

Chapter 1

Preparation for a Study of The Two, The End Days Apostles

Rationale for Writing the Book

The motivation for writing this study originated many years ago while investigating the number *five*. Another student of the Word, after studying the number *five*, found that it symbolized *grace*.² This view has been accepted throughout most of the Body of Christ. After a thorough study of this number, I found that it did indeed signify *grace* but only when it was associated with the number *two*. A cursory study of the number *two* exposed a deep and mystifying subject, one that would take years to unravel.

The subject, the identity of “The Two” is still not fully understood in its entirety. This book then is the “unveiling” in part of the meaning of “The Two,” or the warrior apostles who stand in the end days just before our Lord returns. For those readers who are impatient to “cut to the chase” you may want to go directly to chapter five and then come back to the introductory first four chapters. However, as usual with many of us, the quickest way is not necessarily the best way. We all must be prepared mentally and spiritually to accept certain new truths, known as *new wine*, before they are revealed. This is the purpose of the first four chapters.

Difficulties in Accepting a Study of This Type

During years of this on-going study, many curious incidents occurred in discussions between believing friends and myself. Some long time Christian companions became alienated from me due to the study of biblical symbolism, numerics, and allegory. I chose to leave a church unwillingly to continue growing in this search for truth through the allegorical interpretation of the Word. Not that I was persecuted all that much. Having the gift of teaching, my motivation to continue studying, was to have students to teach. Since I could not teach what I considered as truth, or had no one who was interested in it, then leaving was necessary to find those who were interested.

Much of what I have learned has come by learning with others. Older traditional Christians (old wine skins) who had been so ingrained with previous teachings seemed unable to accept something new coming from the Word. They actually displayed antagonism or ambivalence toward the new teaching. In a few, pride of previously ingrained knowledge became a stumbling block.

Chronological age seemed to have little to do with acceptance. Younger Christians with little previous experience with the Word, like most young children, simply took it in stride and accepted it. For that reason, it was necessary to carefully teach a new Christian who was more susceptible to deception because of the lack of knowledge of the Word (proper doctrine) for comparison.

Preparation to Receive Truths Through Symbolism and Allegory

Now many people generally accept from Scripture that being an “old wineskin” is not necessarily a good thing. Please consider this. Each of us has our works laid out for us by our Lord. To achieve these works, we must be prepared for them by taking in the living water that our Lord gives in various ways. The Holy Spirit directs the total input and uses the “new wine” that is given at the proper time to achieve preparation for the works laid out for that particular believer. Now then why should that wineskin, doing the works he is designed to achieve, turn and drink wine meant for another generation and for another purpose initiated by our Lord? Scripture clearly states that new wine rips or tears old wineskins (Matt. 9:17; Mark 2:22; Luke 5:37, 38). That is damaging, and I don’t believe our Lord desires that for us. So then, I do not believe that being an old wineskin, that is already poured out and has achieved the works laid out ahead of time (Eph. 2:10), should suffer condemnation for refusing to drink the new wine.

During my infancy in Christ, I gained considerable false theology, and like many of you slowly had to leave those false teachings when the true Word became clearer to me. Much of the false theology in me changed through counsel from older and wiser Christian brothers and sisters as well as by the Word. Being able to seek counsel (submit to one another) and sift the wheat from the chaff allowed growth in wisdom and discernment.

This is not to say that old wineskins refuse to drink this new wine, but that many readers simply do not immediately have a strong desire to do so without being prepared to drink it. So then for those of you like myself, who have been around for some years, these first four chapters are for rubbing a bit of olive oil into your aged wineskins to allow it to stretch a bit. Always take a time of preparation seriously; too many rush to be used before they are ready and do considerable damage in the process. I am very thankful that our Lord comes along behind His children to straighten things up a bit as we leave a trail of carnage scattered here and there! Thank God, we are given grace to make mistakes as we grow.

Problems Associated With This Interpretation Technique

Any “newly revealed truth” from the Word quite often brings persecution and oddly enough often from the church itself. The question for the student of the Word who feels persecuted is: Does the perceived “persecution” come due to heresy and sin or from uncovering and promoting truth that is derived differently than the present traditional ways acceptable to the church? Many Christians continue to walk in deception and denial when confronted with a truth about them or their belief system. Ingrained belief systems, paradigms, are very difficult to change particularly when an entire denomination is backing them. Even when their false belief systems are held up in front of them, in love, with the Word, and with proper motives, they still often maintain their “integrity” and either are unable or refuse to change either their behavior or their doctrine. There always seems to be a price for truth. Accepting change to a belief system is change that is often quite uncomfortable. Note the great number of Christian denominations today that unknowingly or knowingly promote disunity in the full body due to either differences in their traditions or their doctrines, both of which contribute to belief

systems. Pride, in many cases, is a root cause of this. I have served my Lord and my fellow Christians in many different denominations and have yet to find one where many of the individuals do not say “I am so glad I am a “_____.” That may mean that the individuals are so glad they are not a part of the other denominations even though they may have little or no exposure to any of the others as a basis for making that statement. Many Christians have only served in one denomination their entire lives and have little knowledge concerning what the others believe.

Reasons to Pursue The Metaphorical Technique

The “Rosetta Stone” is the Bible. It interprets itself. No man is given all truth, but the Spirit of our Lord can and will guide him (John 16:13). Submitting to one another is a key factor for proper growth, whether it is for counsel in solving every day problems or for the correct interpretation of the Word. Being multi-denominational does help in developing a wider scope of acceptance of the various truths found in the Word, but it also exposes an individual to a broader range of untruth. It helps individuals to serve in the greater body by giving them freedom to serve where the Lord would ask them to serve.

The contents of this study, as with all studies by men, certainly are not perfect and are not purported to be. However, where the writer sees a topic unclearly, as through a dark mirror, he informs the reader of that lack of clarity.

Considerable work by many authors has been done with allegory and symbolism over the last one hundred years or so. Many have defined individual numbers, metals, or things, but few have put them together to interpret whole Scripture. One of the best at attempting this was Watchman Nee, a missionary to China, who interpreted the book of Song of Songs through the use of symbolism as defined by the Word itself.

The use of all of the hidden things in Scripture is a new language that has lain dormant for a long period of time. Let’s call it the King’s Code. Now is the time when it is most needed as we approach the end of this age. As with learning a new language, it is not easy to use and takes a considerable amount of personal time to learn. At the end of this age, time is a commodity that is in very short supply because many of our people believe that any period of time that is vacant of activity must be filled. Unfortunately, most do not fill it with time spent with our Lord’s Word even though His Word does state to “*study to be approved*” (2 Ti 2:15).

Most of this study has been shared previously with pastors, small groups, and friends. Some have said there is something to it, but due to the danger involved in false interpretation, it is better left alone. Some have accepted it quite completely but chose not to pursue it. Some have become very excited about it, had their faith lifted up immeasurably by it and have continued to pursue this type of study along with conventional studies of the Word.

A balance is required between conventional literal and the symbolic interpretation of the Word. The vast majority of the Word is literal; however, there are portions to be unlocked at the proper time and for the proper portion of the body of Christ. Unfortunately, some choose one over the other and lose the element of truth, balance, and stability that comes with each. Symbolism is a difficult language to master and takes years to be given “eyes that see.”

The question is: Why bother with the use of symbolism and allegory? Several authors write books that claim to totally disprove that the two views exist at all in the Christian Bible. Others write books using them incorrectly and derive incredibly heretical lies that disagree with the basic literal truths of the Word. Still others become masters, Spirit-led, who use it to reveal incredible truths that lay deep foundations of faith. This faith leads to worshiping in spirit and in truth throughout a lifetime of powerful godly service. Would you expect less? This has been happening since Christ hung on the cross for teaching truth and for being truth. If our Lord uses symbolism in His Word, it follows that that is enough reason to seek it and to learn to use it correctly. This is particularly important at the end of the age when it becomes so necessary to understand what and why things are occurring. If He puts it in the Word, then it has a purpose! It is up to us to find out if it is truth. It is our responsibility to allow the Lord to reveal truth, as we examine His Word, and to show us what His purpose is in using symbolism.

A couple of comments might be in order at this time. The study of symbolism and allegory is not new. The ancient Hebrews studied it, albeit without the Spirit and with their eyes veiled, down through the millennia. But only in the latter portion of this age has there been any concerted effort to discern scriptural truths with it. Many of the books, Ezekiel, Daniel, the lesser prophets, and Revelation in particular, give insight to the events at the end of this age (Eschatology) and are extensively infiltrated with symbolism. It seems that as the end of this age draws near, there is an opening of Scripture occurring that explains the what, why, and how of our Lord's actions with His bride. Remember (Amos 3:7) *"Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets."* Perhaps this is what this book is partially about, preparing those chosen for service for the end of this age.

At the end of this age our Lord allows great deception to abound so the wheat can be separated from the chaff. If you are called to read this study, take great care in what you do with the wisdom you gain from it. Pride has no place in what the Lord would give you. I hope this study of The Two is accepted only as framework or a springboard. It is my desire that others might enter more deeply into the living Word of our Lord's mysteries and so grow, mature, and produce the spiritual fruit so needed at the end of this age. Our Lord desires to enable His bride of choice to produce that spiritual fruit. May we become pleasing in His sight, giving Him contentment for all eternity, and corporately, as well as individually, enjoy Him forever.

Ways to Approach This Study

Using an open Bible while you read this book is a necessity. The translation you use should be as close as possible, word for word, to the original Greek or Hebrew text. A prayer offered up requesting eyes to see and a mind to understand is most important. Finally, if you are destined for some area of leadership, or are presently in that position, a certain amount of patience would help to gain some proficiency in the technique of symbolism.

Perhaps it is best to begin with the analogy of a fishing line that is all tangled in a giant snarl, or a fish net tangled up with knots. If you are a fisherman confronting this mess, it certainly is easier just to cut it all out with a knife and simply tie the ends of the

unsnarled line together and go on fishing. However, you might be left with a very short line or a very small net. You might catch a few small fish close to the boat, but would that satisfy you when a large more desirable fish is swimming just a bit farther away? Do you want just a portion of the truth of God, or would you accept all that He has for you? When you attempt to work out a snarled knot, it leads to many more to work on and so it is for the beginning student attempting to learn the language of biblical symbolism. It is difficult to "sort out" the truth of one number, or symbol, as there is often so many other cross connections with other areas of symbolism close by. To make things more difficult, the same number can occasionally have a different meaning depending on how it is "framed" by surrounding Scripture.

In many scriptural scenarios of the Bible that use symbolism, the full "picture" is difficult to see and accept unless much symbolism is understood. A portion here and there is not sufficient for clarity. Attempting to teach just one piece of symbolism will inevitably run into others that further confuse the issue. Small children learning to speak need time and patience: first, they speak individual words, and then come a couple of words together, and finally a sentence with a complete thought. Wasn't a significant portion of your life required for you to develop the ability to express yourself correctly and, still, you occasionally struggle to find the right phrase? Even when you become very articulate, isn't there still another one who must understand what you have said? So then there are two problems, your *expression* of the "truth" and another's *hearing* of the "truth". So often we are shown Jesus speaking to those who "have ears to hear." He, the Holy Spirit, must give ears to hear truth as well as eyes to see it.

Please have patience! Many of those who criticize symbolism and an allegorical interpretation of the Word state that there must be a consistency portrayed throughout the Word and indeed they are correct. Unfortunately, few teachers have this ability level and those who are attempting to grow in this area are given very little encouragement by the church leaders of today.

Only when enough symbolism is known can the Word be interpreted correctly. Otherwise, things do look as though they are inconsistent and that is also the case with literal interpretations as well. Some cases will be brought up that at first look inconsistent, and then as a more mature knowledge of symbolism is obtained, consistency does become evident. Isn't that true with the literal interpretation as well? Are we not called to give grace when a brother in the Lord is growing and learning? Do we spring forth perfect in doctrine and in the fruit of the Spirit, or do we make mistakes while we stumble our way through our Christian walk? A balance of Grace and Law is very difficult to find in the same individual. Personally I would prefer to err, if I must and I know I will, on the side of grace.

Apology For Imperfection

The truths that are within the covers of this manuscript are submitted to my fellow Christians as one would submit to discipline. Be like the Bereans (Acts 17:10-11) and thoroughly study the purported truths this manuscript contains before accepting or rejecting what is herein. Lovingly correct my mistakes. Hold up my hands as I tire and weaken, for this work is never completed. The Lord created an incredibly complex masterpiece when He put together the sixty-six books of the Bible. Only together in

unity and love do we win this war, and win it we shall but only by His grace!

I stand before the Lord naked and with empty hands except for what he gives me to give to you. I would not knowingly cause division or deception. Nevertheless, this study most likely contains some error. My heavenly Father, I believe, is sovereign. Though being misled early on and occasionally misinformed while a young Christian, I believe He has straightened me out on many issues during my life's walk with Him. If I, in any way, do damage to you by sharing incorrect conclusions in this study, I must depend on my Lord, who is our God. I pray that in His sovereignty He protects you, resulting in no permanent problem for you.

I depend on the promise for you and for me, as you read and learn from this book, that is stated in Rom. 8:28: "*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*" Remember that this wonderful promise is contingent upon two criteria: one can perceive another's love of their Lord by their obedience to His Word and by their gentleness with which they touch His other children. Purpose takes a bit longer to ascertain in a believer's life because it is dependent upon many factors: age, calling, the season of one's life, and the expression of their Love for their Lord. Giftedness, for whatever purpose the Lord calls one of his children, takes time to develop. This is not just in the area of knowledge and wisdom. It must also include the development of the whole person's character in order to fulfill the Lord's purpose with that life.

If you accept only a bit of truth from this study, much less all of it, it may lead to your being persecuted and in some cases alienated from some fellowships particularly if you attempt to further its acceptance and dissemination. There is a price to be paid for truth, but our loving obedience to it (Him) is what will in part defeat our enemy (John 8:32, John 17:17, 2 Co 4:2, 2 Ti 2:15, 3 John 1:4). I can promise you that the sacrifice of carrying and spreading it to others is worth much more than the cost of suffering. Only by walking in Love can one accept and discern the truth a brother may be given. Almost inevitably there is some area of untruth and lack within his wisdom and character. This most certainly applies to what I write and where I am in Christ. Separate the wheat from the chaff of what follows in this book. Grow strong and delight yourself in the Lord. Bon appetite!