it will certainly be surprised—to say the least—when it gets here. For whatever it’s worth to you, God called me to make sure that you aren’t.

(“Questions & Answers,” **The Voice of Elijah**®, July 2000)

If one has no understanding of the meaning and significance of the Hebrew idiom “build a house,” which is the most fundamental of all the idioms used by the Prophets and Apostles, one has absolutely no idea how I know that Jesus is parabolically referring to events that will occur at the End of the Age. To be able to understand the Truth, one first needs to know that the idiom “build a house” is meant to evoke a mental image of the ancient Canaanite practice in which a **zonah** “gave a seed” to the god Baal in hopes of “raising up a name” for him. But there is much more to the parabolic imagery that Jesus had in mind than just the cultic prostitution that the Prophets of Israel ridiculed by their use of the idiom “build a house.” Anyone who is interested in those things can read what I have already written about them. (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.) (“Questions & Answers” **The Voice of Elijah**®, April 2001)

In all of those quotes, as well as in every other case I could find where I mentioned the mockery or ridicule of the Prophets, I did not say *The Teaching* was a mockery or ridicule of ancient mythological beliefs. Instead, I explained how Moses, the Prophets, Jesus, and the Apostles all used their understanding of *The Teaching* to ridicule or mock ignorant beliefs which were themselves a distortion of *The Teaching*. I also said they used ancient mythological beliefs as a basis for explaining *The Teaching* rather than for creating it. Yet in the next part of your question, you imply that I did exactly what I have tried not to do:

Here’s the conundrum: If God spoke the Truth to Adam and Satan distorted it to create various mythologies, then how could The Teaching that God explained to Adam be a mockery of mythological beliefs that didn’t yet exist?

Let me also point out that although I have said very little about *The Teaching of Adam*, I have consistently made a distinction between various other historical perspectives on the Truth of *The Teaching*:

In His explanation of the Parable of the Sower, Jesus has already explained the meaning of the parable in terms that are clear enough for anyone to understand, provided they have ears to hear and are able to understand. The only problem with that is, as Jesus pointed out to His disciples immediately after He told the parable, not everyone has ears to hear or a mind that is capable of understanding. But, for the benefit of all who can hear and understand, I’ll state the matter plainly. The parabolic image of the Seed represents the Truth of The Teaching—not just in the Parable of the Sower but throughout the Scriptures. Depending on the context in which you find this particular parabolic image used, however, it could represent The Teaching of Moses, The Teaching of the

Prophets, The Teaching of Jesus, or The Teaching of the Apostles—The Apostolic Teaching.

Since all of these Teachings have essentially the same content and differ mainly in their historical perspective on the Truth, we can refer to each one of them as The Teaching. You should keep in mind, however, that The Teaching of Moses is the most concise and cryptically stated formulation of the Truth, while The Apostolic Teaching is the most detailed and openly explained. Nonetheless, these two Teachings explain exactly the same thing: How mortal man—a seed—can be transformed into an immortal creature—a plant—by and through no greater agency than belief in The Teaching—a Seed—which replicates itself in the Believer (the ground in the Parable of the Sower)—as a plant.

*(“If You Plan to Reap What You Sow, You Had Better Watch What You Plant,” **The Voice of Elijah**®, April 1998)*

For the benefit (or detriment) of those of you who are familiar with Canaanite mythology, I should tell you I am filling in gaps in the Canaanite mythology on the basis of the parabolic imagery of The Teaching of Moses, The Teaching of the Prophets, and The Apostolic Teaching. In some ways, Moses and the Prophets are much more explicit about what Baal went through to attain resurrection from the dead than any of the Canaanite mythological texts are. But before one can understand the meaning and significance of either the Canaanite mythological texts or what Moses and the Prophets wrote, one must understand what they are talking about. Without insight into the meaning and significance of the Hebrew idioms “build a house,” “raise up a seed,” and “make a name,” that is impossible.

*[“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]*

The most amazing thing about the parabolic imagery of The Teaching of Moses and The Teaching of the Prophets is this: It is extremely easy for the True Believer to understand and believe. The next most amazing thing about the parabolic imagery of The Teaching of Moses and The Teaching of the Prophets is this: It is just as easy for skeptics and scoffers to understand isolated details, but they find it impossible to believe. Consequently, they cannot “see” the big picture. Fools that they are, they will discount what they cannot understand

while vehemently denying that they are blind. The most ignorant will reject the Truth of The Teaching outright.

*[“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]*

In both of those verses, the Prophets are referring to the Day of the Lord, that is, Judgment Day. There is no reason to explain what they have said, however, because it would take an inordinate amount of time to do that here and what they have said in that regard is not all that relevant to what we are discussing at this time anyway. However, your question concerning how many points in time qualify as an ‘olam is relevant. It deals directly with “the riddle in a mirror,” that is, with the nesting of parabolic images in The Teaching of Moses, The Teaching of the Prophets, The Teaching of Jesus, The Apostolic Teaching, and now, here at the End, in The (restored) Apostolic Teaching.

*(“Questions & Answers,” **The Voice of Elijah**®, October 2000)*

Consider this: The Teaching of Moses explained everything the sons of Israel needed to know about God’s plan to create “The Man” Jesus Christ in His Own image and likeness. The Teaching of the Prophets merely added a few more details, such as how God was going to use the New Covenant to accomplish that. The Teaching of Jesus Christ added even more detail concerning how His impending death and Resurrection fit into things which had already been explained in The Teaching of Moses and The Teaching of the Prophets. With that in mind, what do you suppose The Teaching of the Apostles (The Apostolic Teaching) could possibly include that had not already been explained?

If you concluded that an explanation concerning how God had fulfilled the promise through the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ was the only new thing the Apostles could add to The Teaching, you hit the nail right on the head. And that part of The Apostolic Teaching is “the good news”—the only part of The Teaching an Evangelist is authorized to proclaim. By contrast, the intricate details of The Teaching of Moses, The Teaching of the Prophets, and The Teaching of Jesus Christ have been—from the time of Moses—the exclusive domain of the Teacher. Nonetheless, the Evangelists in the Early Church had more than enough information to communicate to unbelievers. The problem

we face today is, the Church lost insight into most of that information some 1800 years ago. Consequently, the only things that are still accurately understood in the Church today are the bare essentials necessary to produce the new birth in those who believe.

("Questions & Answers," The Voice of Elijah®, January 2003)

What I have tried to say is exactly the opposite of what you have attributed to me; yet I believe God has, from the very beginning, mocked and ridiculed mankind's distortion of *The Teaching*. He has done so not in the Prophets' appropriation of Hebrew idioms and ancient *mythological imagery*—whose sole purpose is to help Believers here at the End of the Age "see" *The Teaching* with "the eyes of the heart"—but in the basic message *The Teaching* conveys. That message tells the story of the Passover Parable in which a *remnant* of the man Adam will escape the otherwise total destruction of the man by hiding in a "house" until God's wrath has destroyed the Pretender who claims to be *the fulfillment of the promise*. That *parabolic imagery* will soon be realized in the totally bizarre mythological belief that the appearance of Satan as the Antichrist is the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

I should point out that the distortion of what I have stated aptly illustrates how the Church lost *The Teaching*. It was corrupted by men who, because they were intent on retaining their own mind-set rather than taking on the mind-set of God, thought they saw flaws in the Truth they heard explained by a legitimate Teacher. Consequently, rather than assiduously trying to comprehend and assimilate the things they heard taught, they picked and chose what they wanted to believe and then set out to "correct" the things they did not understand.

Picking and choosing may gratify the ego, but it certainly does not produce saving faith. Instead, it results in ignorance. Can you imagine the utter nonsense that would result from someone teaching the notion that Moses created *The Teaching* which God had previously *delivered* to Adam, Noah, and Abraham, among others? But in all fairness, I should concede the benefit of the doubt. I have not seen the comments on which you based your question. Someone was most likely just trying to understand the Truth rather than catch me in a contradiction the way the Pharisees tried to trap Jesus:

Then the Pharisees went and counseled together how they might trap Him in what He said. And they sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that You are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and defer to no one; for You are not partial to any. Tell us therefore, what do You think? Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?" But Jesus perceived their malice, and said, "Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites? Show Me the coin {used} for the poll-tax." And they brought Him a denarius. And He said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" They said to Him, "Caesar's." Then He said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's." And hearing {this,} they marveled, and leaving Him, they went away.

(Matthew 22:15–22)

That little exchange never fails to amuse me. Jesus is referring to the fact that the only "money" which bears the image and likeness of God is *The Teaching*. It is, in fact, the very image and likeness of the *invisible* God. That is why it has the ability to impress His "likeness and inscription" on all who believe it.

Editor: This question is from a subscriber who has a question regarding Jacob's blessing upon Judah in Genesis 49:10. In that passage Jacob said "the scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes." The implication of that statement appears to be that all the kings of Israel would come from the tribe of Judah, including the final King, Jesus Christ. Yet the first king of Israel, Saul, was from the tribe of Benjamin. What are we to make of this fact and is there any significance to it? Also, what is the significance of the term Shiloh and why is it used to refer to the Messiah?

Elijah: I am fairly certain I have already explained the *meaning* and *significance* of the term *Shiloh* somewhere in what I have written, but I have been unable to find where that is. I would appreciate your readers letting me know should they happen to stumble on to the location of that information. In the meantime, I will repeat it here. The term *Shiloh* is a transliteration of the Hebrew text rather than a translation of it. The word is actually a compound morpheme made up of a personal pronoun suffixed to a possessive preposition which has a relative pronoun attached as a prefix. Its *meaning* is

“the one to whom it belongs.” So the last part of the text you quoted actually reads “until the One comes to Whom it belongs.” You can see, therefore, why it refers to Jesus Christ.

The short answer to your question is this: Jacob is referring to *the inheritance of the promise* concerning kingship rather than *the fulfillment of the promise*. Saul was in no way *the fulfillment of the promise*, therefore his kingship holds no *significance* whatsoever as far as *the inheritance of the promise* is concerned. But the same can be said for Solomon and all the other Davidic kings who ruled over the Southern Kingdom of Judah. The genealogy that Luke provides makes it clear that part of *the promise* was *handed down* to Jesus through David’s son Nathan rather than through Solomon:

And when He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age, being supposedly {the} son of Joseph, the {son} of Eli, the {son} of Matthat, the {son} of Levi, the {son} of Melchi, the {son} of Jannai, the {son} of Joseph, the {son} of Mattathias, the {son} of Amos, the {son} of Nahum, the {son} of Hesli, the {son} of Naggai, the {son} of Maath, the {son} of Mattathias, the {son} of Semein, the {son} of Josech, the {son} of Joda, the {son} of Joanan, the {son} of Rhesa, the {son} of Zerubbabel, the {son} of Shealtiel, the {son} of Neri, the {son} of Melchi, the {son} of Addi, the {son} of Cosam, the {son} of Elmadam, the {son} of Er, the {son} of Joshua, the {son} of Eliezer, the {son} of Jorim, the {son} of Matthat, the {son} of Levi, the {son} of Simeon, the {son} of Judah, the {son} of Joseph, the {son} of Jonam, the {son} of Eliakim, the {son} of Melea, the {son} of Menna, the {son} of Mattatha, the {son} of Nathan, the {son} of David, the {son} of Jesse, the {son} of Obed, the {son} of Boaz, the {son} of Salmon, the {son} of Nahshon, the {son} of Amminadab, the {son} of Admin, the {son} of Ram, the {son} of Hezron, the {son} of Perez, the {son} of Judah, the {son} of Jacob, the {son} of Isaac, the {son} of Abraham, the {son} of Terah, the {son} of Nahor, the {son} of Serug, the {son} of Reu, the {son} of Peleg, the {son} of Heber, the {son} of Shelah, the {son} of Cainan, the {son} of Arphaxad, the {son} of Shem, the {son} of Noah, the {son} of Lamech, the {son} of Methuselah, the {son} of Enoch, the {son} of Jared, the {son} of Mahalaleel, the {son} of Cainan, the {son} of Enosh, the {son} of Seth, the {son} of Adam, the {son} of God.

(Luke 3:23–38)

Editor: What are your thoughts on the recent brouhaha that took place in Alabama over the removal of the Ten Commandments from a state judicial building? Do you see anything wrong with someone posting the Ten Commandments in public?

Elijah: I see nothing inherently “wrong” with anyone posting anything in public. But that is only because I believe the “wrong” is not in actions; it is in people. That is to say, the important thing is not *what* you do, it is *why* you do it. In the case you mention, we are clearly *talking about* a person who has no clue as to the true *meaning* and *significance* of the Ten Commandments. If he did, he would not have been so stupid as to claim that the American legal system is based on them. The Truth is, the source of the *religious beliefs* of many of the men who framed the Constitution can be found in the Ten Commandments. But the *legal system* they established stems from Roman law, which derived many of its legal concepts and practices from centuries of exposure to Assyrian/Babylonian jurisprudence. So if the good judge had wanted to be historically accurate, he would have put the Code of Hammurabi on display rather than the Ten Commandments.

The obvious question is, Why would anyone ignorantly insist on putting several tons of (what is to him) essentially *meaningless* granite on public display? The answer to that one is just as obvious: He thinks everybody should accept the *meaning* and *significance* that he and like-minded “Christians” attach to those “ten words.” Nevermind that he most likely can’t clearly and concisely articulate what that *meaning* and *significance* is. Even if he could, his religious beliefs would hold no great *meaning* and *significance* to the millions of Americans who have completely different religious beliefs. As Chief Justice, his job is to impartially uphold the laws of the State of Alabama as they stand written. Therefore, he has no good reason to impose on others the nonsensical *religious beliefs* he chooses to associate with the Ten Commandments.

If you can’t see how the myopically parochial attitude of the judge in question contradicts the totally impartial and unbiased position which judges are supposed to take, wait just a little while longer. Those who honestly believe the Truth of *The Teaching* will soon have ample opportunity to see that Truth and justice are not all that much a part of the foundation of our legal system either. ■