

The Barley Overcomers

CHAPTER 1: Israel's Three Feasts

When God led Israel out of Egypt into the wilderness and into the Promised Land, He instituted various holidays, or "feast days" to commemorate important events. The three main feast days are Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. Passover commemorates Israel's departure from Egypt; Pentecost commemorates the day God descended upon Mt. Sinai to give Israel the Law; Tabernacles commemorates the time Israel was supposed to cross the Jordan and enter the Promised Land.

It is very important that Christians study these feast days in detail, because they reveal the plan of God for the entire earth on a grand scale. They also reveal the plan of salvation on the individual level. The story written by Moses is not only history, but also a great allegorical novel by which we can know the mind of God.

Passover: The Personal Application

On the personal level, the story of Israel in the wilderness gives us the three steps toward full salvation. Step one is revealed by the feast of Passover. When a man's faith is placed in God through Christ, the "Lamb of God," he is said to become a Christian. He is "justified" by faith. Most Christians are aware that there is more to the Christian life than justification. Just as Israel had a long way to go before entering the Promised Land, so also the Christian has a long way to go before attaining to the full promise of God. And yet, the Christian life is too often explained purely as a New Testament teaching, without tying it to the foundation of the Old Testament which God carefully laid in His dealings with Israel. For this reason, some teach that once they are justified by faith, there is very little more to do except to try to get others saved. This is comparable to an Israelite coming out of Egypt, and then remaining on the shores of the Red Sea trying to coax more people to come out of Egypt. While one should indeed witness to people, one must also realize that he is not yet in the Promised Land.

Pentecost: The Personal Application

One must go on to Pentecost, which is the place of the infilling of the Holy Spirit. It is the place where the Law of God is to be written on our hearts. It is the place where we come to know God not only as Savior, but also as a King to be obeyed. Unfortunately, many who claim a pentecostal experience seem to treat it purely as a New Testament phenomenon, not knowing that it has its roots in the giving of the Law at Mt. Sinai. As a result, many who deem themselves pentecostal by experience think they have been given a license to be lawless and can violate any of the divine laws with immunity, so long as their lawlessness is done in "love." They often taught that love somehow replaced the law of God, instead of seeing that love is defined by the law and is therein expressed.

Those who have gone on beyond the Red Sea and have gone to Pentecost are often under the impression that they have now attained what they often call the "full gospel." This view is comparable to Israel refusing to move away from Mt. Sinai to go to the Promised Land. There is no "full gospel" teaching until one goes beyond Pentecost and teaches the principles of Tabernacles.

Tabernacles: The Personal Application

After giving the Law to Israel, God sent them to the brink of the Jordan river, where they sent twelve men to "spy out the land." When they returned, they unanimously agreed that it was a good land to inherit. However, ten of them brought a message of fear, insisting that they would be unable to conquer the land. Caleb and Joshua, on the other hand, had faith that God would give them the land and urged the people to cross the Jordan as God had said. Caleb and Joshua escaped being stoned only because the glory of God frightened the people. That "decision day" was the 50th Jubilee from Adam. It should have been a day of rejoicing and gladness, a day of blowing the trumpet as the signal for every man to come into his inheritance (Lev. 25:13). Because they refused to cross, having no faith, the day came to be commemorated as the Day of Atonement, a day of mourning, fasting, and repentance.

Had Israel followed the recommendation of Caleb and Joshua, they would have actually crossed the Jordan five days later on the first day of Tabernacles. This festival was a 7-day time period representing the time of the conquest of Canaan. (When Israel did finally cross the Jordan years later, it took 6 years to subdue the Canaanites; in the 7th year the land was divided up among all the tribes and families of Israel. In other words, it was 7 years from the Jordan Crossing to the Inheritance.)

If we were to give a detailed study of Tabernacles, consisting of the Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement and Jubilee, and finally the 7 days of Tabernacles with the 8th day as a climax, we would see that there is more to salvation than just Passover and Pentecost. The fall festivals deal with the final perfection of man. It is meant to portray man's true inheritance in the land.

The Promised Land

The Promised Land is NOT in heaven, but on earth. Canaan was a land filled with "giants" and "enemies" of God who had to be conquered and destroyed. It is common knowledge in many circles that these "giants" represent the carnal tendencies of our own flesh, which we are called to subdue and conquer. This is absolutely correct, but the obvious lesson is often missed. Our bodies are our inheritance.

Like Canaan, our bodies are presently inhabited with lawless and ungodly desires that rule us. This has been the case ever since Adam, whose sin sold us all into bondage. Adam lost the glorified body by which he had been clothed in light. After his sin, he was naked and ashamed, and God clothed them with coats of skins (Gen. 3:21).

The whole idea behind God's plan of salvation is to reverse the effects of Adam's sin upon creation. If Israel had crossed the Jordan on the 50th Jubilee, as Caleb and Joshua had recommended, I believe they would have returned to the real inheritance that had been lost in Adam. That is, they would have been fully glorified, fully changed into His glory as they passed the ark in the midst of the Jordan river. They would have exchanged their coats of skins, which presently house us, for the "house which is from heaven" (2 Cor. 5:2), Paul put it. They would have been released at that Jubilee from the house of bondage, and they would have returned every man to his inheritance. But this was not to be, for there was more to God's plan than just 50 Jubilees of Adamic history.

Nonetheless, the story tells us that our inheritance is not to be received in heaven as a spirit, but on earth in the realm of matter. Our hope, the "Promised Land," is not to forsake the earth and go to heaven, but "the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23).

In this process of the redemption of our body, we have been given the earnest, or downpayment, of the Spirit (Eph. 1:14). God's glory, His Spirit, is now resident in us, but is veiled by this flesh until the time of the full redemption (i.e., Tabernacles). Paul speaks of this quite clearly in Eph. 1:13,14.

13 . . . in Whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance UNTIL the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory.

Paul says that the Ephesian believers, who knew God as Savior (Passover), had also "after that" experienced God as King (Pentecost) and there received the earnest of the Spirit, even as Israel did at Mt. Sinai. The earnest of the Spirit is implanted within our bodies, because this is the beginning of the full inheritance, when our bodies shall be fully "changed" (1 Cor. 15:51). God has promised to change our bodies into spiritual flesh of the same kind Jesus had in His resurrection. Our hope is to be "in the likeness of His resurrection" (Rom. 6:5).

The purpose of creation is to manifest the spiritual in the earth, in the realm of matter, in order that matter (particularly man's body) may glorify God on earth as it is in heaven. In the plan of God, the move of the Spirit is from heaven to earth, not from earth to heaven. This is made plain by God's coming to earth at Mt. Sinai and by God's second coming to earth to fulfill all things. It is made plain by all the in-between comings as well, wherein He pours out His Spirit into earthly temples. (See chapter one of **The Purpose of Resurrection.**)

If we are to teach the "full gospel," we must deal with all three of these phases of salvation: Justification, Sanctification, and Glorification. Each is represented by a different feast day of Israel and illustrated by Israel's history under Moses and under Christ.

The Appointed Time

When Israel refused to cross the Jordan at their first opportunity, God judged them by refusing to allow that generation to cross over at all. They had to wander in the wilderness for 40 years before arriving at the next "appointed time." When the people heard God's decision, they "mourned greatly" (Num. 14:39). Many rose up the next morning and crossed the Jordan anyway. They were smitten before their enemies (Num. 14:45). Few people really understand the concept of appointed times. They think that if they just repent of NOT crossing over, that this gives them a license to cross the Jordan into the inheritance immediately. It does not work that way. Once judgment of God has been set, it cannot be altered, and we must submit to the judgment of God.

In the New Testament, we find Jesus coming as the Passover Lamb to free us from the bondage of our "Egypt," the flesh, sin, and death. Then we see the Church empowered at Pentecost, when God came down as fire once again and spoke to the people (Acts 2:3,4). Shortly after this (Acts 7), Stephen preached to the representatives of the people, the Sanhedrin, urging them to follow Jesus (Joshua) into the Promised Land of the Kingdom. They refused and stoned him instead. This story runs parallel to that of Caleb and Joshua urging the people to cross the Jordan, where the people nearly stoned them to death for their trouble.

The point is that because of the rejection of the Kingdom, the stoning of Stephen, the New Testament Church has had to wander in a wilderness of its own for 40 Jubilees (1960) years. We showed in our book, **Secrets of Time in Prophecy**, that the crucifixion of Jesus and the Pentecost which followed took place in 33 AD. Forty Jubilees later is 1993 AD. We are not given the date for the stoning of Stephen, but its parallel to the near stoning of Joshua indicates it was the Day of Atonement of 34 AD. Thus, we see that our time of wandering in the wilderness is nearly concluded, at which time we are now being called to cross over our own Jordan into a greater inheritance and a greater Kingdom era.

Some understand that we Christians ought to cross over into the full inheritance. However, these often do not comprehend the appointed times, and this often causes problems. Some beat their fellow Christians over the head for not moving into perfection yet. Many in the early Church tried very hard to attain perfection by living as hermits and monks in the deserts of Syria and Egypt, contemplating God and "buffeting the flesh" until it was near dead. They did not understand that once the Kingdom was rejected, the penalty was that "the Church in the wilderness" (Acts 7:38) would have to remain in the wilderness for 40 years (or Jubilees). This was the judgment of God. We should, of course, learn the path of obedience and seek perfection. But we must do so with a basic comprehension of the appointed times, lest we be overcome with guilt and grief for not overcoming the "giants" of our Canaans yet. It was by faith that Caleb and Joshua urged Israel to cross the Jordan; it was also by faith that Caleb and Joshua did NOT cross Jordan the next day, after God had decreed against it. Caleb and Joshua are the "overcomers" of the Old Testament. They had the attitude that we must emulate. Part of that overcoming attitude means we must know the appointed times, so that we jump when he says to jump; and stay when He says to stay. It is not enough to cross the Jordan; one must do it at the appointed time. It is not enough to do good; one must do it in the manner God prescribes. A man is "not crowned, except he strive lawfully" (2 Tim. 2:5).

This is the hour for the overcomers to come to the forefront and show their faith, even as Caleb and Joshua. We have reached the end of the age. After the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus in 33 AD, God gave Jerusalem 40 years of probation. Then, because they still adamantly refused to repent, God destroyed the city. The final judgment came at Masada, when the Romans captured that fortress on Passover, 73 AD. It is no coincidence that this occurred precisely 40 years after the crucifixion at Passover of 33 AD.

The Church also had a time of trouble for 40 rest years (40 x 7 = 280 years). They overcame in many ways, and so God brought about the end of Rome's persecution in precisely 313 AD with Constantine's Edict of Milan. (280 years past 33 AD is 313 AD.)

On the third and highest level, the overcomers have been given a time of 40 Jubilees. It is their time of probation, after which they will receive their inheritance. With this appointed time in mind, we will now discuss the revelation of the overcomers, depicted in Scripture as barley.

CHAPTER 2: The Barley Harvest

The three main feast days of Israel, which we have already discussed briefly, each are associated with a different harvest. The barley ripens first around the time of Passover; the wheat ripens next around the time of Pentecost; and the grapes ripen last in the fall

around the time of Tabernacles. These three crops depict three classes of people, as we will show soon. The barley represents the overcomer; the wheat represents the Church; and the grapes represent the unbelievers. There is a profound revelation in each of these crops, but our present study will focus on just the first one, barley.

The Barley Wave-Sheaf Offering

The wave-sheaf offering shortly after Passover was the firstfruits of the barley that the priest offered to God in the early Spring. It was always waved "on the morrow after the sabbath" after Passover (Lev. 23:10-14). This day is sometimes called the feast of the firstfruits. Barley was the first crop to ripen in the Spring in Canaan and Egypt. In fact, the Hebrew month of Abib ("green ears") has direct reference to the ripening of barley in that month. On the first day of that month, the priest would inspect a sheaf of barley to see if it had "eared out" yet. If so, it was announced to all the people that Passover would be observed in Jerusalem two weeks later. If the barley grain was still closed up, with the grain covered by the husk, the priest would announce that they would have to wait another month before Passover could be observed lawfully.

In such a case, a thirteenth month would be added to the previous year, rather than starting the new year with that month. Lunar months are only 29 1/2 days long, so 12 lunar months only covered 354 days. Thus, in order to keep pace with the seasons and the solar cycles, the Hebrews would add a reset month every two or three years. The earing of the barley determined whether that month was to be a 13th "reset" month or the first month of the new year.

This was also important, because it retained the symbolism of Israel's feast days. Passover signified the death of the lamb and had prophetic reference to the crucifixion of Jesus. The wave-sheaf offering signified resurrection from the dead, for on this day Jesus was raised. Thus, the people could not lawfully observe the Passover unless the barley was eared out, for this signified newness of life.

Jesus presented Himself before His Father in the heavenly Temple at the time the priest waved the barley sheaf in the earthly temple. The waving motion, up and down, signified resurrection. Though Jesus had actually been raised from the dead "very early in the morning" (Luke 24:1), He did not allow Mary to touch Him prior to the wave-sheaf offering (John 20:17). Not until the wave-sheaf offering was Jesus declared legally alive in the court of heaven.

Barley Ripens First

When God was dealing with Pharaoh to allow Israel to leave, He sent 10 plagues upon Egypt. The 7th plague was that of hail, which destroyed the barley and flax, but not the wheat and rye. (This took place just prior to the Passover, which was the 10th plague.) We read in Exodus 9:31,32.

31 And the flax and the barley was smitten, for the barley was in ear, and the flax was balled.

32 But the wheat and the rye were not smitten; for they were not grown up.

The barley was ripe and eared out just prior to that first Passover. But the wheat was "not grown up" yet.

Forty years later, when Israel was ready to cross the Jordan, Joshua sent two spies to Jericho. It was the time of Passover (Joshua 5:10), and Rahab hid the spies under stalks of flax (Joshua 2:6). Flax ripened at the same time as barley, as we saw from Exodus 9:31. Linen comes from flax. It was used to make priestly garments, and in Rev. 19:8 we see that "fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

The week after Passover is also called the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The people were required to remove all leaven from their houses for a full 7 days. Leaven is symbolic of sin; thus, removing the leavened bread depicts the removal of all sin from one's house (body). This is the same symbolism as we find in flax, so all of these things work together, woven into a complete picture of the plan of God for Christ and the overcoming body. The body of Christ (the overcomers) who are identified with their Head, will soon follow in the first resurrection.

Overcomers are "Barley"

We have already dealt with Israel's three feast days and their significance on the personal level. They represent the three stages of salvation from justification to sanctification to glorification. It is now time to view the feast days from a much broader perspective. These feast days reveal the nature and scope of the resurrections from the dead. Each crop represents a different class of people. The barley, which ripens first, represents the overcomers of the first resurrection; the wheat, which ripens at Pentecost, represents the rest of the Church (i.e., believers in general); and the grapes, which are trodden down at the end of the growing season represent the unbelievers who are judged according to their works. In this present study we will limit our focus to the barley company, showing the revelation God has given in this first "harvest of souls" called by John the first resurrection. This is the first of "three times in the year" when all the males were to appear before God's throne in Jerusalem (Ex. 34:23).

The Value of Barley

The first Scripture relevant to any study of barley is Leviticus 27:16. It reads,

16 . . . an homer of barley seed shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver.

This is the value of barley in the eyes of God. Fifty is the number of Pentecost and Jubilee. Pentecost was to be celebrated on the 50th day; Jubilee in the 50th year. Both are revelations of the outpouring of the Spirit of God. Pentecost is the time when the earnest of the Spirit was poured out (Eph. 1:14; 2 Cor. 1:22 and 5:5). The Jubilee signifies a greater outpouring, that is, the fullness (pleroma) of the Spirit. Paul prayed to be "filled with all the fullness (pleroma) of God" (Eph. 3:19). Thus, while Pentecost is a downpayment of a Jubilee, or the promise of a Jubilee, both are depicted by the number 50. The barley is valued at 50 shekels of silver, and this associates the barley with the outpouring of the Spirit, both in its earnest and its fullness,

This is consistent with the revelation of the overcomers who attain to the first resurrection; or, if they are alive at the end of the age, their "change" (transfiguration) without dying. It is also consistent with the revelation of the "unleavened bread" at Passover and the flax (white linen) ripening at the same time, which is used in the priestly garments. All of these details point to the fact that the barley company is raised first among God's creatures. James 1:18 says,

18 Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures ["creation"].

In the book of Revelation, we are told of the 144,000 who sing a new song before the throne of God. In Rev. 14:4 these are called "the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb." Firstfruits imply that a greater harvest is yet to come. Even as Jesus was "the Firstfruits of them that slept" (1 Cor. 15:20), so also are the overcomers of the first resurrection (the "144,000" of Rev. 14) the firstfruits of others yet to come.

Gideon: The Cake of Barley

Gideon is an interesting Bible character, because his ministry reveals not only the character of the barley company, but also shows it in relation to the wheat and the grapes. Israel had been forced to pay tribute to the Midianites for 7 years. When Israel finally repented and cried out to God for deliverance, God sent them a prophet to give them a history lesson (Judges 6:8-10). As Paul wrote many years later, these history lessons were written for our learning. They are examples of how God deals with men and nations. They show us why we are oppressed by captivities, both internally and externally. They also show us the solutions to the problem.

When the people repented at the word of the prophet, then God commissioned Gideon as a judge, or deliverer, to save Israel. The angel sent to call Gideon found him threshing wheat in a winepress (Judges 6:11). Since it was wheat harvest time, we know that this call came in early summer at the time of Pentecost. Assuming that the Biblical types hold true, Gideon delivered Israel later that fall at the time of the feast of Tabernacles.

Gideon's threshing wheat in the winepress depicts the calling to remove the chaff from the wheat (i.e., carnal nature and sin from the church). The winepress signifies judgment that is reserved for unbelievers. Gideon's actions here are striking, because one does not normally thresh wheat in a winepress, but on a hilltop where the wind can blow the chaff away. This seeming incongruity is matched only by the statement in Rev. 14:18, which says:

18 And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire, and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.

One does not harvest grapes with a sickle, any more than one threshes wheat in a winepress! These are highly symbolic things, but the main thing for our purpose is to show that the wheat company (non-overcoming church) will undergo trial by fire to see if their works are made of wood, hay, and stubble (1 Cor. 3:12).

When Gideon finally mustered his army of 300 against the host of the Midianites, he wanted confirmation that this was not just his own carnal plan. After all, the situation seemed hopeless. So God told him to spy out the enemy camp to receive his confirmation. Judges 7:13,14 says,

13 And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed and dram, and lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along. 14 And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel; for into his hand hath God delivered Midian and all the host.

Thus, Gideon and his army represent the barley company, the overcomers who will inherit the promise of God at the end of this present age. The manner in which Gideon's army defeated the enemy tells us how the overcomers of today will receive the promise.

Each of the men in Gideon's army was given a trumpet and a torch inside an earthen jar, or pitcher. With little oxygen in the jar, the torches could only glow. At the signal, they blew their trumpets and broke the jars, holding up the torches in the air, causing them to burst into flames.

The trumpet signifies the first resurrection of the dead at the Feast of Trumpets. The torches within the pitchers signify the presence of God in our bodies, which are the earthen vessels. At the appointed time, after blowing the trumpet for the first resurrection, these bodies of death will be broken, and the glory of God will burst into view, even as Jesus was transfigured before His disciples.

When Paul was expounding upon the transfiguration of Moses (2 Cor. 3 & 4), he made reference to this battle of Gideon by saying in 4:6,7,

6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

At present, this glory of God is a valuable "treasure," but it is hidden in "earthen vessels." The breaking of these vessels is a death of the flesh. God deals with us in matters of daily obedience in order that we may put the flesh to death a little at a time. That way, when the appointed time comes, we may be able to stand the final breaking necessary to manifest the glory of God.

If we were to delve deeper into the rest of the battle against the Midianites, we would see how Gideon affected the wheat company. He asked for help from the men of Succoth and of Penuel (Judges 8:5-9), who represent the wheat (Church). They all refused to assist Gideon in the battle, for they did not have the faith to believe that Gideon could actually win the battle. In both cases, Gideon returned after his victory and "threshed wheat in the winepress." This was the practical outworking of that which he had been doing symbolically at the first appearance of the angel in 6:11.

The men of Succoth, those with a knowledge of the revelation of Tabernacles ("Succoth") nevertheless did not qualify as overcomers. Gideon returned and scourged them with briars and thorns in the wilderness. Jesus' parable in Luke 12:45-48 illustrates this very thing. It is the parable where the carnal servants of God are to be beaten with few or many stripes and given their portion with the unbelievers. That is, they are raised from the dead at the same time as the unbelievers at the general, or second resurrection.

The men of Penuel would not help Gideon either. Penuel is the place where Jacob wrestled with the angel. The name means "the face of God," for Jacob had seen God face to face and lived. The men of Penuel represent those who have a revelation of God, who see God's face, but they are still disqualified from the barley company by a lack of faith.

The men of Penuel had built a tower (Judges 8:9), and Gideon tore it down when he returned from battle. It speaks of the day when the barley company, after they have been perfected, will tear down all the little towers of Babel that men have raised up as monuments to a past revival or revelation of God.

Denominational towers will become obsolete.

Absalom: The Rebellious Son of David

Absalom, the oldest son of David, fits into this study because he burned Joab's barley field in order to get an audience with his father. This was an unlawful and rebellious act that revealed his heart in a way that is painfully reminiscent of the church today.

Absalom's half brother, Amnon, had raped Tamar. She was Absalom's full sister and Amnon's half sister. David did nothing about it, so Absalom took the law into his own hands two years later by killing Amnon (2 Sam. 13:32). Absalom then fled to his laws in Geshur, where he remained for 3 years.

David, of course, loved Absalom greatly. He longed to see him (2 Sam. 13:39), but was restrained from calling him back from this self-imposed exile, because he recognized that Absalom had a rebellious heart. Finally, however, after 3 years, David allowed Absalom to return to Jerusalem, but David refused to see him (2 Sam. 14:28). We pick up the story from that point:

29 Therefore Absalom sent for Joab, to have sent him to the king; but he would not come to him; and when he sent again the second time, he would not come.

30 Therefore he said unto his servants, See, Joab's field is near mine, and he hath barley there; go and set it on fire. And Absalom's servants set the field on fire.

Joab did come at that point, and Absalom got his audience with David. But the moment Absalom got himself recognized by the king, he immediately began to sow seeds of discontent among the people, telling them that David was unjust and did not do anything to bring justice to those who had grievances. "So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel" (2 Sam. 15:6).

Finally, Absalom went to Hebron, where he had himself proclaimed king. David fled Jerusalem, leaving ten of his concubines to keep the house. Absalom raped them all in the sight of the people (16:22).

David's friend and counselor, Ahithophel, the high priest, joined the conspiracy and actually counseled Absalom to rape the women of David's house. This situation revealed a hidden grudge that he had carried against David for many years, for Bathsheba was his granddaughter through his son Eliam (See 11:3 & 23:34). God had forgiven David's sin with Bathsheba, but Ahithophel had not. God used this incident to bring Ahithophel's heart bitterness to light in order to give us a good example of how the house of Eli was finally disqualified from ministering to God in Solomon's Temple.

Ahithophel also advised Absalom to pursue David immediately and aggressively, but God worked it out that this piece of advice was not followed. Ahithophel knew then that David would win in the end, so he went home, got his house in order, and hanged himself (17:23).

David was greatly hurt by Ahithophel's betrayal and wrote of him in Ps. 69 and in Ps. 55:13,14.

13 But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide ["counselor"], and mine acquaintance.

14 We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.

This verse is also prophetic of Judas, who betrayed Jesus, for we read in Acts 1:16,

16 Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.

Ahithophel's counsel, in New Testament terms, was to rape the Bride of Christ. This is how many leaders in the Church fulfill this prophecy, not so much in the literal sense, but moreso by taking authority over the people, the Bride company, in an unlawful manner. The Bride belongs to Christ and are not for the leaders to use. David left them honorable, they would have served him well. Instead, he abused them. Absalom followed the advice of one who harbored bitterness against David and who therefore could not give advice that was pleasing to God.

At the end of the story Absalom was killed in the final battle for the throne. David grieved over his son, for he loved him greatly with an unconditional love. In this, David became a type of Christ, while Absalom and Ahithophel became types and shadows of the rebellious portion of the Church, the wheat company. The Church in general has long been in rebellion against God, accusing Him of injustice and thinking they know better how to rule the world with justice. Even so, God's love for them remains, even as David continued to love Absalom, his son.

Of course, we must emphasize that not all Christians are in a state of utter rebellion. That is not the point of this story. We are showing the distinction between the barley and the wheat, the overcomers and the Church in general. We are issuing a call to the wheat company (of which we are all a part until we are perfected) to strive for the higher calling, even as Paul did (Phil. 3:14). Most of the Church today hardly realizes that there is a higher calling at all. Many do not know that the works done by faith serve to build "gold, silver, and precious stones" upon the Foundation of Christ. Most do not know that there is a "better resurrection" for the overcomers (Heb. 11:34).

Our purpose here is not to malign the Church, but to try to motivate Christians to a deeper walk with God. The Biblical examples that tell us of the true heart of the wheat Church may seem harsh, but they are no worse than what most preachers tell their people even today: that the heart of man is totally depraved and "desperately wicked." Just because a man becomes a Christian does not mean he immediately becomes perfect. Repentance is only the beginning, a change in the course of one's actions. Simple repentance does not change basic human nature into the full Image of Christ.

So we do not mean to be insulting; yet we must put our finger on the problem, as the Scriptures do, lest we be guilty of vagueness. Paul said in 1 Cor. 14:8,

8 For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?

When the Church teaches that the Law of God has been abrogated, and that Christians have no further obligation to be obedient to Him, it is utter rebellion in the tradition of Absalom. Some Christians have gone so far as to say that the Law of God is a horrible thing invented by a "god of hate," and that we now have a new law of Love to follow, they are accusing God of injustice precisely as Absalom did. Most do not go so far as to call the God of the Old Testament a "god of hate," but nonetheless, the seeds of such bitter accusation are there. The very fact that men disagree with the Law of God in such things as usury, the death penalty for premeditated murder, and restitution for robbery, show that Christians are in rebellion against God.

When a Church teaches men to violate the Law of God, even as Ahithophel did with Absalom, they come under the category of believers Jesus talked about in Matthew 5:17-19.

17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfill ["perform, obey, do them"]. **18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. 19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.**

Because many Church leaders have disagreed with God in the matter of justice, they have established their own standard of righteousness according to their own feelings of "love," based largely upon their culture and what the world does. Have you ever noticed how the overall Church's sense of right and wrong has undergone great change to conform to the world's view? It only takes a generation or so to fully manifest the change. We have failed to teach our children the law of God. We have largely sent them on a voyage into open seas with no compass except to follow a vague standard of "love," which they inevitably define according to the world's view.

As a consequence, they do not know how to establish Christian government in their community, state, or nation. They blindly support the entire system of usury, excessive taxation, prison sentences for thieves (rather than restitution), and many even oppose the death penalty for premeditated murder, kidnapping, and adultery. The laws of men prevail, because the Church has destroyed or undermined the Law of God, and society has become chaotic, full of injustice, and often dangerous. Instead of the Church converting the world to the Truth, the world has largely converted the Church to its standard of "righteousness."

Many pastors and teachers have simply gone on strike and refused to teach the Law of God to the people. They say it is irrelevant, no longer a standard of right and wrong that we must use to define sin. This is absolutely contrary to new Testament teaching, to say nothing of the Old Testament. John says that "sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). Paul says he would not even know how to define sin, except by reading the Law (Rom. 3:20; 7:7).

If any church member takes it upon himself to learn the Law, the chances are quite good that he will either have to repent of his learning or face a tirade about "falling from grace." While few would accuse God of injustice to His face, they nonetheless say with Absalom,

"Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice." [2 Sam. 15:4]

In other words, "if I were God, I would do it right!" So in their zeal to establish "true justice" based on their carnal mind's definition of "love," they do not realize that they are well on their way to being deceived by a heart of bitterness into raping the Bride of Christ. This is not some unimportant issue. It is a question of rebellion and accusation against God. And yet, amazing as it may seem, God still loves the Church, even as David loved Absalom.

Nonetheless, the Church must suffer the same fate as did Absalom. his hair was long, and as he rode under a tree, his hair became tangled in the branches. When Joab, David's general, heard of it, he went and killed Absalom (2 Sam. 18:14). This is not to say that the Church will be destroyed as such. It simply means that the wheat company (Church), like Israel under Moses, is rebellious and is therefore disqualified from inheriting Life at the time of the first resurrection.

The story of Absalom's rebellion takes up a full 6 chapters of Scripture (2 Sam. 13-18, plus two of the psalms. This is obviously a very important incident in the Bible and one that contains serious warnings to the wheat company. Absalom showed his utter disregard for Joab's barley. He burned the barley field to get an audience with David. Unfortunately, the Church in general has a long history of approaching God in an unlawful manner and with a heart of rebellion and hatred for the barley overcomers. In destroying the barley, he fit the type of the church that persecutes the overcomers, even as Saul persecuted David.

A parallel theme is the story is that of Ahithophel, the high priest, who also represents the wheat company in another manner. His son, Abiathar, became high priest when Ahithophel committed suicide. Abiathar was the last of the line of Eli to serve a priests before God. Abiathar proved to be disloyal to David later in the matter of Solomon's succession to the throne (1 Kings 1:7). He was replaced by Zadok (2:27,35)), at which time Samuel's prophecy came to pass concerning the house of Eli, the corrupt priesthood (1 Sam. 3:14).

This theme forms the backdrop for Ezekiel's prophecy in chapter 44 about the idolatrous priests (house of Eli) and the sons of Zadok. The house of Eli came to represent the corrupt and rebellious priesthood up to the present day in the Church, while the sons of Zadok depict the Melchizedek Order, the barley company, who are allowed to minister to both God and man in the age to come.

This story is packed so full of types and shadows that it ranks among the most important stories of the entire Bible narrative. When we view Absalom's treatment of Joab's barley field in the full context of these important themes, it is not hard to see how barley represents the overcomers that are persecuted by the wheat company.

This is the theme of our next section.

The 7 Sons of Saul Hanged at Barley Harvest

In 2 Samuel 21 we are told that there was a famine in the land during the days of David. David inquired of the Lord to discern its spiritual cause. The Lord answered:

1 It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.

David then called for Gibeonite representatives and asked them what he must do to right the wrong done upon them. They requested that 7 of the sons of Saul be delivered to them for execution. David complied with that request.

9 And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill before the Lord; and they fell all seven together and were put to death in the days of harvest, in the first (days) in the beginning of barley harvest.

The word "days" above is not in the original Hebrew text. The translators did not understand the significance of this passage and so they inserted the word "days." It should be understood as the first DAY, the beginning of barley harvest--hence, the day of the wave-sheaf offering. So while the high priest of Israel was waving the firstfruits of the barley harvest, the 7 sons of Saul were being executed by the Gibeonites. The irony of this situation is manifest in that years later, Jesus was raised from the dead on this day. It is a day of resurrection, but the sons of Saul were executed on this same day. This contrast can be understood only when we learn that Saul represents the Church under Pentecost, and his 7 sons represent the 7 Churches in the Pentecostal era (33 to 1993 AD).

How do we know that Saul represents the wheat Church? Simply because Saul was crowned king over Israel on the day of Pentecost, the day when the high priest offered the firstfruits of the wheat to God in the temple. When Samuel gave his speech on the day Saul was coronated as king of Israel, he said in 1 Sam. 12:17,

17 Is it not WHEAT harvest today? I will call unto the Lord, and He shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking you a king.

According to the Law in Lev. 23:14, no man was allowed to harvest a new crop of barley or wheat until the high priest had offered to God the firstfruits of the harvest. For instance, the day of barley harvest would be the wave-sheaf offering shortly after Passover. Once the high priest had offered the firstfruits of barley to God, the people were then allowed to harvest and eat of their new crop of barley. The same was true of the wheat harvest. No man could harvest or eat of the new crop of wheat until the day of Pentecost. Consequently, the day of wheat harvest was the day of Pentecost. This is how we know that Saul was coronated on the day of Pentecost, and therefore, Saul is typical of the wheat company, the pentecostal Church, which is not yet perfected, but carnal. Even as Saul himself reigned over Israel 40 years, so also our "Sauls" have reigned over the New Testament Church for 40 Jubilees from 33 to 1993 AD.

We do not mean to disparage Pentecost itself here. Pentecost is good, for it is a feast day of the Lord established to commemorate God coming down as fire upon Mt. Sinai to write His Laws in our hearts. It has a greater fulfillment in the second chapter of Acts as well. However, we must also understand the limitations of those under the pentecostal anointing. The 2 loaves of wheat bread offered to God at Pentecost were baked with leaven (Lev. 23:17). Since leaven is a type of sin in the Bible, it is not hard to see that the realm of Pentecost, though good, was NOT an era of perfection. It was an era in which we received an earnest of the Spirit only, by which no man can be perfected.

But this is not a book on the wheat harvest, so we cannot pursue that theme further. For now, it is enough to know that Saul represents the carnal Church, and that his 7 sons represent the 7 Churches of Pentecost. Their execution on the day of barley harvest speaks volumes. If they had been of the barley company, they would have received Life at that time, even as Jesus was raised from the dead on that day. Their execution tells us that they, like the Church under Moses, will die in the wilderness. They will remain mortal at the time of the first resurrection and not receive the promise at that time. They will be among "the rest of the dead" (Rev. 20:5) who will remain mortal or dead for another thousand years, awaiting the second resurrection.

Saul's Persecution of the Gibeonites

There is more to be learned from the story of the execution of Saul's sons. The reason for their execution is that they persecuted the Gibeonites. Who were the Gibeonites? How do they fit into the story of the Church and the overcomers?

The story begins in Genesis 9:20-27, where Noah cursed Canaan.]

25 And he [Noah] said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.

26 And he said, Blessed be thee Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his [His?] servant.

27 God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant.

In our book, **Secrets of Time in Prophecy**, we show how this event took place in the year 1660 from Adam, just four years after the flood. We also show how this curse put Canaan and his descendants in the land of Canaan under Cursed Time (414-year cycles leading to judgment). Joshua marched into Canaan to bring judgment upon the Canaanites precisely 828 years after the curse, or 2 x 414 years. Thus, they were judged precisely on schedule by the Laws of Time.

However, the curse was NOT that all the Canaanites would be killed. It was that Canaan would be a servant to his brethren and possibly to the Lord Himself. Note that verse 26 might be read that Canaan would be the servant of "the Lord God of Shem," not merely Shem himself.

At any rate, the fulfillment in the time of Joshua shows us how we are to interpret Noah's curse. While Joshua was making war with the Canaanites, the town of Gibeon tricked Joshua into making a covenant of peace with them (Joshua 9). There are many lessons to the story, but few ever connect the story to Noah's curse upon Canaan, which was the cause of this war against the Canaanites. The fact that Noah prophesied by his curse that Canaan was to be a servant means that someone had to fulfill it by becoming a servant. Dead Canaanites make poor servants. Joshua 9:23-27 reads,

23 Now therefore ye are cursed and there shall none of you be freed from being bondmen and hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God. 27 And Joshua made them that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation and for the altar of the Lord, even unto this day, in the place which he should choose.

The Gibeonites were "cursed" to serve the Temple of God in place of "the congregation." (This Old Testament word is translated church in the New Testament.) What a fantastic curse! Paul himself called himself a "servant," or literally a bond slave of Jesus Christ

(Rom. 1:1). As such, we all should serve God in His sanctuary. And thus, we might read Noah's curse in Gen. 9:26 to mean that Canaan would be a servant of the Lord God of Shem, for this was the practical outworking of that curse.

On the other hand, Canaan was also to serve his brethren, particularly Shem himself. Who is Shem? Shem is identified in ancient writings as the original Melchizedek, king of Salem (Jerusalem), to whom Abraham paid tithes. Because he simply pops up out of nowhere in the book of Genesis, a story without explanation, a man who is unidentified as to genealogy, this divine silence makes him a type of Christ (Heb. 7:1-4).

The book of Jasher also calls him Shem. I believe this is correct, because it fits the type when we come to the story of the Gibeonites. The Gibeonites became servants of Shem, or Melchizedek, and bond slaves of Jesus Christ. One might call them the Melchizedek Order, the new priesthood that replaces that of Levi. Those of this Order are the "priest of God and of Christ" who "reign with Him a thousand years" (Rev. 20:6) in the New Jerusalem, the greater Salem.

How could those Canaanite Gibeonites under the curse of God possibly represent the Melchizedek Order, the overcomers? The Melchizedek Order is not some sort of super-spiritual club of saints. It is a group of overcomers. If they had all started out perfect, they would not need to overcome anything. The simple fact is that we are all Canaanites under the curse of God. But by His grace, our Joshua (Jesus) "curses" us to become His servants in His Temple, where we serve Shem, the original Melchizedek.

Joshua (Jesus) has sworn to protect us (Jos. 9:19); he had sworn to "let them LIVE" (Jos. 9:20); and He has made us "hewers of wood" (bearing His cross of reproach) and "drawers of water unto all the congregation [Church]." They are to bring the water of the Holy Spirit to the rest of the Church on behalf of the Temple of God (Jos. 9:21).

And so, when Saul later decided to persecute the Gibeonites, not understanding God's purposes, it was a graphic picture of how Israel persecuted the prophets in the Old Testament, and how the Church has persecuted the overcomers in the New. Saul persecuted David, and he also persecuted the Gibeonites. Saul's actions disqualified the 7 sons of Saul and the wheat Church from inheriting the kingdom in the first resurrection. This is why the Church must await the second resurrection at the end of the thousand years.

Eleazar Protects the Barley Field

King David had a few mighty men who distinguished themselves in various ways. One of these was Eleazar. 1 Chronicles 11:12-14 says,

12 And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodo, the Aholite, who was one of the three mighties 13 He was with David at Pas-dammim, and there the Philistines were gathered together to battle, where was a parcel of ground full of barley; and the people fled from before the Philistines. 14 And they se themselves in the midst of that parcel and delivered it and slew the Philistines; and the Lord saved them by a great deliverance.

Eleazar was a mighty man in that he helped David defend the barley company, the overcomers. In fact, Eleazar had at one time been part of Saul's army and therefore must have defected to David. David, too, is an overcomer, so Eleazar's actions in defending the barley is consistent with his helping David against the army of the Philistines.

This brief account in Scripture speaks volumes. It is one of the true gems in the Bible. This Hebrew name "Eleazar" means God helps. In a court of law, a helper is called an Advocate, or "comforter" (John 15:26). The name denotes the activity of the Holy Spirit, God's help.

The mighty man of David carries the same name as Abraham's trusted servant, who was sent out to find the bride for Isaac (Gen. 24). Again, this shows the activity of the Holy Spirit, Who has been sent to find the Bride for the chosen Seed.

Eleazar is said to be the son of Dodo ("loving"). The name comes from the Hebrew word, Dode, which means Love. In fact, the word Dode is the root of both Dodo and David. That is it is generally understood that the name "David" also means "loving."

Dodo himself is called an "Ahoite," which means he was descended from Ahoah (1 Chr. 8:4). According to **A Dictionary of Scripture Proper Names**, by J.B. Jackson, Ahoah means "brother of rest."

So let us put all this together and see what God is saying under the surface of the Scripture. We will simply translate the names as we re-quote 1 Chron. 11:12 and see what the Spirit is teaching us.

12 And after him was the Advocate, the son of Love, the brother of Rest, who was one of the three mighties.

In other words, the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, is "one of the three Mighties." The Holy Spirit is born of Love and related to entering into God's Rest. What a marvelous picture this verse paints for us!

Verse 13 says that Eleazar was with David at Pas-dammim. Bullinger's notes say that this is probably the same as Ephes-dammim (1 Sam. 17:1), the place where David slew Goliath. Pas-dammim means "the vanishing, or spreading out of bloods." Ephes-dammim has a similar meaning: "limit of bloods." Most likely, it received its name from the fact that bloodshed was limited to Goliath at that place. Recall that Goliath was the champion of the Philistines, while David was the champion of Israel. The loser of the battle was supposed to serve the winner. In ancient times battles were sometimes fought by champions in order to limit bloodshed.

If Eleazar was with David at the time of Goliath, it can only mean that he was part of Saul's army at that time. He was obviously a trained warrior who saw that God was with David in slaying the giant. In some later battle with the Philistines, when Saul's army again fled in fear, Eleazar stood his ground, and defended this barley field. (See 2 Sam. 23:9-12. From this text, it is obvious that David was not leading the troops of Israel at that time, since the troops had fled. Thus, it must have occurred after David had fled from Saul.) After David fled from Saul, Eleazar, it seems, left Saul's army and defected to David in the hills. As best we can tell, this is the history of Eleazar, the barley defender. And, as we said, the spiritual meaning shows that the Holy Spirit is the real defender of the overcoming remnant, the barley company.

Elisha Overcomes Death with Barley

Barley is a hardy plant that can withstand drought and extreme heat and cold. So when the Scriptures talk of grain or meal in time of drought, it generally refers to barley, for wheat cannot grow under such severe conditions. In this way barley is a very good symbol of the overcomer, who will flourish in between revivals when the Spirit of God does not appear to be moving.

In contrast, the wheat company languishes when God seems to hide his face for a time. Like Israel under Moses, they tempt God saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?" (Ex. 17:7). They do not understand that our faith is not tested while God is moving miraculously, but in those times when he is silent. Thus, in the time of drought, the wheat dies.

There are 13 famines (droughts) recorded in the Bible, and they all deal with this very subject.

Barley ripens early as well. It ripens around the time of Passover in early Spring, while wheat ripens later in late Spring or early Summer at the time of Pentecost. Barley ripens prior to the latter rains, while the wheat needs the latter rain to ripen. Likewise, the overcomers will come into maturity and be "harvested" by God prior to the "latter rain" of the Holy Spirit. In fact, the overcomers will receive the fullness of His Spirit (the latter rain) and then dispense it to the rest of the world, including the Church.

There was a drought in the days of Elisha that teaches us more about the spiritual principles of barley. 2 Kings 4:38-41 says,

38 And Elisha came again to Gilgal; and there was a dearth [drought] in the land; and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him; and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets. 39 And one went out into the field to gather herbs and found a wild vine and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full and came and shred them into the pot of pottage; for they knew them not. 40 So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out and said, O thou man of God, there is DEATH in the pot. And they could not eat thereof. 41 But he said, Then bring MEAL. And he cast it into the pot, and he said, Pour out for the people that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot.

Since this event occurred in a time of drought, the "meal" which they used was no doubt BARLEY. And so, the barley was used to overcome death. It pictures resurrection from the dead.

But the story is not complete without reading the next verses:

42 And there came a man from Baal-shalisha and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley and full ears of corn [i.e., "grain"] in the husk thereof. And he said, Give unto the people that they may eat. 43 And his servant said, What, should I set this before an hundred men? He said again, Give the people, that they may eat; for thus saith the Lord, They shall eat and shall leave thereof. 44 So he set it before the, and they did eat, and left thereof, according to the word of the Lord.

A man from Baal-shalisha brought Elisha the firstfruits of the barley which would normally go to the priest at the temple. Apparently, the priesthood was corrupt at that time, and this man did not want his offering to be used to support false teachings.

So it was the day of the wave-sheaf offering on the first Sunday after Passover that year. (See Lev. 23:10-14.) Many years later, Jesus would be raised from the dead on this day to fulfill this very feast day. But Elisha and the sons of the prophets celebrated it by turning death into life, in order to feed the multitude. The bread was multiplied, so that they even had leftovers.

Jesus Feeds the Multitude with Barley

The story of Elisha reminds us of a similar story in John 6 which also took place around the time of Passover (John 6:4). On this occasion, Jesus fed the multitude with "five barley loaves and two small fishes" (6:9).

12 When they were filled, He said unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. 13 Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which remained over and above them that had eaten.

The broken bread denotes death; gathering the "fragments" speaks of resurrection, "that nothing be lost." In the commentary later in the chapter, Jesus says 4 more times, "and I will raise him up at the last day." (See vs. 39, 40, 44, and 54.)

The overcomers will inherit the first resurrection. But first, they are the barley bread in Jesus' hands that must be broken to feed the multitude. The overcomers often wonder why they experience troubles, rather than the "victorious life." They wonder why they are disfellowshipped by their church and friends. They wonder why God brings all their faults to the surface for others to see. They wonder why God promises so much, yet seems to deliver the opposite. They wonder why God disciplines them so much, never letting them get away with anything.

There is a simple explanation. Jesus is breaking them to feed the multitude. Is not the time to be victorious yet. It is the time to die. It is not yet time to enjoy a good reputation among the brethren, but to be made "of no reputation" (Phil. 2:7), following the path Jesus trod. He breaks the pride of His overcoming remnant by exposing their faults so that wheat can feed upon them. This is why the wheat company (Church) seldom recognized the overcomers among them. They are usually the most unlikely ones by their standard of measure. While the promises are tremendous, the way to those promises is through the valley of the shadow of death. Joseph, too, had mighty promises, but God led him first into slavery and the dungeon.

The barley company is not righteous. they simply know the deceitfulness of their own hearts better than most, because this has been a major part of their revelation from God. They know they are unworthy, and the Church is happy to remind them that they are, after all, just publicans and harlots. The barley call is not a call to righteousness, but to brokenness. It is not a call to the victorious life, but to the despair of death. It is not a call to the throne, but to the dungeon and the wilderness. And when all self-righteousness is gone, when all impatience has run its course, then is death conquered by Life.