

It is really easy to refute the argument against the correct identification of the church triumphant if you employ the lines, and you have eyes to see and ears to hear. This argument is not about the church triumphant, it's about "line upon line" methodology.

The ensign that is lifted draws the entire world. See Isaiah 5:26; 11:10–12; 18:3; 30:17; 31:9; Zechariah 9:16.

The ensign is lifted up and in Isaiah the glorious holy mountain is also lifted up. The ensign that is lifted up is made up of the outcasts of Israel. See Psalm 147:2; Isaiah 11:12; 56:8; Jeremiah 30:17. The ensign must also be John's remnant that Satan is so angry at because of the shortness of time.

Therefore "line upon line" the ensign that is also the glorious holy mountain is made up of Seventh-day Adventists that were somehow separated (cast out) from Adventism, which is modern Israel. With this small amount of "line upon line" application there are many things that can be addressed, but what I want you to now see is that the expression "outcasts of Israel" is representing a specific period of prophetic time. The "outcasts of Israel" is a reference to the remnant of Adventism that have been separated from the rest of Adventism by being somehow cast out. It is not referencing the Second Coming, or when God's people stand upon the sea of glass. Many other symbols, which are also representing the same "remnant" people of God emphasize specific periods in the history of the remnant church that ultimately does stand upon the sea of glass and enters into New Jerusalem.

The "outcast", the "remnant", the "ensign" and "the glorious holy mountain" are simply four out of many lines that when brought together provide the complete characteristics of the church triumphant. If one chooses to employ Greek reasoning, which is the same reasoning that the early Christian church of Ephesus was confronted with in their interactions with both the Jewish and Gentile world, then in agreement with Greek logic you take a subject and divide that subject into as many parts as possible. Then you isolate one of those many parts and build a definition or model of that part, which is then employed to attack and reject that correct definition of the subject that was dissected into many parts. I suspect that there is at minimum twenty various symbols in inspiration of the church triumphant. To define the church triumphant based upon only passages that contain the expression "church triumphant" is a technique of Greek logic.

The subject of the church triumphant as represented by the line of the glorious holy mountain informs us that others beside the outcasts of Israel will be gathered.

The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather *others* to him, beside those that are gathered unto him. Isaiah 56:8.

The period of prophetic time represented within the previous verse includes the gathering of the outcasts of Israel and extends through the time when the Gentiles are also gathered. Other lines of prophecy establish that the gathering of the Gentiles takes place during the fall of Babylon.

During the period of history when Babylon falls the "remnant" are also represented by several other various symbols, and many times those symbols are associated with the terminology of warfare. The remnant are the "threshing instrument" in the hand of the Lord, and they are also His "battle ax" that as

“a stone cut out of a mountain” are destined to fill the whole earth and that is going to strike the foot of the statue of Daniel two and turn the kingdoms represented therein into chaff that is blown away by the wind. The battle ax in the Lord’s hand are the escaped of Israel who the Lord will glorify Himself with and in. See Isaiah 44:23; 49:3; 60:9.

The prophetic light derived from the line of truth represented by the glorious holy mountain identifies that the mountain is a kingdom, for mountains represent kingdoms. Miller’s rules identifies this symbolism, and his rules also identify that symbols may have more than one meaning. A mountain therefore in Scripture is not only a kingdom, but also a church.

The church therefore represented by the glorious holy mountain is also the kingdom of priests which is also according to Peter a spiritual house, a holy nation and a royal priesthood. A holy nation is an obedient nation, so the period of time that is the antitype of Peter’s prophecy is perfectly fulfilled is when the tares have been removed and the only thing left is wheat. In agreement with the period of time Peter is identifying, Sister White records that there is to be a trying process where the remnant church appears to fall, but it doesn’t, for it remains through the entire process of tare removal. That is of course a paraphrase, but it is accurate. When the tares are gone, it is a holy nation.

Isaiah speaks of a time in the context of Zion, which he also calls Jerusalem, when no sinners will enter into the glorious holy mountain Zion and Jerusalem are interchangeable symbols with the glorious holy mountain. He marks the specific time when the tares are removed by saying that from “henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Isaiah 52:1. But if we read all of chapter fifty-two we find that this purified church is marked during the history of the second angel’s a call out of Babylon.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see **eye to eye**, when the Lord shall bring again Zion. Isaiah 52:7, 8.

The watchmen at this point lift up their voice in unity, which among other things identifies that the tares have previously been removed as Isaiah already said in verse one when he stated from “henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.” The glorious holy mountain is “tare free” well before the Second Coming.

Other lines of truth that identify the “remnant” choose terms of warfare to describe the glorious holy mountain and they as in Isaiah fifty-two place this symbol of the remnant in the history of the latter rain, which is of course the history following 911, when the second angel arrived. Thus the context of Isaiah fifty-two is speaking of the unity of the outcasts of Israel that is accomplished somewhere after 911 when the tares are removed from the wheat. Zechariah speaks of this time and represents the remnant as a “goodly horse in battle.”

Ask ye of the Lord rain **in the time of the latter rain**; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field. For the idols have spoken vanity, and the diviners have seen a lie, and have told false dreams; they comfort in vain: therefore they went their way as a

flock, they were troubled, because *there was* no shepherd. Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I punished the goats: for the Lord of hosts hath visited **his flock** the house of Judah, and hath made them as **his goodly horse in the battle**. Zechariah 10:1–3.

Therefore the outcasts, who are the remnant, who are the glorious holy mountain are also the Lord's "goodly horse" in battle, and of course that goodly horse will be triumphant. The question is whether that horse is triumphant at the conclusion of the warfare it engages in, or is it triumphant from the beginning of the warfare all the way through to the end and beyond?

All the books of the Bible meet and end in the book of Revelation, informing us that the church of Ephesus was the horse that conquers, which is also understood to mean the horse that triumphs. The church of Ephesus as represented by the white horse that goes forth "conquering and to conquer" is Zechariah's goodly horse in battle, that is also the Lord's battle ax and threshing instrument with which the Lord will thresh Babylon during the history of the second angel that arrived at 911.

Early on in this movement and message we began to employ a passage from the book *The Great Controversy* which states that "one saying is not to be used to destroy another." To employ an incomplete description and definition of the church triumphant through insisting that your consideration of the subject must be confined into the narrow compass of the inspired discussion of the church militant and church triumphant is a technique of Greek philosophy, which wrests the true biblical definition of the church triumphant that is established through the methodology of Isaiah's "line upon line" located in chapter twenty-eight. The rejection of the "line upon line" methodology is therefore a rejection of the latter rain.

Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? *them that are* weaned from the milk, *and* drawn from the breasts. For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little: For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This *is* the rest *wherewith* ye may cause the weary to rest; and this *is* the refreshing: yet they would not hear. But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken. Isaiah 28:9–13.

Therefore the foolish argument we are now speaking to is directed against the church of Ephesus that is represented as the Lord's goodly horse that goes forth to conquer and is actually an attack against the application of the line upon line methodology, which is therefore a rejection of the latter rain message as typified by the ministry of Jones and Waggoner in the 1888 time period. Probably the most insidious element of this particular satanic teaching is that it places the church triumphant into a future history when it will be too late to leave the church militant and join the church triumphant.

When the following passages that were employed in an attempt to destroy a correct understanding of the church triumphant are considered by employing the methodology of line upon line correctly, they are not at variance at all with what we have been teaching about Ephesus.

“The church militant is not in this world the church triumphant.” *Review and Herald*, July 26, 1898.

The church militant and triumphant represent two symbols. No contradiction there. That is how teach it. But the next passage that is employed simply does not uphold the accusation that it supposedly identifies. Notice the person cites the following singular sentence:

“The members of the church triumphant,—the church in heaven—will be permitted to draw near to the members of the church militant, to aid them in their necessity.” *Southern Watchmen*, September 8, 1903.

The claim is made that the church triumphant is “the church in heaven” as if those members of the church in heaven are either angels or overcomers that are now in heaven. They are “permitted to draw near to the members of the church militant” so the members of the church in heaven must exist during the history of the church militant. But the supposed claim made with this lone sentence does not agree with what the passage says, and it doesn’t agree just as certainly as we reject the Protestant claim that Lazarus was in heaven while the rich man was alive in hell communicating to God. The sentence that was selected without any surrounding context is taken from the following passage. I will underline the sentence that was dissected and placed in a false light from this passage, while also placing in bold-type identifying that the church in heaven represents a membership of humanity that have joined themselves unto divinity. In the passage this unity is called a “heavenly union.”

“As the end draws near, the **work of God** is to increase in strength and purity and holiness. The **workers** are to be filled with love for **God** and for **one another**. **They** are to cherish principles of strictest integrity. When the true keynote is struck, God will reveal himself as the God of mercy and love. **Angels of heaven** will ascend and descend the ladder of shining brightness, **to co-operate with human workers**.

“The members of the church triumphant,—the church in heaven—will be permitted to draw near to the members of the church militant, to aid them in their necessity. Let us ever remember that **we are laborers together with God**. **In this heavenly union we shall carry forward his work with completeness**, with singing and rejoicing. **In every soul** will be kindled the fire of holy zeal. **Company after company will leave the dark standard of the foe, to come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.**”

“**God’s workers** must gain a far deeper experience. **If they will surrender all to him, he will work mightily for them**. **They will plant the standard of truth upon fortresses till then held by Satan**, and with shouts of victory take possession of **them**. **They** bear the scars of battle, but there comes to **them** a comforting message that **the Lord is teaching them** terrible things in righteousness. He will lead **them** on, **conquering and to conquer**.

“**When God’s servants with consecrated zeal co-operate with divine instrumentalities**, the state of things that exists in the world will be changed, and soon the earth with joy will receive her King. Then

**‘they that be wise** shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and **they that turn many to righteousness** as the stars forever and ever.’” *Southern Watchmen*, September 8, 1903.

The definition of the church triumphant in this passage is among others things tied to the church of Ephesus, for as we already noted, it is the church of Ephesus which goes for as the Lord’s goodly horse “conquering and to conquer.” The definition of the triumphant church in this passage is a church representing a membership that live out the reality of the combination of humanity and divinity. The church triumphant is composed of members that have secured a “heavenly union” between themselves and heavenly agencies. They are clearly marked as existing in the prophetic history where the Gentiles are being called out of Babylon.

For a person to claim, “Where exactly is this church triumphant then if it’s been here since 9/11? I sure haven’t seen or heard of one! And that is definitely contrary to the SOP... and the lines.. if you did the lines correctly” sounds convincing to some I suppose. But the antagonist provided no evidence of the claim that he makes about correctly applying line upon line methodology, with the possible exception that he selected three passage that contained the expression “church triumphant.” At best that is simply a counterfeit of genuine line upon line methodology.

The first reference he selected about the church triumphant does nothing more than confirm what everyone believes; that being that the church militant is different than the church triumphant. His second reference consists of one sentence, void of the context that leads to and follows after the sentence he chose. Yet the actual context of the passage demonstrates that his private interpretation of the definition of the church triumphant is “contrary” to the simple and clear definition within the passage.

Then he adds one more passage into the mix when he cites:

“The Church militant is not the church triumphant, and earth is not Heaven. The church is composed of erring, imperfect men and women, who are but learners in the school of Christ, to be trained, disciplined, educated for this life, and for the future, immortal life.” *Signs of the Times*, January 4, 1883.

We have already presented the passage from *Southern Watchmen* that stated:

“The members of the church triumphant,—**the church in heaven**—will be permitted to draw near to the members of the church militant, to aid them in their necessity. Let us ever remember that we are laborers together with God. In **this heavenly union we shall carry forward his work with completeness**, with singing and rejoicing. In every soul will be kindled the fire of holy zeal. **Company after company will leave the dark standard of the foe, to come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.**”

The triumphant and militant church exist in the same history, one church associated with the earth and one with heaven. The heavenly church is made up of members who possess the experience marked as

the combination of humanity and divinity, which we are repeatedly taught in inspiration represents the condition of those that do not sin.

“Christ came to make us ‘partakers of the divine nature,’ and His life declares that **humanity, combined with divinity, does not commit sin.**” *The Ministry of Healing*, 181.

When an individual secures the experience represented by the combination of humanity and divinity he is seated in heaven.

Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of **disobedience**: Among whom also we all had our conversation **in times past** in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath **quicken**ed us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath **raised us up together**, and **made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus**. Ephesians 2:2–6.

Those who secure the experience of justification by faith are seated in heaven, (and Paul did not put the sitting with Christ in the future tense). If we are justified, we are seated in heaven. We are not simply seated in heaven, but we are (present tense) sitting with Christ. The process whereby we might be seated with Christ is the process of overcoming.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. Revelation 3:21.

The heavenly union associated with the church of heaven is accomplished through the combination of humanity and divinity.

“Christ is the ladder that Jacob saw, the base resting on the earth, and the topmost round reaching to the gate of heaven, to the very threshold of glory. If that ladder had failed by a single step of reaching the earth, we should have been lost. But Christ reaches us where we are. He took our nature and overcame, that we through taking His nature might overcome. Made ‘in the likeness of sinful flesh’ (Romans 8:3), He lived a sinless life. Now by His divinity **He lays hold upon the throne of heaven**, while by His humanity **He reaches us**. He bids us by faith in Him attain to the glory of the character of God. Therefore are we to be perfect, even as our ‘Father which is in heaven is perfect.’” *The Desire of Ages*, 311.

Those who “attain to the glory of the character of God” are “perfect” even as God the Father is perfect. Whereas the church militant, or the earthly church “is composed of erring, imperfect men and women, who are but learners in the school of Christ, to be trained, disciplined, educated for this life, and for the future, immortal life.” The target audience to be “trained” and “educated” for this “life, and for the

future, immortal life” is the church militant. Some in that church will receive the message from the heavenly church, and some will not. The heavenly church is Ephesus and the earthly church is Laodicea.

Speaking of the church of Ephesus just after the day of Pentecost we are informed:

“They could speak the name of Jesus with assurance; for was He not their Friend and Elder Brother? Brought into close communion with Christ, **they sat with Him in heavenly places.** With what burning language they clothed their ideas as they bore witness for Him! Their hearts were surcharged with a benevolence so full, so deep, so far-reaching, that it impelled them to go to the ends of the earth, testifying to the power of Christ. They were filled with an intense longing to carry forward the work He had begun. They realized the greatness of their debt to heaven and the responsibility of their work. Strengthened by the endowment of the Holy Spirit, they went forth filled with zeal to extend the triumphs of the cross. The Spirit animated them and spoke through them. The peace of Christ shone from their faces. They had consecrated their lives to Him for service, and their very features bore evidence to the surrender they had made.” *Acts of the Apostles*, 46.

The disciples during the time of Pentecost were “brought into close communion with Christ” and that close communion is represented as being seated “with Him in heavenly places.”

There are many lines that witness to the definition of the church triumphant. Not every line speaks to every aspect of truth associated with the church triumphant. In Hebrews twelve we are informed that that Jesus endured the sufferings of the cross and the associated shame because of the joy that was set before Him. Jesus is our example in all things, and if we are to overcome and therefore be seated in heavenly places with Him, we will overcome as He overcame. His overcoming was made possible for Him by His focus on the prize or “the joy set before Him.” As our example, He left for us the principle of overcoming that is based upon looking forward to a reward that exceeds any present suffering. When it comes to the definition of the church triumphant we have several prophetic lines of testimony, thus providing us with “a cloud of witnesses” on the subject.

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great **a cloud of witnesses**, let us **lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us**, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; **who for the joy that was set before him** endured the cross, despising the shame, and is **set down at the right hand of the throne of God**. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Hebrews 12:1–3.

In this chapter of Hebrews, after Paul speaks of Moses coming to Sinai, he then speaks of heavenly Jerusalem, thus using the first Pentecost (Sinai) to illustrate the latter rain at the end of the world, when he writes:

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and **church of the firstborn**, which are

written in **heaven**, and to God the Judge of all, and to **the spirits of just men made perfect**, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of Abel*. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more *shall not we escape*, if we turn away from him that *speaketh* from heaven. Hebrews 12:22–25.

If we think that the church of heaven, which is the church triumphant only exists at or beyond the Second Coming, then we have destroyed our ability to recognize what the qualifications are that allows us to be members of that church. If you do not think there is a grocery store in that little town, then you don't go to that little town to do your shopping. If you do not think you have been called into the covenant promise of the church of the firstborn, that is also the church triumphant, you refuse the call.

The characteristics of the church triumphant are set forth in many lines of prophetic testimony. One essential characteristic that is a major line of truth is that it is a purified people that are used to gather the gentiles as the message of the glory of God is conveyed to the world through his triumphant people that are lifted up as an ensign. The members of the church triumphant must be triumphant over their own sins before they can be employed as an ensign to gather the other flock. This truth is a major theme of prophetic history. Consider a few passages that emphasize the necessity of God's church being pure, that is to say triumphant over sin, before they can call the Gentiles.

In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth *shall be* excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, *that he that is* left in **Zion**, and *he that* remaineth in **Jerusalem**, shall be called **holy**, *even* every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: **When** the Lord shall have **washed away** the filth of the daughters of Zion, and **shall have purged** the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning. Isaiah 4:2–4.

**I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins**: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done *it*: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord **hath** redeemed Jacob, and **glorified himself in Israel**. Isaiah 44:22, 23.

And he hath made my mouth like a **sharp sword**; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a **polished shaft**; in his quiver hath he hid me; And said unto me, Thou *art* my servant, O Israel, **in whom I will be glorified**. Isaiah 49:2, 3.

“The work of the Holy Spirit is to convince the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. The **world can only be warned** by **seeing** those who believe the truth **sanctified through the truth**, acting upon high and holy principles, showing in a high, elevated sense, **the line of demarcation between those who keep the commandments of God, and those who trample them under their feet**. The sanctification of the Spirit signalizes the difference between **those who have the seal of God**, and those who keep a spurious rest-day. When the test comes, it will be clearly shown what the mark of the beast is. It is the keeping of Sunday. Those who after having heard the truth, continue to regard this day

as holy, bear the signature of the man of sin, who thought to change times and laws.” *Bible Training School*, December 1, 1903.

After the glorification of His people that there is yet to be a call to the nations.

Behold, **thou shalt call** a nation *that* thou knowest not, and nations *that* knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; **for he hath glorified thee**. Isaiah 55:5.

Notice that Zechariah represents the remnant as the “goodly horse in the battle” which is John’s “white horse” that goes forth “conquering and to conquer”, as God’s flock, as “stones of a crown” (Peter’s “lively stones” that build up a “spiritual house” that is a “holy priesthood) and as an ensign that is lifted up.

And the Lord their God shall save them in that day as **the flock of his people**: for they *shall be as* the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land. For how great *is* his goodness, and how great *is* his beauty! corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids. Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; *so* the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field. For the idols have spoken vanity, and the diviners have seen a lie, and have told false dreams; they comfort in vain: therefore they went their way as a flock, they were troubled, because *there was* no shepherd. Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I punished the goats: for the Lord of hosts hath visited **his flock the house of Judah**, and hath made them as **his goodly horse in the battle**. Zechariah 9:16–10:3.

Commenting on this previous passage of Zechariah Sister White adds:

“For Zion’s sake will I not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, **until the righteousness thereof go forth** as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And **the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness**, and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God;’ ‘And the Lord their God shall save them in that day as the flock of His people; for they shall be as the stones of a crown, **lifted up as an ensign** upon His land.’

“Those here represented have found Christ, the gift of God, for whom the world should be surrendered. Those who seek for peace and rest will be unsuccessful unless they find Him, the One of whom John said, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, **which taketh away the sin of the world**.’ But the soul that finds Jesus feels that all his wants are satisfied. In Him the words are fulfilled, ‘**A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you**.’ **This is the reward of obedience.**” *Signs of the Times*, November 24, 1898.

The ensign represents those that have acquired the experience and “reward of obedience” that places them into membership of the church of heaven, where they, as overcomers are by faith seated with Christ in heavenly places. To be a member of the church of heaven requires that we are overcomers as was Christ, yet Christ overcame based upon the goal that was set before Him. The goal set before us is to secure the experience represented as the combination of humanity with divinity, and to participate in the gathering that is accomplished when “company after company” “leave the dark standard of the foe” and “come up to the help of the Lord” “against the mighty.”

We must be in the church triumphant before the final gathering of Gentiles, and if we are led to believe that the church triumphant only exists after the final ingathering of God’s children is accomplished, then what we have essentially been led to believe is that experience of victory over sin, the experience that is the essential element of the symbolism of all the lines addressing the church triumphant is pushed off into future history unto a time when probation is past.

Therefore this misguided application is a rejection of “line upon line” methodology, a rejection of the latter rain, a rejection of the third angel’s message as represented in the ministry of Jones and Waggoner and a rejection of the everlasting covenant which simply stated is, “Obey and live. Disobey and die.” Oh why will you choose death, oh house of Israel? Why would you assign the triumphs of the cross that are accomplished by the remnant people of God into a future where the opportunity to repent is past? Why would you argue to uphold the concept that all the way to the Second Coming God’s church is composed of wheat and tares?

The church triumphant is to be purified before the gathering in of the Gentiles. (In this response I am not addressing any distinction between priests; Levites or Nethinims.) At the conclusion of the purification God’s triumphant church the members will see eye to eye in unity. That unity was represented in the church of Ephesus during the time when the early church went forth conquering and to conquer. That unity included a work of organization. That history illustrates our history today.

“Only as they were united with Christ could the disciples hope to have **the accompanying power of the Holy Spirit and the co-operation of angels of heaven.** With the help of these divine agencies they would present before the world a united front and would be **victorious [triumphant]** in the conflict they were compelled to wage unceasingly against the powers of darkness. As they should continue to labor unitedly, heavenly messengers would go before them, opening the way; hearts would be prepared for the reception of truth, and many would be won to Christ. So long as they remained united, the church would go forth **‘fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.’** [Warfare] Song of Solomon 6:10. Nothing could withstand her onward progress. **The church would advance from victory to victory, gloriously fulfilling her divine mission of proclaiming the gospel to the world. [Triumphant from beginning to end]**

“The **organization of the church** at Jerusalem was to serve as a model for the organization of churches in every other place where messengers of truth should win converts to the gospel. Those to whom was given the responsibility of the general oversight of the church were not to lord it over God’s heritage, but, as wise shepherds, were to ‘feed the flock of God, . . . being ensamples to the flock’ (1 Peter 5:2, 3); and the deacons were to be ‘men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom.’

These men were to take their position unitedly on the side of right and to maintain it with firmness and decision. Thus they would have a uniting influence upon the entire flock.

“Later in the history of the early church, when in various parts of the world many groups of believers had been formed into churches, **the organization of the church was further perfected**, so that order and harmonious action might be maintained. Every member was exhorted to act well his part. Each was to make a wise use of the talents entrusted to him. Some were endowed by the Holy Spirit with special gifts—‘first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.’ 1 Corinthians 12:28. But all these classes of workers were to **labor in harmony**.

“‘There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.’ 1 Corinthians 12:4–12.

“Solemn are the responsibilities resting upon those who are called to act as leaders in the church of God on earth. In the days of the theocracy, when Moses was endeavoring to carry alone burdens so heavy that he would soon have worn away under them, he was counseled by Jethro to plan for a wise distribution of responsibilities. ‘Be thou for the people to Godward,’ Jethro advised, ‘that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: and thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.’ Jethro further advised that men be appointed to act as ‘rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.’ These were to be ‘able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness.’ They were to ‘judge the people at all seasons,’ thus relieving Moses of the wearing responsibility of giving consideration to many minor matters that could be dealt with wisely by consecrated helpers.

“The time and strength of those who in the providence of God have been placed in leading positions of responsibility in the church, should be spent in dealing with the weightier matters demanding special wisdom and largeness of heart. It is not in the order of God that such men should be appealed to for the adjustment of minor matters that others are well qualified to handle. ‘Every great matter they shall bring unto thee,’ Jethro proposed to Moses, ‘but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.’

“In harmony with this plan, ‘Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.’ Exodus 18:19–26.

“Later, when choosing seventy elders to share with him the responsibilities of leadership, Moses was careful to select, as his helpers, men possessing dignity, sound judgment, and experience. In his charge to these elders at the time of their ordination, he outlined some of the qualifications that fit a man to be a wise ruler in the church. ‘Hear the causes between your brethren,’ said Moses, ‘and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him. Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God’s.’ Deuteronomy 1:16, 17.

“King David, toward the close of his reign, delivered a solemn charge to those bearing the burden of the work of God in his day. Summoning to Jerusalem ‘all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes, and the captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course, and the captains over the thousands, and captains over the hundreds, and the stewards over all the substance and possession of the king, and of his sons, with the officers, and with the mighty men, and with all the valiant men,’ the aged king solemnly charged them, ‘in the sight of all Israel the congregation of the Lord, and in the audience of our God,’ to ‘keep and seek for all the commandments of the Lord your God.’ 1 Chronicles 28:1, 8.

“To Solomon, as one called to occupy a position of leading responsibility, David gave a special charge: ‘Thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek Him, He will be found of thee; but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off forever. Take heed now; for the Lord hath chosen thee: . . . be strong.’ 1 Chronicles 28:9, 10.

“The same principles of piety and justice that were to guide the rulers among God’s people in the time of Moses and of David, were also to be followed by those given the oversight of the newly organized church of God in the gospel dispensation. In the work of setting things in order in all the churches, and ordaining suitable men to act as officers, the apostles held to the high standards of leadership outlined in the Old Testament Scriptures. They maintained that he who is called to stand in a position of leading responsibility in the church ‘must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.’ Titus 1:7–9.

“The order that was maintained in the early Christian church made it possible for them to move forward solidly as **a well-disciplined army clad with the armor of God**. The companies of believers, though scattered over a large territory, were all members of one body; all moved in concert and in harmony with one another. When dissension arose in a local church, as later it did arise in Antioch and elsewhere, and the believers were unable to come to an agreement among themselves, such matters were not permitted to create a division in the church, but were referred to a general council of the entire body of believers, made up of appointed delegates from the various local churches, with the apostles and elders in positions of leading responsibility. Thus the efforts of Satan to attack the church in isolated places were met by concerted action on the part of all, and the plans of the enemy to disrupt and destroy were thwarted.

“God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.’ 1 Corinthians 14:33. **He requires that order and system be observed in the conduct of church affairs today no less than in the days of old.** He desires His work to be carried forward with thoroughness and exactness so that He may place upon it the seal of His approval. Christian is to be united with Christian, church with church, **the human instrumentality co-operating with the divine**, every agency subordinate to the Holy Spirit, and all combined in giving to the world the good tidings of the grace of God.” *Acts of the Apostles*, 91–96.

Your brother Jeff