

The Headship of Jesus Christ

“They have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me; that I should not reign over them”. (1 Samuel 8:7)

Some 1,500 years before the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, the chosen ones of Israel were brought out from Egypt, released from bondage and baptised in the waters of the Red Sea. They were led by Moses, a type (or prophetic shadow) of the Lord Himself. Through this, God revealed Himself as the I AM, the ever-present One and empowered Moses to perform increasingly astounding miracles as a witness against Pharaoh and his kingdom.

13 “Then Moses said to God, "Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?"
 14 And God said to Moses, "I AM WHOM I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" (Exodus 3:13-14)

Moses, with considerable fear and trembling, yet in obedience to his God, in faith allowed himself to be the person whom God, the God of Israel, would show Himself the highest and most powerful of all.

In those days emperor worship had become accepted practice. Pharaoh sat in his own temple, on his own throne, demanding obedience and recognition that he alone was god. His laws could not be questioned. They were enforced by a well-trained and disciplined army. When Moses came before Pharaoh his life could be considered as nothing and without the Living God to protect him, Moses was as good as dead for daring to question the power and authority of one of the first and more well-known antichrists. Yet the I AM does not allow anyone to imitate Him. No created being has ever had the authority to take His place. The minute Pharaoh adopted the title of a god who demanded worship, his judgement was a foregone conclusion. Not that it would happen immediately, but like most things in this world, it would come in due time: in God's time.

Without detailing the symbolic meaning of the plagues that God sent to Pharaoh and his kingdom, we may note that Pharaoh was exceedingly humiliated and as head of his kingdom, his own, and his people's firstborn and their land and crops, were severely destroyed (Exodus CHs 7 - 14).

This principle, that the spiritual state of the head of a kingdom determines how God deals with that kingdom, is a principle of scripture running right through the Bible; from the beginning to its end.

Judgement on the Headship of a Kingdom

It first began with Adam, the head of all creation under God, and Eve the mother of all living. When Eve disobeyed the word of the Lord and listened to the first of all false prophets, the serpent, she disobeyed her Head and transferred her allegiance to the devil. Both Adam and Eve were in complete communion with God. They walked with Him and saw Him face to face. Their choice, the choice of a perfect free will, was to turn their backs on the One who had showed them so much love and affection.

Not only did Eve just listen to the evil one; she deliberately and consciously disobeyed the word of God by her act of rebellion (*Genesis 3:1-6*). Effectively, she divorced herself from her husband, the Lord Himself and joined herself adulterously to a new husband, the devil. As if this was not enough, our ancestral mother then sought to seduce Adam into the same lie. Blindly and incredibly ignorantly failing to ask God what should be done, loving the creature more than the Creator (*Romans 1:25*), Adam completed the fall by not questioning Eve's conduct. Adam did not attempt to refer to God's simple word and therefore fell into line with an adulterous woman. By his failure to look to Jesus, both himself and his wife were automatically transferred from under the Kingship of the God of Israel to the kingship of the deceiver who masquerades as an angel of light.

God's action to separate Himself from this first prostitution was swiftly and justifiably quick. The new king of the world brought with him the seeds of his deceit: weeds, thorns, thistles, hard labour, sickness, death. The whole creation now became changed into the likeness of the new king. Succeeding kings became ever more corrupt and crazy for personal power. And each new generation were forced to give allegiance to each new despot who perpetuated Adam's sinful and rebellious nature.

After a suitable time when men could reflect on what man had done and the judgement of the Flood was past, the people of Israel found themselves under bondage to the world and king Pharaoh of Egypt.... Enter the God of Israel with His servant, Moses.

By this time Egypt was one of the seven kingdoms of the world which are prophesied to set themselves against the true God (*Revelation 17:9-10*). Once God judged that iniquity had come to its fullness, Moses was sent as a demonstration of the authority and power of the Living God. Against Him, Pharaoh was unable to stand. Even his kingly line – the firstborn son of Pharaoh and every firstborn of every Egyptian was systematically slaughtered by the destroying angel, the devil:

4“Then Moses said, "Thus says the LORD: `About midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt; 5 `and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the female servant who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the animals. 6 `Then there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as was not like it before, nor shall be like it again. 7 `But against none of the children of Israel shall a dog move its tongue, against man or beast, that you may know that the LORD does make a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.' (*Exodus 11:4-7*)

Only those who had painted lamb's blood on the doorposts of their houses, exactly in accordance with God's command through Moses, were saved from slaughter. The devil could not touch them, not because of the blood of a creature but because of the command God had given regarding the blood of the lamb, His Firstborn:

3 "Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: `On the tenth day of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household. 4 `And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb. 5 `Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 6 `Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight... 7 `And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it.... 11 `And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD'S Passover. (*Exodus 12:3-11*)

14 "So it shall be, when your son asks you in time to come, saying, `What is this?' that you shall say to him, `By strength of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 15 `And it came to pass, when Pharaoh was stubborn about letting us go, that the LORD killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast. Therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all males that open the womb, but all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.'" (*Exodus 13: 14-15*)

The Firstborn Lamb of the God of Israel is, of course, the Lord Jesus Christ through whom the world was created in six days, and in whom is redemption through His blood:

13 "He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, 14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. 15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. 18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the pre-eminence." (*Colossians 1:13-18*)

Next God led the chosen ones to and through the Red Sea, where king Pharaoh and his army, who did not have the blood covering and therefore had not obeyed God's Word, were humiliatingly slaughtered for a second time as they tried once more to oppose the Living God (*Exodus 14:13-31 ; Hebrews 11:27-29*)

But the chosen ones were brought through the waters and eventually to the Promised Land, now called Israel. They entered into the land because they had the only One King as their God.

The only One King

Who then, is the only One King? He demonstrates His kingship and His headship of the true flock of Israel by the actions He has taken to lead those who belong to Him. His own blood was prefigured by the lamb's blood at Passover. The passing through the sea prefigured his immersion. His authority and power were demonstrated by His command of the wind and waves (*Exodus 14:21; Luke 8:22-25*); and by the command to the devil to destroy only the firstborn, rather than just any person. As King of Kings and Lord of Lords, no man can usurp his authority. Prior to His incarnation, still the Living God makes it abundantly clear that He, and He alone is King, supreme Ruler and the repository of all justice, righteousness and truth. It is He, and He alone who is to be obeyed (*Deuteronomy 11:26-28; 1 Samuel 22-23; Luke 8:21; Acts 5:29*).

So the Lord Jesus Christ and no other, has the right to rule and reign over His chosen His bride. His headship is absolute (*Colossians 1:18*). As the One through whom the world was created, no creature can stand equal to Him; neither can any created being stand vicariously in his place. No man or woman can substitute for Him. He, and He alone, has the right to that place of headship over his bride. By ignoring God's word, Adam substituted a created being as head over him. This vicarious replacement of God with another is part of our inherited sin nature and was to occur again and again.

Vicarious Replacement of God

During the years of wandering in the wilderness, when many fell for wanting to return to Egypt, and later, in the Promised Land, the chosen people passed through phases of apostasy and revival. When they listened to the voice of God through men like Joshua and various Judges, He was patiently protecting them so that they might continue to know His absolute power and authority. While they did not listen to the voice of God, punishment for disobedience came by way of the nations whose gods the chosen had begun to worship. But the heart of man is wicked beyond all else and those who had entered into the Land steadily became blinded to the goodness and care of the God of Israel for them. A man such as Gideon, for example would not entertain the idea that he should be made King, yet many ignorant of God's word, desired it so:

22 "Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, "Rule over us, both you and your son, and your grandson also; for you have delivered us from the hand of Midian." 23 But Gideon said to them, "I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; the LORD shall rule over you."'" (*Judges 8 22-23; the word LORD is YHVH in the Hebrew - Yahweh*)

Samuel was eventually called to make the final stand before a vicarious replacement of God with a man named Saul. During the time when Samuel had been called to proclaim God's word to the people, the chosen began to desire to imitate the nations around them and to appoint a King over them. Although they probably did not realise what they were suggesting, the effect of their clamouring was to desire a man who would stand vicariously in the place of the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 "Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, 5 and said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations." 6 But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." So Samuel prayed to the LORD. 7 And the LORD said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them. 8 "According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even to this day--with which they have forsaken Me and served other gods--so they are doing to you also. 9 "Now therefore, heed their voice. However, you shall solemnly forewarn them, and show them the behaviour of the king who will reign over them." 10 So Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who asked him for a king. 11 And he said, "This will be the behaviour of the king who will reign over you: He will take your sons and appoint them for his own chariots and to be his horsemen, and some will run before his chariots. 12 "He will appoint captains over his thousands and captains over his fifties, will set some to plough his ground and reap his harvest, and some to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. 13 "He will take your daughters to be perfumers, cooks, and bakers. 14 "And he will take the best of your fields, your vineyards, and your olive groves, and give them to his servants. 15 "He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage, and give it to his officers and servants. 16 "And he will take your male servants, your female servants, your finest young men, and your donkeys, and put them to his

work. 17 "He will take a tenth of your sheep. And you will be his servants. 18 "And you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the LORD will not hear you in that day." 19 Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, "No, but we will have a king over us, 20 that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles." 21 And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he repeated them in the hearing of the LORD. 22 So the LORD said to Samuel, "Heed their voice, and make them a king." " (1 Samuel 8:4-22)

Even if the people did not know, Samuel knew that they desired to replace God as their King. God even told Samuel that they had rejected not Samuel but Him. This true prophet's warning was ignored and the stage was then set for another antichrist to enter, starting a line of powerful oppression (with a few exceptions) which eventually led to complete apostasy and the inevitable judgement. When the people of God turn from Him to imitate the world, a second principle comes into play: that God uses the things of the world as instruments of judgement to remind His people of His goodness; that they may repent and return to Him.

What is it that God and His prophet foresaw that the people He had chosen did not see? It was that the threat to their safety and well-being came from **within** themselves. It came not from their enemies from whom God had promised to protect them, but from their own sin-nature and the tendency of all created beings to rebel against God and His word. Again and again, the scriptures from the beginning, warn us of blindness and hardening of hearts leading to a falling away from truth, which takes place from within the congregation. This then prepares the way for all manner of false prophets and teachers and finally, the Antichrist himself.

Apostasy from within the congregation

According to the scriptures, there are many antichrists in this age and there is another antichrist yet to come. We are told that he will set himself up in the Temple in place of God. Some who hold to the false historical/grammatical approach to prophecy, argue that this desecration of the Temple occurred under Antiochus Epiphanes some years prior to the birth of the Messiah. This, however, is a gross distortion of the texts of the Newer Testament scriptures, in which the Lord Jesus Himself declares that the coming of the abomination of desolation is a future event (*Matthew 24:15*). Josephus the Jewish historian also applied this to his own age during the destruction of the Temple in AD. 70. Thus the pattern of prophetic scripture has been seen to have been happening in more than one age, leading to the final and complete fulfilment at the end just before Jesus returns.

Another interpretation of this man is that he is said to be a Pope of the Roman Catholic Church. Whilst we may *speculate* about future events we should not be blinded to the possibility that the most obvious person, i.e. a Pope, to fill the position, may not be the devil's choice for rather obvious reasons. It could be, though we have yet to find out, that the Pope heads a grouping of false prophets and all other worldliness, that he is one of many antichrists rather than being the Man of Sin himself. Whatever the truth, there must first be a falling away from truth before the Antichrist can be revealed:

3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day (*the day of the Lord's return*) will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.
(2 Thessalonians 2:3-4).

Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, indicates that the falling away, the apostasy from truth, will take place in the context of the Second Coming of the Lord, when lawlessness will "come out of the midst", possibly meaning it will come from within the fellowship of believers. This might be led by a Pope, of course, or some other deceiver. (*English translations of the text in 2 Thessalonians 2:7 say "until he is taken out of the way", but the Greek reads εως εκ μεσου γενηται – until it comes out of the midst*).

As with Adam's wife, Eve, the wife of Jesus contains weeds amongst the wheat; those who know the word but ignore it and do their own bidding. There will be at the end of days, two women: one who is faithfully obedient to her husband, the Lord Jesus and there will be another who is in rebellion. Rebellion is lawlessness whose headship rests with the devil, as at the first. God will regard this second woman as an adulterous harlot (*Revelation 17:1-6*) who has run after the kings of the world, even though like Eve

she once had known the Lord and was loved by Him. Unless salvation had been offered to her she could not be regarded as being apostate and an adulterous prostitute..

The Greek word, translated apostasy, is *apostasias* which is derived from *apostasion* - a bill of divorce. **The unsaved** do not get divorced from Jesus because they were never joined to Him. Unless the bride had known the true husband, she could not be regarded as a harlot when she ran after other gods. The biblical picture of a harlot is one who has first known her husband, then later seduced other men and their gods (demons) to know her. According to scripture, this picture first began with Israel, the bride of the Lord God Almighty, the God of Israel. A careful and considered reading of the whole Bible shows us just how often the prophets declare Abraham's children to be a chosen bride who later fell into harlotry. (See for example *Deuteronomy 31:16; Isaiah 57:3-8; Jeremiah 3:1 & 3:14; Ezekiel 16:32 & Ch 23; Hosea 1:2*). But later the apostles were to apply the same warnings to the church (*2 Thessalonians 2:1-4; 2 Peter 2:12-15; Romans 11:20-22; 1 John 2:18-19; Revelation 2:22 & 17:1-6*).

At first the church was an assembly of repentant Jews; called to return to their Head, the King of Israel, the Lord Jesus Christ. Later as gentiles were saved, the epistles refer to various antichrists who set themselves over the congregation to teach things which the apostles did not teach. It does not take a great deal of informed reading of the Newer Testament to understand that the beginnings of apostasy, the falling away from truth, were occurring within the first 60 years of the resurrection. And it occurred through wolves in sheep's clothing who, like all false prophets, question "Did God really say?" Theirs is not apostolic instruction, although they like to pretend it is. Theirs is a counterfeit which is **not** derived from the scriptures, but the teachings of men.

6 "I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel,

7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed". (*Galatians 1:6-8; the Greek for "turning away from" is metatitheshe apo - indicating a reversal of prior ordination*)

Their instruction may be based on experiences or it may be based on what they have heard many other teachers say, but it is not the result of searching the scriptures to find out what God says. Although they try to imbibe an aura of authenticity by associating with apostolic teachings, they soon begin to substitute the plain meaning of scripture with teachings which are much more easy on the ear and are readily acceptable to a heart that is hardening to unbelief.

18 "Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. 19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be revealed, that none of them were of us." (*1 John 2:18-19*)

15 They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; 19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage 20 For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge (*Greek: epignosis - thorough knowledge*) **of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. (2 Peter 2:15,19-20)**

2 Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; 13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end". (*Hebrews 3:12-14*)

We are warned under threat of serious punishment (*Revelation 2:5 & 3:16*) **not** to be like the antichrists who fall away, depart, stand off or withdraw themselves from the Lord. Always these harlots are said to come from the midst of the congregation and the devil uses their false headship to pull the unwary away from the Living God little by little; step by creeping step.

Little by little

The apostasy of old Israel took place over many years until the bride to be, was far from spotless. So did the apostasy of the church. A mixture of truth and error replaced little by little, the once pure doctrine of the Lord given through His chosen apostles. Had the people used the Holy Spirit's gift of discernment they might have rejected the false whilst holding to the true. Indeed there were always a few who saw the error and proclaimed the truth, only to be slaughtered for daring to question the authority of the king over them. Nevertheless, the clamour for a king over us is always there. It is far easier to adulate a person we can see, than the King whom we cannot. It is far easier to allow the false prophets and teachers to take their kingly place **we** give them, than to stand for the Word!

History shows that the once biblical assembly of believers steadily became separated into Clergy and Laity, adopting many worldly beliefs until one man became head (Pope) of an organisation which christianises paganism to win converts into the biggest pseudo-christian cult in the world. Even attempts at reformation were at best partial, still mixing rationalistic humanism with the Word; retaining a catholic philosophy, and denying God's spiritual gifts.

Today we throw money by the bucketful at teachers who have become gods because we do not measure their "new" revelation against the bedrock of God's word. They may be scholars who replace revelation with reason, submission with higher criticism. They may write books thicker than the Bible itself to make their case. They may wear special clothing to distinguish themselves from us and further divide the body of Christ. They may jet around the world, only appearing at those places which can contribute to their expensive lifestyle. Many have christianised pagan practices to enable as many "converts" to enter the organisation of the church by such christening; others have injected Humanistic or Eastern philosophy; idolatry, Psychology or Evolution into their teachings; still others are like the situation in *Matthew 7:21-23*, where Jesus says those powerful men were never known by Him. They may either deny God's gifts or they may seem to have the appearance of gifting in extraordinary power; yet they have one thing in common: they do not believe God's word or else they would preach it and live it! Always they have an appearance of teaching the scriptures. But they mix the word with the teachings of men. And, if they do not preach God's pure word, they do not acknowledge His headship:

"You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you (*Deuteronomy 4:2*).

Woe to the rebellious children," says the LORD, "Who take counsel, but not of Me, And who devise plans, but not of My Spirit, That they may add sin to sin; (*Isaiah 30:1*)

9 "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. 10 "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love (*John 15:9-10*).

But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed". (*Galatians 1:8*)

In all cases their only course of action should be to repent of their folly and seek the grace of God. Like the Lord Jesus, we should not allow them recognition, as their vacuous teachings are useless for salvation. And we should call them to stand down from leadership whilst they are dealt with by God's transforming power – the power of the true gospel which will save those who truly return to Him.

So then, those who can see and understand what's occurring need to speak out that those who oppose God's word may be yet saved. Love demands that we tell the truth about them, otherwise they will perish eternally as part of the harlot, the Woman of Babylon; the bride who has run adulterously after other gods, which are demons in disguise.

Choose before its too late!

Harlotry comes in many guises and denies the truth in many diverse ways. Ultimately it is about being one's own master and

following one's own religious pathway; gaining power over the flock that Jesus bought with His own blood, rather than the way of submission to the Lord, the God of Israel, the only King and Saviour over us.

Like Israel of old, the church has followed what Israel did. Rejecting the revelation of the word, we set up church government in hierarchies where there is ultimately one man at the top. He may be called archbishop, apostle, prophet, preacher, pastor or pope, but he is a man who takes the place of, and focus off, Jesus. Paul warned against this focus on men in 1 Corinthians 1:12-13.

In clamouring for a king over us, we reject God's word in favour of our own selfish ways, and replace the headship of Jesus with the headship of the devil. Once in the clutches of such a king, we must expect to be treated as Samuel prophesied:

- "Yes-men" from the assembly to serve in the "king's" army (*1 Samuel 8:11*)
- Hierarchy to provide the "king" with his wealth and honour (*8:12*)
- Daughters from the assembly to provide the "king" with his personal needs (*8:13*)
- Deprivation of the assembly through the confiscation of assets (*8:14*)
- Demanding a tithe of everything for himself (*8:15*)
- The assembly becomes his passive servant (*8:17*)
- The oppression will become so great "And you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, and the LORD will not hear you in that day." (*8:18*)

Or, instead of a plurality of elders, we exercise Reformed democratic government and effectively abolish biblical eldership altogether. Many in the Reformed stream have argued for the cessation of such callings as apostle, prophet and evangelist and have amalgamated the office of pastor and teacher into one. Having denied the gifts of the Holy Spirit, they deprived the people of the means of real discernment of God's will, substituting selfish rationalism in its place.

Again, although they probably did not realise it, they were setting up vicarious kings over the congregations; a democratic power-struggle of selfishness. And they fed us with the false idea of Calvin's christianised national church; a newer form of catholicism which is still dominionism. It should be no surprise that in many restorationist/dominionist streams today, the leaders willingly declare their Reformed credentials!

The God of Israel is the only true head

All apostasy has one thing in common: disobedience to the True and Living Head, obedience to the counterfeit. The ultimate battle between Light and darkness rests with **headship**.

If the God of Israel is the Creator and Redeemer of the universe then He will triumph and He only should be obeyed. If He is not, then death is not conquered, we are lost in our sins and our faith is vacuous (*1 Corinthians 15:14*). Already we know that death has been swallowed up in the victorious resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is He who has led captivity captive. One day He will return on the white horse of purity to consummate His victory and reveal Himself and His spotless bride to the world (*Revelation 19:11-16*). For His bride to be spotless she surely has to be obedient to her Head, the Word of God?

At the Second Coming of Jesus the Bible tells us that He will take charge of the Headship of the whole world:

1 "It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established on the top of the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills; And peoples shall flow to it. 2 Many nations shall come and say
"Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion the law shall go forth and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem"
(Micah 4:1-2)

16 "And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles". (*Zechariah 14:16*)

He will return to Jerusalem to reign gloriously with His chosen elders (*1 Corinthians 6:2-3; Matthew 19:28; Revelation 2:26-27 & 20:4*). And Jesus will destroy the harlot who counterfeits His power and authority and oppresses His mouthpiece, the prophets (*Revelation 18:24 & 19:2*). No corruption of the pure Word of God will be tolerated in that Day. For the bride to be pure, she has to be cleansed of all counterfeit.

Many have given allegiance to various counterfeit kings, and not repented. Many in these days are giving allegiance to the greatest harlot of all, the Pope and his perverted system of christianised paganism, idolatry and worldliness. But lest we forget, the Roman counterfeit system is **not** the only organisation where wolves in sheep's clothing feed us with the spiritual equivalent of skimmed milk. A product so watered down with the teachings of men, that its taste is so foul to those used to real nourishment.

Jesus, totally obedient to His Father's commands (*John 15:9-10 - above*), dealt very severely with religious leaders. He cursed those who added to or who took away from the scriptures, loving to be kings and to have power over the people:

27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. 28 "Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. (Matthew 23:27-28)

Woe to you when all men speak well of you, For so did their fathers to the false prophets (Luke 6:26). "Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seats in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces. (Luke 11:43)

Jesus is the One who will judge all antichrists as adulterers. If we give **any one** of them our allegiance we become blinded as to how God views them, little by little, until we become unable to discern the coming of the ultimate Man of Sin, the Antichrist when he appears. All antichrists try to confuse the issue of headship. They often debate the issue as if it concerns alternative church traditions (robes, christening versus immersion, "the quantity of water for baptism"; cessation of spiritual gifts, Roman vs. Reformed, etc.). They love to declare that Jesus questioned the traditions of the elders as if acceptance of alternative traditions or a mixture of traditions, brings forth biblical unity.

Theirs is a fixation on **outward** appearances, whereas God judges the heart. And out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. But at all costs they avoid the real issue: of unity through truth by allegiance to the only One Head. Jesus, however, prayed for unity in the context of **obedience** to His commands and the coming of the Holy Spirit **who would lead us into all truth (John 16:13)**. Where the proclamation of the truth is dying or has died, the Holy Spirit has departed from the leaders and the vacuum is to be filled by the counterfeit.

Consider this: in all times and all ages there have been many antichrists and many antichrist organisations, though only one woman who has consistently and steadily fallen into apostasy. That woman is the chosen ones of **both** Older and Newer Testaments; Israel and the Church. Apostasy is the result of disobedience to the One Head, rejection of His simple Word and the substitution of a perverted alternative. The Pharisees and Teachers are a prime example of this. Had they not claimed to know the truth, Jesus would not have cursed them but would have forgiven them. (*John 9:41*)

It is appropriate that we meditate carefully on the words of Joshua; addressing those whom he was chosen after Moses to lead Israel, he said prophetically:

15 "And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve YHVH (-Yahweh the LORD, the God of Israel - Joshua 24:15).

Not a man: **not** an organisation; but the **One** whom we cannot yet see. To whom do you truly give allegiance?

Who is your real head; whom do you really serve?