

OIM UPDATE

February 2013

This past month, we have found that our family's twelve years of living in Florida has definitely "thinned out" our blood—as the adjustment to colder weather has us all "multi-layering" our bodies with garments, which have not been needed or even seen for years. But the blessing of being relocated to Texas, and also the delight of seeing snow perched on the tree limbs and ground—coupled with warm-hearted conversations with so many previous friends and acquaintances—are making the need to wear gloves and hats, a relatively mild "tribulation" that we are enduring joyfully!

As noted in last month's lead article about our ministry's peaceful Messianic mission in Dallas, a significant part of our assignment is interacting with not only the diverse Messianic people in the area, but also conversing with many Christians in various denominational circumstances. We know from our evangelical roots, where we originally received the good news and were born again, that it is merely a matter of a hungry soul, diligently seeking more of the Lord, when the Holy Spirit leads many to consider the Hebraic Roots of their faith. Thankfully, as we wait patiently upon Him, for those curious about "what we are doing," we are able to speak pointedly about our ministry, the multiple publications we have compiled, and our continuing research—which is available to them to more fully explain many aspects of the Messianic lifestyle, which the uninformed are inquiring about.

From much feedback over the years, we understand that many of you have done the same with our publications. We trust that the additional titles being worked on for this year, will continue to help not only the curious—but a Messianic community of faith, which tends to be chronically challenged with a variety of opinions on a wide range of issues and topics. Scheduled for release this month is a new title for our Confronting Issues series, *Are Non-Jewish Believers Really a Part of Israel?* by J.K. McKee. This is a detailed study into some of the ongoing debates over ecclesiology and the people of God, which are raging between much of Messianic Judaism and the more independent Hebrew/Hebraic Roots and independent Messianic persuasions. It is our hope and prayer that this publication's insights and attention to detail—but also its admonitions to all of us—will dispel much of the disinformation and discord, which are currently disturbing many Messianic individuals and groups.

With "restoration" being one of our ministry themes since our inception—and given the challenges of the Messianic community and our heartfelt desire to always be proclaiming the gospel and making disciples—I have been led to write this month's lead article entitled, "Restoration Patterns." This addresses a wide range of thoughts about how our Creator is the ultimate repairer of the breach and restorer, but that He always chooses individuals to do most of His work with people:

"And the LORD will continually guide you, and satisfy your desire in scorched places, and give strength to your bones; and you will be like a watered garden,

and like a spring of water whose waters do not fail. **Those from among you will rebuild the ancient ruins; you will raise up the age-old foundations; and you will be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of the streets in which to dwell**" (Isaiah 58:11-12).

Hopefully, some of the insights, conveyed in this article, will be used by the Lord to inspire many to mature in their respective walks—to the place where He can use all of us to minister to the lost and broken hearted souls, who are searching for the unconditional love placed in our hearts. After all, as long as we each have breath and can praise Him, He desires every Believer to help advance His Kingdom on Earth, until the restoration of all things...

"May the Lord bless you, and keep you, the Lord make His face shine on you, and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up His countenance on you, and give you peace" (Numbers 6:24-26).

Blessings in Him, Mark Huey

RESTORATION PATTERNS

by Mark Huey

Let it be known from the onset of this article, that the author makes no apologies for attempting, by the indwelling teaching of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16, 26; 15:26)—to construe life and spiritual applications through the unvarnished grid of the sacred Holy Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation. For by the unmerited grace of the Creator God, He chose to reveal His Word to certain selected individuals in Ancient Israel and others after the resurrection of the Messiah, who spoke and wrote and collected it for the instruction and edification of all. In His infinite wisdom, God chose to preserve His message of goodness and redemption, initially by the Jewish people (Romans 3:2)—but certainly since the Day of Pentecost, by those from nations indwelt by His Holy Spirit as well, who have believed in the efficacy of Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ).

In our modern electronic age, the combination of archeological discoveries verifying or dispelling antiquated theories and presumptions, almost instantaneous availability of historical sources/data confirming ancient writings, and computer-aided technological advances accelerating the flow of rapidly expanding information—the study and interpretation of what the Almighty has revealed to humanity has grown exponentially. But given these realities, it still remains the challenge of the most ardent pursuer of God's revelation, to rely primarily upon the Holy Spirit for understanding, wisdom, and knowledge. Without total dependence upon the Lord for His revelatory inspiration, the most brilliant computer-enhanced intellects can certainly be subject to “futility” of the mind—what the Apostle Paul clarifies to be basic human wisdom which is foolishness to God. Consider how God has chosen the foolish things of the world, to shame or confound those who consider themselves to be wise:

“So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, **in the futility of their mind**, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. But you did not learn Messiah in this way, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Yeshua, that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, **and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self**, which in *the likeness of God* has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth” (Ephesians 4:17-24).

The “new self” or new creation, upon being steadily conformed to the image of Messiah Yeshua (Romans 8:29; Colossians 3:10; Galatians 6:15; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:10, 15; 4:24), progressively understands and concedes—through the enlightenment and empowerment of the Holy Spirit—that dependence upon the Almighty in all things, is of paramount importance. For example, the following explanation that Paul gave to the Corinthians, makes sense to the enlightened mind, but confounds those who remain in darkness (John 12:46):

“For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not *come to* know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; but we preach Messiah crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Messiah the power of God and the wisdom of God. **Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.** For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; **but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong,** and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God. **But by His doing you are in Messiah Yeshua, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, so that, just as it is written, ‘LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD’ [Jeremiah 9:24]”** (1 Corinthians 1:21-31).

However, even once a Believer humbly recognizes and acknowledges that he or she should be boasting only in the Lord—for whatever wisdom or understanding received—the Scriptures remind all seekers of the Holy One that the Creator still retains certain “secret things” and mysteries from His own, *including* the most learned born again Biblical scholars:

“The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law” (Deuteronomy 29:29).

“It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter” (Proverbs 25:2).

“Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!” (Romans 11:33).

Because of the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, Believers have a significant advantage in understanding some aspects of the ways of the Lord. As noted in this passage from the Gospel of Mark, Yeshua indicated that certain “mysteries” would be revealed to those who seek more of the light of His truth, in the often quoted-analogy of the seed and the Word of God:

“And He was saying to them, ‘To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God, but those who are outside get everything in parables, so that WHILE SEEING, THEY MAY SEE AND NOT PERCEIVE, AND WHILE HEARING, THEY MAY HEAR AND NOT UNDERSTAND, OTHERWISE THEY MIGHT RETURN AND BE FORGIVEN [Isaiah 6:9-10].’ And He said to them, ‘Do you not understand this parable? How will you understand all the parables? The sower sows the word. These are the ones who are beside the road where the word is sown; and when they hear, immediately Satan comes and takes away the word which has been sown in them. In a similar way these are the ones on whom seed was sown on the rocky *places*, who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy;

and they have no *firm* root in themselves, but are *only* temporary; then, when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately they fall away. And others are the ones on whom seed was sown among the thorns; these are the ones who have heard the word, but the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. And those are the ones on whom seed was sown on the good soil; and they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold.' And He was saying to them, 'A lamp is not brought to be put under a basket, is it, or under a bed? Is it not *brought* to be put on the lampstand? For **nothing is hidden, except to be revealed; nor has *anything* been secret, but that it would come to light.** If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.' And He was saying to them, 'Take care what you listen to. By your standard of measure it will be measured to you; and more will be given you besides. For whoever has, to him *more* shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him.' And He was saying, 'The kingdom of God is like a man who casts seed upon the soil; and he goes to bed at night and gets up by day, and the seed sprouts and grows—how, he himself does not know. The soil produces crops by itself; first the blade, then the head, then the mature grain in the head. But when the crop permits, he immediately puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.' And He said, 'How shall we picture the kingdom of God, or by what parable shall we present it? *It is* like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the soil, though it is smaller than all the seeds that are upon the soil, yet when it is sown, it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and forms large branches; so that THE BIRDS OF THE AIR can NEST UNDER ITS SHADE [Ezekiel 17:23; 31:6; Daniel 4:12, 21]. **With many such parables He was speaking the word to them, so far as they were able to hear it; and He did not speak to them without a parable; but He was explaining everything privately to His own disciples**' (Mark 4:11-34).

In this passage, Yeshua stated that in time—through progressive revelation by the teaching of the Holy Spirit (John 14:6)—certain things that have been hidden or secret, will eventually be revealed and come to light. However, He cautioned His disciples to "Take care what you listen to," with the reminder that however one measures or judges (Matthew 7:2) what is being said or taught, will affect how much additional insight will be given, with the affirming additional statement that to those given insight and handling it properly, more will be given. But there is the implication that a critical or judgmental attitude toward others, regardless of what is being communicated, just might result in insight taken away. So it is imperative that one rightly handle the Word like a Berean (Acts 17:11), understanding that proper interpretation and application of the Scriptures can differentiate between what is generated by the soul or the enlightened spirit of man:

"For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do" (Hebrews 4:12-13).

With these premises stated above, coupled with the overwhelming weight of the Holy Scriptures and a desire to understand God's ways more fully, several questions arise:

1. Has the immutable Holy One of Israel established some spiritually discernable "restoration patterns" to often achieve His will for the Creation?
2. Are these spiritual principles evidenced in physical guidelines, applicable on a micro/individual level, as well as a macro/corporate level?
3. Should God's people recognize and employ those principles in order to achieve certain objectives, such as being His light to all (Isaiah 42:6; 49:6) via proclaiming the gospel in order to reveal His truth, and then disciple and teach all that the Holy Scriptures have commanded (Matthew 28:18-20)?
4. Or, as the title of this article suggests and will address, should God's true Believers employ these "restoration patterns" to reclaim, return, and restore both individuals and nations, in light of what the enemy has stolen or distorted by nefarious means?

Most assuredly in these times, the Holy One of Israel is progressively restoring not only the hearts of the fathers to their children and the children to their fathers (Malachi 4:6), but is in the timely process of restoring all things, as the Prophets have collectively declared, as noted by the Apostle Peter:

"Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send Yeshua, the Messiah appointed for you, **whom heaven must receive until *the* period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time**" (Acts 3:19-21).

First, in examining a "restoration pattern" found in the Scriptures, there are some foundational Holy Spirit-inspired statements, which remind the pursuer of God and His truth, that the promises of the Father, after He sent His Son Yeshua to be a sacrifice for the sin of all humanity (John 3:16), are slowly and patiently coming to fruition over time:

"The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, **not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance**" (2 Peter 3:9).

Additionally, Paul reiterated the Father's heart, as he encouraged intercession and prayers for all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth:

"First of all, then, I urge that entreaties *and* prayers, petitions *and* thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, **who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth**. For there is one God, *and* one mediator also between God and men, *the* man Messiah Yeshua, **who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time**" (1 Timothy 2:1-6).

Since all people have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 5:23), there is one thing they definitely all share in common, being the descendants of

Adam and Eve:

“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned” (Romans 5:12).

In order to more fully comprehend the heartfelt desire of the Father to restore and redeem the “fallen” children of Adam and Eve, one must return to Genesis, and recognize some key aspects of the created order which were established in the beginning of human existence. It must be understood that the first human created was formed from the elements and carbon-based minerals of the dust and ground, held together by water, whereupon the Creator imparted him with a unique breath of life or consciousness (soul/spirit/mind):

“Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground [*afar min-ha'adamah*, אָפָר מִן־הָאָדָמָה], and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life [*nishmat chayim*, נִשְׁמַת חַיִּים]; and man became a living being [*nefesh chayim*, נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה]” (Genesis 2:7).

If one reads this description, and the further elaboration of how Eve was formed from the side (rib) of Adam (Genesis 2:21-22), it is not too difficult to conclude that the first humans were largely physically dust, earth or ground, with enough water to form what is later described as “clay pots.” Job makes this connection multiple times, while Isaiah individualizes the analogy, and then Jeremiah expands the reference to nations:

“Can mankind be just before God? Can a man be pure before his Maker? He puts no trust even in His servants; and against His angels He charges error. **How much more those who dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, who are crushed before the moth!** Between morning and evening they are broken in pieces; unobserved, they perish forever. 'Is not their tent-cord plucked up within them? They die, yet without wisdom” (Job 4:17-21).

“Your hands fashioned and made me altogether, and would You destroy me? Remember now, that **You have made me as clay**; and would You turn me into dust again?” (Job 10:8-9).

“Behold, I belong to God like you; **I too have been formed out of the clay**” (Job 33:6).

“For the LORD has poured over you a spirit of deep sleep, He has shut your eyes, the prophets; and He has covered your heads, the seers. The entire vision will be to you like the words of a sealed book, which when they give it to the one who is literate, saying, ‘Please read this,’ he will say, ‘I cannot, for it is sealed.’ Then the book will be given to the one who is illiterate, saying, ‘Please read this.’ And he will say, ‘I cannot read.’ **Then the Lord said, ‘Because this people draw near with their words and honor Me with their lip service, but they remove their hearts far from Me, and their reverence for Me consists of tradition learned by rote,** therefore behold, I will once again deal marvelously with this people, wondrously marvelous; and the wisdom of their wise men will perish, and the discernment of their discerning men will be concealed. Woe to those who deeply hide their plans from the LORD, and whose deeds are *done* in a dark place, and they say, “Who sees us?” or “Who knows us?” You turn *things* around! **Shall the potter be considered as equal with the clay, that what is made**

would say to its maker, “He did not make me”; or what is formed say to him who formed it, “He has no understanding?”” (Isaiah 29:15-16).

“The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD saying, ‘Arise and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will announce My words to you.’ Then I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was, making something on the wheel. **But the vessel that he was making of clay was spoiled in the hand of the potter; so he remade it into another vessel, as it pleased the potter to make.** Then the word of the LORD came to me saying, ‘Can I not, O house of Israel, deal with you as this potter *does*?’ declares the LORD. ‘Behold, like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel. At one moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to uproot, to pull down, or to destroy *it*; if that nation against which I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent concerning the calamity I planned to bring on it. Or at another moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to build up or to plant *it*; if it does evil in My sight by not obeying My voice, then I will think better of the good with which I had promised to bless it” (Jeremiah 18:1-10).

To reiterate at this point, what do the Scriptures indicate? That the Father made each individual human being since Adam and Eve out of inherited dust, ground, and water—with a unique consciousness (soul/spirit/mind)—and that the Holy One desires that none should perish, but have eternal life and communion with Him. However, because each “clay pot” or nation of “pots,” is being monitored by an omniscient Creator God, if He so chooses for His unknowable reasons to use circumstances generated by the flesh nature or the world system, or even the Adversary, to rebuke, admonish, or chastise His own—so that they would come and return to Him in order to receive eternal life—*so be it*. After all, He is the Potter, and humanity and nations have all been created for His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13). Since His ways and thoughts are beyond human comprehension, all anyone can do is be rest assured that His Word will not return to Him without accomplishing all He intended it to accomplish:

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,’ declares the LORD. ‘For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there without watering the earth and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding *in the matter* for which I sent it” (Isaiah 55:8-11).

According to Ezekiel 12:25 and Jeremiah 1:12, particularly, the Lord not only speaks forth His word to perform it—He literally watches over His word to perform it. Believers have the blessing of confidently turning to the Holy Scriptures for His words of life, appealing to the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit for leading and more understanding, about what has been preserved down through the millennia.

With this rather lengthy introductory background review of various key Scripture passages, establishing some framework to work within, perhaps the most exhaustive Scriptural revelation for a “restoration pattern” can be gleaned from studying the Books of Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Haggai, Zechariah,

and Malachi. After all, the prophesied punishment of the Southern Kingdom of Judah by the Babylonians, was followed by prophecies that indicated their return to Jerusalem and the Holy Land after a seventy-year period (Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10). If one turns to these sacred texts, there can be found a written record of how the Holy One had predestined a defined period of judgment for disobedient Israel. He then foreordained a return to the Promised Land in order to rebuild the Temple, which would ultimately receive greater glory than Solomon's Temple (Haggai 2:9), because it would host the Son of God. After all, the Messiah Himself had to fulfill the requirements of the Law, and be the perfect sacrifice for the sin of humanity.

However, before getting too far ahead in considering some of these texts, it must first be understood that God's chosen, Biblically and historically, have then and should now—always appeal to the Holy Scriptures with fasting and prayerful supplication, in order to properly discern the will of the Almighty. The pattern for restoration begins with prayer and searching the Word of God:

“Let my cry come before You, O LORD; **give me understanding according to Your word.** Let my supplication come before You; deliver me according to Your word” (Psalm 119:169-170).

Perhaps this is epitomized by the godly actions modeled by the Prophet Daniel, a captured exile from the Southern Kingdom, who had an amazing life in the governmental courts of Babylon, which have been preserved for every succeeding generation to consider. Note in the opening verses of Daniel ch. 9, the reference to Jeremiah's word, and the response to seek the Lord God with prayer, and supplications with fasting:

“In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans—in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was *revealed* as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, *namely*, seventy years. **So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes**” (Daniel 9:1-3).

Upon reading the prayer of Daniel, one can note the adherence to the principles of physical restoration of the Promised Land, which Moses had relayed in Leviticus 26—with special emphasis on Leviticus 26:38-46—which appears to be understood by this man of understanding (Daniel 9:13), as he offered up this all-encompassing prayer to the Holy One:

“I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed and said, ‘Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances. Moreover, we have not listened to Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our princes, our fathers and all the people of the land. Righteousness belongs to You, O Lord, but to us open shame, as it is this day—to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those who are nearby and those who are far away in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of their unfaithful deeds which they have committed

against You. **Open shame belongs to us, O Lord, to our kings, our princes and our fathers, because we have sinned against You.** To the Lord our God *belong* compassion and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against Him; nor have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His teachings which He set before us through His servants the prophets. Indeed all Israel has transgressed Your law and turned aside, not obeying Your voice; so the curse has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against Him. Thus He has confirmed His words which He had spoken against us and against our rulers who ruled us, to bring on us great calamity; for under the whole heaven there has not been done *anything* like what was done to Jerusalem. **As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us; yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our iniquity and giving attention to Your truth.** Therefore the LORD has kept the calamity in store and brought it on us; for the LORD our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not obeyed His voice. And now, O Lord our God, who have brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and have made a name for Yourself, as it is this day—we have sinned, we have been wicked. O Lord, in accordance with all Your righteous acts, let now Your anger and Your wrath turn away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people *have become* a reproach to all those around us. So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplications, and for Your sake, O Lord, let Your face shine on Your desolate sanctuary. **O my God, incline Your ear and hear!** Open Your eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by Your name; for we are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion. **O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action!** For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name” (Daniel 9:4-19).

From Daniel’s example and many others in Scripture, today’s Believers should appropriately know that through prayer and diligent study of the Word, the Father’s will is discernible and discoverable (2 Timothy 3:16). Yeshua Himself affirmed this to His followers, as they were sent out to share the gospel message of the Kingdom:

“The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me.’ The seventy returned with joy, saying, ‘Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.’ And He said to them, ‘I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning. Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven.’ **At that very time He rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit, and said, ‘I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from *the* wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants. Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight.** All things have been handed over to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to re-

veal *Him*.' Turning to the disciples, He said privately, 'Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things you see, for I say to you, that many prophets and kings wished to see the things which you see, and did not see *them*, and to hear the things which you hear, and did not hear *them*'" (Luke 10:16-24).

In this passage from Luke, one finds the Messiah rejoicing greatly over how the Father is not only empowering His disciples with spiritual authority, but revealing to them greater understanding of the things that prophets and kings yearned to see. Following this, Yeshua answered the lawyer's inquiry on how to inherit eternal life, with a description of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), with the chapter concluding with a comparison and contrast between Martha and Mary, and their respective approaches to the Messiah (Luke 10:38-42). Needless to say, a prayerful pursuit of the Lord Yeshua and of His ways, is highly needed, no matter what your station in life!

What does His Word reveal about restoration patterns found in the texts related to the return to Jerusalem and Judea, the reinstitution of reverence and obedience to the written Word, combined with the rebuilding of the walls around Jerusalem? *Perhaps it is simply that in His sovereign will and in His timing, God will choose uniquely qualified individuals to accomplish His work.* In the case of the return of the Jews to rebuild the Temple, occupy Jerusalem, and secure Judea in order for Yeshua to fulfill the commands of the Torah to be the perfect, unblemished, sacrificial Lamb of God—He used not only secular leaders in the region, but also those returned exiles from Babylon who had little or nothing. Without going into an exhaustive analysis found in the Tanakh books referenced above, suffice it to say, the Holy One used Cyrus and various succeeding rulers of the Persian Empire like Artaxerxes, along with the Jews: Zerubbabel, in the line of David, Ezra the priest, and Nehemiah the governor in charge of rebuilding the walls. Along the way in the revelation given, insight and details are found in the Book of Daniel, as well as some corrective measures found in the Books of Haggai and Zechariah, with some closing remarks on the ongoing results in Malachi.

In summary, the pattern was fairly basic. Prayer and seeking God's will, revelation from God's written Word, more prayer and fasting seeking God's favor and timing, hearing that God wants to restore His Temple so that He can be glorified in it, understanding the importance and adherence to the written Word of God, and restoring the physical location where the Temple resides and His Word can be followed. Over the course of studying this particular part of Israel's history, I believe that a restoration pattern emerges regarding the Promised Land, and its relation to individuals.

This begs a question. Can such a restoration pattern be applied to individual pieces of "land" or clay pots, so that the elevated position of becoming a tabernacle/temple of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16-17), be accomplished? In other words, if God's restoration pattern for the rebuilding of the Temple, the reinstitution of reverence for the commandments, statutes, precepts, and laws of the written Word, and the reclamation of the Holy Land—can they be applied here and now to individual "pieces of land" (men and women), as well as groups of people coalesced into clans, tribes, or even nations?

I believe that it can, if followers of the Messiah understand that it always

begins with individual hearts of stone which are to be changed into hearts of flesh, with the indwelling Spirit imparted to them. This spiritual reality is described in the greater context revealed by the Prophet Ezekiel, who also happened to be one of the exiles given revelation from the Most High, while a captive in Babylon:

“Then the word of the LORD came to me saying, ‘Son of man, when the house of Israel was living in their own land, they defiled it by their ways and their deeds; their way before Me was like the uncleanness of a woman in her impurity. Therefore I poured out My wrath on them for the blood which they had shed on the land, because they had defiled it with their idols. Also I scattered them among the nations and they were dispersed throughout the lands. According to their ways and their deeds I judged them. When they came to the nations where they went, they profaned My holy name, because it was said of them, “These are the people of the LORD; yet they have come out of His land.” But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations where they went. “Therefore say to the house of Israel, “Thus says the Lord GOD, “It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD,”’ declares the Lord GOD, ‘when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight. For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God”’ (Ezekiel 36:16-28).

Notice that the indwelling Spirit of the Most High, will actually cause redeemed persons to walk and obey His commandments! However, as much of Christian history will attest, certain ecclesiastical authorities have influenced people down through the centuries, to believe that God’s Law is of little or no concern to Believers after the resurrection of Christ. This delusion has kept a great many Christians from even knowing what many of God’s basic rules for living truly are, generating some serious challenges for such born again Believers. If they are under the false assumption that flagrantly or ignorantly breaking God’s basic instructions for humanity, simply because they have been “forgiven of their sins” by the sacrificial blood of Jesus, then they are sorely mistaken. This is not to say that anyone can earn eternal salvation by human works—yet it is abundantly clear that faith is a gift from God evidenced by good works (Ephesians 2:8-10; James 2:14-26). Nevertheless, the inherent principle found in the Creation that one reaps what is sown, should remind each of us that there are *always* consequences for disobedient behavior. Although not necessarily immediately noticeable, the consequences for sins of commission or omission, are often spiritual in nature, and administered by a loving Father (Proverbs 3:11-12; Hebrews 12:3-11).

Discipline can range from a lack of communion or peace with the Lord, to some of the extreme chastisements that can be found in the Book of Job, or even death, as noted in the dramatic case of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-10).

From God's perspective, when it is all said and done, and one attempts to take in the whole counsel of God, the humbling reality for those in darkness—is to first be delivered from the enslavement found in Egypt or be born from above, which is likened in the baptism reminiscent of the watery escape from Egypt (Galatians 3:26-29; Romans 6:3-11; 1 Corinthians 10:2). But then, for those who truly believe in Yeshua the Messiah—salvation is just the onset of a faith journey, which is designed to conform disciples of the Messiah into His image (Romans 9:29; 1 Corinthians 15:49; Philippians 3:21). It then becomes the imperative challenge of God's people to come out of the entrapping darkness found in the alluring captivity of Babylon (Jeremiah 51:6-9; Revelation 18:4-5). This more subtle bondage, to the enticement of the world system, is epitomized by the mixture of faith competing with the pursuit of wealth, which inevitably engenders a double-mindedness in people (James 1:6-8, 4:7-10), that the Lord hates (Psalm 119:113).

So in a similar way to how the Southern Kingdom exiles were given the opportunity by the decree of Cyrus to depart Babylon, return to Jerusalem, rebuild the Temple, restore adherence to the Word of God, and rebuild the walls of the city—every follower of the Messiah has a similar choice, for the “clay pot” they currently occupy. In fact, at the onset of Yeshua's ministry, in His Sermon on the Mount, He unequivocally describes the “two masters” which are impossible to serve simultaneously:

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth” (Matthew 6:24).

But even though this admonition to choose one or the other master, to fully serve, comes in the opening chapters of the New Testament—it is difficult for many followers of the Messiah to *totally* relinquish the innate carnal challenges of the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life (1 John 2:16). The world system, the flesh, and the Devil, are worthy adversaries that have confused and distorted the Word of God and impeded its progress down through the ages.

However, the Father has given His people not only the Word made flesh, Yeshua, and His salvation—but His written Word, understood through the teaching of the indwelling Holy Spirit, to be all that He has called His children to be. Now through the empowerment found by walking in the Spirit and being led by the Spirit, He is revealing more and more of His ways and mysteries, so that His children will accomplish His will for the Creation.

For most assuredly, the restoration patterns for individuals and nations are all available to glean from the Holy Scriptures. The question remains, will they be followed—or will far too many continue to wallow in blindness to His Word, and deafness to His Spirit's leading? *Father please open up the eyes of our hearts for understanding, and give us spiritual ears to hear and willingness to follow and obey Your leading, and faithfully serve You, in order to advance Your Kingdom on Earth, until the restoration of all things...*