

REVIVAL NEWS

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* SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2019 *** SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2019 *

FATHERS AND SONS

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Restoration of Fathers and Sons

There is a restoration happening in the church worldwide. God is doing it in fulfilment of His word. He spoke through Malachi that, *“Behold, I will send you the prophet Elijah before the coming of the great and dreadful day of YHWH [the LORD]. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children [literally in Hebrew ‘sons’], and the hearts of the children [‘sons’] to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.”* Mal.4:5-6. God promised a great restoration to take place before the coming of the Lord. Fathers and sons are to be restored in order to be prepared for the coming! There needs to be a generation of fathers and sons in the earth to prepare the earth for the coming of Messiah.

John the Baptist – a partial fulfilment

The angel spoke to Zacharias that his son, John, *“will go before Him [the Lord God, the Messiah] in the spirit and power of Elijah, ‘to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,’ and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord”* Luke 1:17. John the Baptist went before Jesus the Messiah and made a people ready to receive Him. But this was not the *“great and dreadful day”* that Malachi was referring to.

Restoration to deliver creation

The Spirit and power of Elijah is still here and among us to make us ready for Jesus’ coming. He is the Spirit of Sonship enabling us to cry *“Abba, Father”* (Rom.8:15) and restoring our hearts into the family of God, which is fathers and sons. We are not an institution. The Church is not leaders and servants and organisations. The Church is a family with fathers and sons who are about the Father’s business.

As the restoration of fathers and sons unfolds, creation will not be *“struck with a curse”* (Mal.4:6). **The earth is cursed when there are no fathers and sons.** Lack of fathers leads to many orphans, lack of maturity and insecurity. But *“the creation itself eagerly waits for the manifestation of the sons of God”* Romans 8:19. Creation will be delivered from its *“bondage to corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God”* (Rom.8:20-21) as sons are raised who can manifest their Father. This happens through the restoration of fathers and sons!

TRUE APOSTLES ARE FATHERS

God has always intended for the church to have fathers. The apostle Paul wrote to the **Corinthians** calling them *“my beloved children”* (1 Cor.4:14). He viewed the believers as his children; he was a father to them. He told them that they may have many *“instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers”* (1 Cor.4:15). A father takes responsibility for the family, making sure they have everything they need to grow. Instructors and teachers can do their duty, deliver their instruction and their lesson, and then leave the saints to figure it out.

But fathers carry a parental concern to see the children grow to become mature sons. Despite all the sufferings, beatings and physical hardships Paul faced, he said what really burdened him was, *“what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches”* 2 **Corinthians 11:28**. This is the heart of a father for their children. We need fathers. We need true apostles who bring this fathering grace to the church.

Coming to know the Father

When Jesus sent out the twelve apostles on their first recorded mission, He told them, *“He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me”* **Matthew 10:40**. If you receive a true apostle, you will receive a revelation of the Father. Apostles come to reveal the Father to the church. They bring a revelation of Jesus the Messiah that opens our eyes to see the Father in the Son. As we receive true apostles, we will receive a revelation of sonship. This has been my testimony. As I received a true apostle into my life, my eyes opened to see the Father in Christ.

THE MYSTERY OF GOD REVEALED BY FATHERS AND SONS

There is a grace on true apostles to bring the church into the mystery of God (Col.2:2) and so bring forth many *“sons to glory”* (Heb.2:10). The apostle Paul told of his great *“conflict I have for you...that your hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, attaining...to the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ”* **Colossians 2:1-2**. We enter this mystery by receiving apostles who reveal the Father in Christ. We then become *knit together* in the mystery of God, the *“fellowship of the Father and of His Son, Jesus Christ”* 1 **John 1:3**.

The mystery of God is both of the Father and of Christ. It is a revelation of the Father in Christ, the Son. God is Father to a Son and Son to a Father. *“A Son is given...and His name will be called...Everlasting Father”* **Isaiah 9:6**. When Jesus became a mature Son He was then able to reveal the Father and raise up sons, the twelve apostles. In turn these apostles were raised to be mature sons who could then reveal the Father and raise disciples as spiritual sons. As fathers and sons are restored there is an unveiling of the mystery of who God is that is outworked and displayed for the world, and all creation! *“The mystery of God will be complete”* **Rev.10:7**. This mystery will be finished and clearly seen as the church walks in the reality of fathers and sons, being knit together, in relationship, by this mystery of God. God as Father to Son and Son to Father will be seen by the world as the Church models this mystery!

Corporate fathering

When writing to the **Galatians** Paul calls them *‘my little children, for whom I labour in birth again until Christ is formed in you’* **Gal.4:19**. Paul as a father was labouring, travelling and working to see the Messiah formed in God’s people. But then to the Thessalonians it is written, *“you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged everyone of you as a father does his own children”* **1 Thessalonians 2:11**. Paul writes that *we* were as a father to the saints in Thessalonica. The *‘we’* refer to *“Paul, Silvanus and Timothy”* **1 Thess.1:1**. The apostolic team was as a father to the church in Thessalonica!

We can testify to this reality. We as a company at SHILOH function corporately as a father to many brethren here and in the nations – it is a corporate fathering of sons! A number of spiritual sons have been raised by us as an apostolic company where that *exhortation, comfort and charging as a father* happens through us as a many membered Body, not only through a singular apostolic father.

A STUDY OF FATHERS AND SONS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

The next part of this newsletter is written in point form as it is a study of passages dealing with fathers and sons in the Old Testament. Please read the passages of Scripture that are referenced at the headings of each section so you can better understand the points that are presented.

Moses and Joshua – a picture of father and son discipleship

Exodus 17:8-16 – Joshua growing as a young man with his father

- Joshua is sent into battle (**Ex.17:9**). Moses was able to give Joshua a command. Sons receive commands from fathers. Joshua submitted and obeyed Moses, his spiritual father (**Ex.17:10**).
- As a father, Moses interceded for his spiritual son while he was out on mission (**Ex.17:9,11**).
- Fathers send sons on mission, into battle, and intercede for them to get the victory over the enemy.
- Jesus sent and prayed for His spiritual sons (**Jn.17:6-19**).
- Paul sent and prayed for Timothy, his spiritual son (**1Cor.4:16-17, 2Tim.1:3-6**).
- Joshua was still in training and learning to get the victory with the help of his spiritual father (**Ex.17:12-13**). In terms of the stage of his growth he was a *“young man...strong...the word of God abided in him...he overcame the wicked one”* **1Jn.2:14**. He had a father who *“knew Him who was from the beginning”* (**1Jn.2:13-14**). His father was helping him and training him to overcome the devil, the enemy.
- We need fathers to bring up the *“little children”* (**1Jn.2:12**) and the *“young men”* to know the ways of the Eternal One. Fathers provide the covering and environment for well guided growth.
- YHWH told Moses to keep a record of Joshua’s victory and *“recount it in the hearing of Joshua”* (**Ex.17:14**). Joshua was to keep a reminder of the victory so he could draw strength from this in time to come and keep walking in victory.

- Fathers remind sons of the victories to build their faith and trust in Jesus. Paul gave Timothy a command *“according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, having faith and a good conscience”* **1Tim.1:18-19a.**
- Fathers remind the sons of what the Lord has spoken and encourage them in the battles they face in Christ in the mission.

Exodus 24:13 – A son serving his father

- Joshua was Moses’ *“assistant”*. He was a servant, ministering and attending to Moses.
- The attitude of a son growing up under a father is to serve the father in any way that is needed.
- The disciples served Jesus their spiritual father (**Matt.10:24-25**).
- Timothy served and ministered to Paul (**Acts 19:22**). Timothy served Paul as a son with his father in the gospel (**Phil.2:22**).
- God called Moses up the mountain and *“he arose with his assistant Joshua”* (**Ex.24:13**)! Joshua went up the mountain with Moses and was with him for forty days and forty nights with God (**Ex.24:14-18**). Joshua was watching what Moses did and learning from him. He watched Moses interact with God and learnt how to approach God.
- The disciples of Jesus also were with Him (**Mk.3:14**) and Jesus modelled for them how to relate with God as Father, even bringing three of His spiritual sons up the mountain to witness His glory (**Matt.17:1-5**).
- Paul’s life was open for Timothy to observe and learn from (**2Tim.3:10-12**).
- Spiritual fathers do not hide their interactions with God from their sons. They bring their sons with them to see and learn how to relate with God as Father. This cannot be learned by studying a textbook – it is through experience.

Exodus 33:9-11 – Fathers draw sons to God, not themselves

- Joshua saw Moses talking to God face to face as a man talks to his friend (**Ex.33:9**)
- Joshua wanted this same relationship with God. He stayed in God’s Presence after Moses left and *“did not depart from the tabernacle”* (**Ex.33:11**).
- The role of a spiritual father is to bring up sons to be in relationship with God. They teach their spiritual sons how to be sons of God; they raise them up to walk with God.
- The spiritual father is not to draw sons to himself, but to point them to God. Moses did not discourage Joshua’s zeal to stay in the Tabernacle. Joshua was learning to abide in the Presence of God.
- Joshua was called *a servant* and a *young man* (**Ex.33:11**). He was still in a stage of service in the body under the oversight of a father. Joshua was patient. He did not try to break free from Moses and start his own ministry. He was faithful and stayed with the process of growth.

Numbers 11:28-29 – Fathers teach sons loyalty to God

- Moses did not allow Joshua to develop a wrong loyalty to himself. Moses did not want Joshua *“zealous for my sake”* (Num.11:29). He wanted Joshua zealous for God and zealous for all God’s people to be serving Him, prophesying and being *equipped* to function (Eph.4:12)!
- Joshua was still called Moses’ *assistant* (Num.11:28). Do not be impatient with the process of serving – it works in you the character necessary to lead.
- Joshua was serving as a spiritual son but still retained his identity, *Joshua the son of Nun*. We learn how to follow Jesus from our spiritual fathers but are not called to take on their personality or identity. Learn the ways in Christ of spiritual fathers while being who God made you to be!
- Timothy would remind the Corinthians of Paul’s *“ways in Christ”* and what Paul *“taught”* but he was still Timothy (1Cor.4:16-17).

Numbers 14:30 – a son inherits

- There was a different spirit within Joshua – he would inherit the land. The Spirit of sonship was working in Joshua. He was raised by Moses to believe in YHWH, not trust in Moses. Moses raised Joshua to be a son who would receive his spiritual inheritance (Rom.8:15-17).

Numbers 27:16-20 – a son now walking in his destiny

- Moses successfully raised a son who could carry on the mission that God had begun in Moses’ life. Moses’ ministry would continue beyond his death. Joshua was released into his destiny.
- Joshua is now able to shepherd God’s people (Num.27:17). Sons are raised to shepherd God’s people into God’s plans, purposes and inheritance.
- Jesus raised sons to send out into the harvest of God’s people who were *“weary and scattered, like sheep without a shepherd”* (Matt.9:35-10:2). Sons are raised to shepherd!
- Joshua is now called *‘a man’* (Num.27:18)– no longer a *‘young man’*. He has become a mature son who can now be a *father* among God’s people – *“a man in whom is the Spirit”* (Num.27:18). Now He is a son being led by the Spirit of God (Rom.8:14). This is the goal of spiritual fathering – to raise sons who are led by God’s Spirit!
- Joshua is now commissioned. He is set in place as the leader and he received the laying on of hands and received the authority of Moses (Num.27:19-20)
- Sons are raised to carry the authority of their fathers.
- Jesus as a mature Son came to the Jordan river for baptism – and was placed into the position of the Son, *“This is My beloved Son”*, receiving the full authority of His Father! (Matt.3:17).
- Jesus released His authority to the sons He raised (Jn.20:21-23, Matt.28:18-20).
- Paul released grace and authority to Timothy to function in his calling and destiny (2Tim.1:6).
- Fathers lay hands on sons, releasing authority to them to function in their calling and destiny.

Deuteronomy 3:28 – Fathers charge and put courage into sons

- God commanded Moses, the spiritual father, to *“command [charge] Joshua, and encourage him and strengthen him; for he shall go over before this people”* (Deut.3:28).
- Fathers put courage into sons to fulfil the mission of bringing God’s people into their inheritance in Christ.
- Finally, Joshua hears God for himself saying *‘have courage, be strong’* (Josh.1:1-9).

Eli and Samuel – hope for those who thought they failed

1Samuel 1:27-28 – the dedication, lending our children to YHWH

- Samuel was dedicated to Yahweh – that meant giving him over to a spiritual father in the house of God. Sometimes as natural parents and as spiritual parents there comes a time to give our children over to another to spiritually father them. Are you willing to lend your son to YHWH in the way He chooses and to the one He chooses?

1Samuel 2:12-29 – a failure with his own natural sons but still given a spiritual son

- Eli’s own sons were not walking with Yahweh themselves. They were corrupt and *“did not know YHWH”* (1Sam.2:12). Eli was a failure at bringing up his own sons to know God, however, God still gave Samuel to him as a spiritual son to raise.
- The child Samuel grew before YHWH (1Sam.2:21). Eli was facilitating Samuel’s growth in the Presence of YHWH. Spiritual fathers are to facilitate the growth of sons before God.
- Samuel was being fathered by Eli and Samuel was growing up in a manner similar to Jesus, *“in stature and in favour both with YHWH and men”* (1Sam2:26 & Lk.2:52). Spiritual fathers help us grow up in *“all things into Him who is the Head – Christ”* Eph.4:15.
- Eli and his own sons were judged (1Sam.2:31), but he still served God and fathered Samuel – who was chosen by God (1Sam.2:35:36). You may have failed with your natural family, but God can still use you to father the next generation of sons of God!

1 Samuel 3:1 - Training to minister under the guidance of fathers

- The boy Samuel *“ministered to YHWH before Eli”* (1Sam.3:1). Eli was training Samuel how to serve in the house of God. He was used by God to prepare this boy to know *“how to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God...”* 1Tim.3:15. Fathers train sons how to serve and conduct themselves in God’s house, the church.

1 Samuel 3:2-21 – Training to hear and respond to God

- Eli teaches Samuel how to hear from God and how to respond to Him when He speaks. Fathers teach sons how to be led by the Spirit of God (Rom.8:14). This is equipping for ministry, learning to function under the direction and leading of God by the Spirit.

- Eli confirms that Samuel was hearing from God (**1 Samuel 3:18**).
- Eli may have been a failure in his own family, but God used him to raise up a young boy to be a true prophet of God and lead God's people in his generation (**1 Samuel 3:19-21**).
- Do not let your own failures disqualify you from being a father to others. God will use you if you are willing to raise sons to God!

**True fathers are being restored to the church!
As fathers and sons are restored, the very mystery of God,
Father and Son, will be seen in the earth!**
