

# THE FINAL PART OF THE SEVEN WEEKS

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Transcription of recording, slightly edited

## Introduction

It is great to be with you for this June Bible School weekend, with tremendous movement right across the country – different ones travelling to different places to be part of the teaching team.

My focus today will be the final part of the seven weeks of 'The Seventy Weeks Prophecy'.

By way of orientation, it is Daniel Chapter 9 verse 25. 'Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times.'

In this session, we are going to acknowledge the two time periods that are mentioned in that particular verse, which is 'seven weeks' and 'sixty-two weeks', and that, of course, equates to 'sixty-nine weeks' in total.

Four hundred and eighty-three years, which is the time from the going forth of the command to the coming of the Messiah, which is the baptism of Jesus Christ.

## Grace followed by silence

There is an important distinction made by the prophet in relation to this sixty-nine-week period.

The distinction is 'grace for seven weeks' and then 'silence for sixty-two weeks'. That silence refers to the fact that there was no prophetic ministry in the earth during that time period.

But it is worth noting that Malachi's prophecy, which is the last statement in the Old Testament, bridges us right across that sixty-two-week period to the next prophetic voice of John the Baptist.

He prepared the way of the Lord, and also exemplified the Elijah ministry, which is a specific initiative of the Lord, ministered by presbyteries to restore families to the order of headship, so that, in the day of the Lord, they will be protected from the curse with which He comes to strike the earth.

We will give attention to the curse of the flying scroll, prophesied by Zechariah, in our session today.

You will also note that the language of Malachi, in his call to repent, is set against the backdrop of this curse which Paul, in the New Testament, described as the judgement of God that progresses from 'weak, sick and falling asleep'.

We will connect these elements together, through this session today.

## A season of restoration

Now, concerning this 'seven weeks', or 'forty-nine years', three prophetic ministries were active in Jerusalem, toward God's people.

The point to note is that the latter part of this seven-week period is where we locate the ministry of Malachi, which is where I will particularly focus, noting that the ministry of Ezra and Nehemiah was well addressed last month.

As a younger person, I loved the account of Nehemiah. It is one of those stories I read as a young man and have often gone back to it and considered it, not fully appreciating and understanding where it sat within the broader framework of the Seventy Weeks prophecy.

A very important part of my understanding and learning through this season has been in appreciating the ministry of Ezra, and the restoration that came to the people, such that, when Nehemiah came among the people, he was given the ability to walk with, lead and instruct them, as an obedient and settled people, toward the significant work of rebuilding.

I was quite taken by the rebuilding work, appreciating the ministry of Ezra, and the restoration within households, and restoration to the headship of God, in regard to how they listened and heard and responded in repentance.

I also appreciate the nature of how the Lord has been coming among us, and I know that we are certainly walking and moving forward.

But the season that is just behind us has very much been a season where the Lord has been

restoring us, His people, to the place where His messenger is proclaiming to us, bringing restoration, bringing healing, bringing recovery.

There is a great work of *building* that is before us, as we are being built in *to be the walls*, the worthy homes, that will be significant to the work of gathering the harvest that is yet ahead.

So it is a great season, and it is tremendous that we can reflect upon the lessons that are recorded for us in the Scriptures, and can grow and learn as we consider the matters that are before us, even here today.

### **Sanctified from the world as a God-fearing community**

We made the point that the ‘street’ of the city, the ‘open square’ on the eastern side of the temple, was restored by Ezra to be the public meeting place between the Lord’s messengers and the people.

That was where Ezra preached to the people and confronted them, particularly concerning the mixed culture in their marriages and households. And this has particular significance when we consider *the curse of the flying scroll*.

This is also the place that was given later to the apostles as their context of proclamation of the word of God.

Then, of course, Nehemiah returned to initiate and oversee the rebuilding of the walls of the city.

The walls of the city were important, because they represented the commitment of the people to live as a sanctified people – sanctified from the world – and a God-fearing community.

Those walls represent a people who feared God, not man. When you consider the nature of what came against them, it is an amazing account of how they listened, received faith, and continued to proceed in obedience, with such warfare coming against them and such resistance.

### **The nature of Malachi’s ministry**

The question that I want to address in this session as we are considering this seven-week period, particularly in regard to Malachi is: ‘What is the nature of his ministry? And what did he bring to the group who were gathered there in Jerusalem?’

This short period of forty-nine years should have been a profound period of restoration for Jerusalem and the Jewish nation. But, by the time that Malachi prophesied, following the ministry of Ezra and Nehemiah, the nation had again turned away from the Lord.

Before we explore this more fully, it will be helpful to provide a very simple chronology of how the Lord ministered grace, through these three figures, in this forty-nine-year period.

I really want to highlight that early phase; that first twenty-five years of this period of time, and then to appreciate what Malachi was actually addressing, and the nature of where he ministered within that forty-nine-year period.

### **Grace was extended to the people**

We know that Ezra proclaimed to the people that they needed to come and to gather in the open square. We know that there was a three-day opportunity to respond. That is the first increment of *grace* that was measured to the people.

Very soon after that, Ezra, with a presbytery of leaders, took three months to appraise the situation, which then initiated an ongoing season of recovery and restoration.

Ezra remained in Jerusalem for thirteen years. In this period of time, he continued in the ministry of the agenda of restoration and recovery. And there was an overlap when Nehemiah returned, and Ezra remained there in Jerusalem.

When Nehemiah came, the first task was to *rebuild the wall*; an amazing feat in fifty-two days. He then continued as governor for twelve years, indicating that twenty-five-year period.

After this twelve-year period, he returned to the king of Persia for a brief period, and then went back again to Jerusalem.

Upon his return the second time, there is nothing further recorded. So we are not quite sure – there are some gaps in what is recorded.

However, it is widely agreed that Malachi prophesied during the very latter part of the fifth century BC, which puts it almost at the end of this first seven weeks.

The key point to note is that, in the first seven weeks, the Lord extended grace to the inhabitants

of Jerusalem. A spirit of grace and supplication was poured out, enabling them to look upon Him whom they had pierced.

There was a tremendous outpouring of grace leading to mourning and repentance; a great change in the culture of their marriages and their households, under the ministry of Ezra.

Then there was an ordered and obedient community of people walking in the fear of the Lord, and submitted to the ministry of Nehemiah.

### **We are not free to do as we please**

We would have to say that, if the story had ended there, it would have been a very good read, wouldn't it? If that's where it ended, and if that was the account that we were to consider, and finish there, we'd say, 'What a tremendous journey.' Things were looking very good.

Now, the point is that something happened and, by the time of the ministry of Malachi, it is a very different picture; a significantly different picture.

It's important that we acknowledge that there is a process, or progression, to attaining the sonship that is promised in the gospel, and each stage in this process requires, for us, *a measure of faith*.

None of us are free to go and do as we please. We are called to be an obedient people, living by every word that proceeds from His mouth.

And that's not for most of our life; that's not for key parts of our life - that's for *every day of our life*. That's the invitation and that's the call of sonship.

This means that we become the righteousness of God in Christ by journeying by faith; from one measure of faith to the next measure of faith.

A person's attainment of each measure of faith is demonstrated as they believe and obey the word proclaimed. This is how it is that we live from faith to faith.

Therefore, we must be careful that we do not believe in 'a gospel of superannuation', where we have worked and served our whole life, believing that we have stored up enough credit to retire and live off the accumulated wealth from a former day.

We cannot live like that. That is not the gospel of sonship.

Whatever your resume of achievements might be - and they may well all be very legitimate

waypoints of faith - don't forget what the Lord said.

Many church attending, Bible-believing people 'will say to Me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?" Then I will tell them plainly, "I never you; depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness".' Mat 7:22-23.

We know this passage well. It's a passage that captures our attention.

Why were they not *known*? It's because they did not participate in the *agape* meal, where they could have received the substance of their name, at the tree of life, which would have confirmed their sanctified participation.

Instead, they remained 'outside the city with the dogs, the sorcerers, the sexually immoral, the murders, the idolators and everyone who loves and practices falsehood'.

In other words, they sought validation according to their self-defined function, rather than validation from the tree of life.

### **Rejoice that our names are written in heaven**

In direct contrast to this group, there is the account of the seventy-two, who returned with the report, 'Even the demons are subject to us.' They were essentially making the same claim as those recorded in Matthew Chapter 7.

Jesus said, 'Do not rejoice that the demons submit to you.' Don't get distracted by your function or in what you are able to achieve in your obedience to the word.

'But rejoice that your names [including your works] are written in heaven', which is the evidence that you are gaining access to the tree of life, where the substance of your name is being ministered. Luk 10:20.

Blessed are those who wash their robes so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter the city by its gates.

I trust you are hearing, this weekend, the call of the Spirit and the bride, who are saying, 'Come.'

Yes, the Lord will expose what is lame. And yet They are saying, 'Come.'

His eyes as a flame of fire will expose your iniquity; and still They say, 'Come.' Don't withdraw in unbelief or 'sideline' yourself, but come.

This is the invitation to us right now. It is to 'come'.

**It is not how we start the race, but how we finish**

The returned exiles did well to make their way to Jerusalem from Babylon. They did well to weather the reproaches of the nations around them.

They responded well to Ezra's ministry, bringing about great cultural revival. And they worked courageously, in the fear of the Lord, to build the wall under Nehemiah.

But what did they do next? What did they then carried on with? What did they move forward with? In addressing the Galatian church, the apostle Paul wrote, 'You were running a good race, but who cut in on you to keep you from obeying the truth?'

The point is, it's not how you start the race that matters. It's how you finish it.

This is our key point.

By the time Malachi stood up to prophesy, the majority of the people had again turned away from the Lord. Now, that's difficult to say.

Twenty-five years of restoration and revival and, right at the close of that seven-week period, they had already turned away from the Lord.

Only a remnant of the remnant remained as ones who feared the Lord.

The restoration that had been experienced by the inhabitants of Jerusalem in response to the ministry of Ezra and Nehemiah had been lost.

So the prophecy of Malachi can be viewed as that final call to repentance, which belonged to that period of restoration.

Assuming Malachi prophesied twenty years after the second return of Nehemiah, it is remarkable how quickly everything that Ezra and Nehemiah had restored, was lost.

**Replacing fellowship with sacramentalism**

It is important that we acknowledge that this is a well-worn path concerning God's people.

God, in mercy, *delivers* His people. They *rejoice* and give thanks, only to harden their hearts in preference for another gospel.

Concerning 'the golden calf' incident, the Lord God said to Moses, 'They have turned aside, quickly, out of the way which I commanded them.'

And this wasn't only an Old Testament issue. Paul wrote to Timothy, 'This you know, that all those in Asia have turned away from Me.'

By the time the aged apostle John penned his account to the seven churches in the book of Revelation, we read that many churches had lost their way.

For example, the once mighty church in Ephesus had become a church which had fallen from the first love fellowship of the *agape* meal.

The very same church to which the whole counsel of God had been delivered was now without this most essential feature and was, accordingly, at risk of losing its lampstand; that is, unless they repented and returned to do the first works.

We now know that the vibrant and dynamic contribution of the entire church at the *agape* meal was replaced with a sacramental alternative. The fellowship of illumination was replaced by the convenience of a religious ritual.

It's likely that early churches opted to forsake the *agape* gathering, both publicly and in houses, where congregants would meet together to consider each other, in order to stir up one another to love and good works, in preference for a more sophisticated and relationally pragmatic approach.

What did the Ephesian church fall from? In short, they fell from heavenly places, where the *agape* meal fellowship was established by the word of Christ, which equipped the saints to speak with grace on their lips, in order that they might prepare and equip their brethren for their sonship works in the offering of Christ.

What a shock to think that, within Paul's own lifetime, 'the sound of many waters' that had washed the feet of the brethren in that region in Asia, for their participation in Christ's offerings, had been so quickly silenced.

Congregations were, instead, directed to a nominated priest or a church leader, who relieved the whole congregation of their ministry works and, instead, spoke a blessing over the lifeless elements, in the belief that their consumption was the means by which the grace of God was being transferred to them.

Silence fell upon the church as the church fell from heavenly places.

It is an amazing picture, isn't it – the impact, and the way in which this spread across the whole of Asia. This conveys well our human propensity for a *sacramental alternative* – a golden calf in Moses' day; the request for a king in Samuel's day; the eucharist in Paul's day – always desiring to place someone *between* God and us.

The point to note is *how quickly the things of the Lord can be lost*. Praise the Lord that we are being restored at this time to His 'agape meal', and learning again to speak with grace on our lips. May we never think it a weariness to participate as *ministers of His life to one another*.

### **Malachi addressed four specific areas requiring cultural change**

I want to now give attention to the *four specific areas* that were addressed by Malachi among the people at the close of this seven-week period. I will list them; then, through the remainder of this session, and tomorrow, we will consider these four aspects.

First, Malachi addressed *the culture of the Lord's table*.

He then addressed the culture of the *teaching priests*, or the *messengers*.

He then addressed the culture of the *households*, and particularly the *marriages*.

Finally, he addressed the culture of *offering*.

### **The culture of the Lord's table restored by Ezra and Nehemiah**

We will begin with the culture of the Lord's table.

We considered, in our last session, that the fellowship of an *agape* meal, in faith for the New Covenant, was restored by Ezra and Nehemiah.

We read in Nehemiah Chapter 8 that Ezra read from the prophetic book of the New Covenant, the book of Deuteronomy, from sunrise to midday.

He was supported by a number of other messengers and by the Levites, who were among the people. They explained the word. They gave the sense of it; they discussed its implications, its application. And understanding came to all the people. Neh 8:7-8.

The fruit of this fellowship in the word was an *agape* meal; and they rejoiced in the word. Neh 8:12.

It is a beautiful picture! I love the sense of the whole community coming together and the word being proclaimed; and there being opportunity, then, to *receive understanding* – understanding to the extent that every household *knew the implications* for them, and knew the *application* of that word, so as to move forward with *faith*, with *confidence*, to *live* according to the word.

Nehemiah recorded, 'And all the people went their way [having received the word] to eat and drink, to send portions and rejoice greatly, because they understood the words that were declared to them.' Neh 8:12.

### **The name and the table of the Lord profaned by His people**

However, by the time of the events of the first chapter of the book of Malachi, which, as we have suggested, was perhaps *twenty years later*, we read that the Lord confronted the people, because they profaned, or showed no respect for, the name of the Lord and the fellowship of His table.

This was in their *conversation* and in their *conduct*. Their lips were unclean, and the relational mode of their living was out of order.

By the time that Malachi was prophesying, there had been a very clear shift from what had been restored in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah.

We read, concerning the table of the Lord, 'But you profane it, in that you say, "The table of the Lord is defiled; and its food is contemptible".' Mal 1:12.

They were saying, 'It is to be despised. It is of no value to us. It is not giving to us what we need. It is not giving to us what we want.'

### **Unclean lips – God judges the conversation of complaint against Him and His messengers**

I suspect that there were many among this returned group who were excited under the

ministry of Ezra, and excited under the ministry of Nehemiah; and yet they held on to the *sense of expectation*: 'Surely life is going to get *better* after we return, and after these things are put in place – the walls built and things beginning to be ordered.' There was a sense of expectation.

It reminds me of the children of Israel in the wilderness. 'And the people spoke against God and against Moses: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread."' Num 21:5.

The judgement of God fell upon the camp; which, on one side, caused the death of all who *refused to repent*. However, equally, it brought about a great *revival and cleansing* among those who did *humble* themselves.

The point to note is that the judgement of God fell upon the camp *because their lips were unclean*, which is confirmed in the way in which they *spoke complaint* against Yahweh and His messenger.

Their *dishonour* and *complaint* only demonstrated that they were *eating from the wrong tree* and were joined to the *wrong conversation*.

This is true for us today, also. When we become drawn to the *wrong tree*, when we become drawn to the *wrong conversation*, we will find ourselves *questioning*.

We will find ourselves in an *unsettled* state in regard to what the Lord is speaking to us about.

And, when we eat from the *wrong tree*, we *speak against* the Lord and His presbytery. And this will provoke the *judgement of God*.

### **We cannot separate the word from the fellowship of His table**

It is important that we remember what we heard right at the beginning of the year: that if we eat from the tree of life in any way *other than* in an *agape* meal, it will become the *fruit of the other tree*.

This is where we encounter the *curse*, which is to *come under judgement*: some weak in faith, some sin-sick, and some spiritually dying.

The important point for us to note here is that we *cannot separate the word from its fellowship*, as though fellowship is an 'add-on'; as though fellowship is a kind of 'extra', if we 'have time' for it.

*Fellowship with one another* is critically and significantly important to all that God is *desiring to do among us*.

The food that the Lord has set at *His table* is His *word*. And His word invites us to, and equips us to participate in, *the fellowship of that table*.

It cannot be eaten at a table of *your choosing*. It is *His table* that we are coming to, and it is *His table* that we are gathered to.

We should be able to look around the auditorium today and acknowledge that we need each other; and then give thanks that we have each other. This is the point where He is *gathering* us; this is the place where He is *connecting* us.

### **Given to the relational and time commitment to participate with one another**

Malachi continued, 'You also say [concerning the fellowship of the table], "Oh, what a weariness [What a nuisance! How tiring!]" And you sneer at it," says the Lord of hosts.' Mal 1:13.

What is this 'weariness' that they were referring to?

It is worth revisiting a proverb that you will be familiar with: 'Lazy people take food in their hand, but it wearies them to lift it to their mouth.' Pro 26:15.

What is actually being said is that *something is being put into our hand*, and we cannot even *honour* it by *taking it in* and *receiving it*.

I want us to register this point.

We can *hear* the word. We are all gathered here today to hear the word; and we know that *faith* comes by hearing – but *faith compels us to speak*.

'Those who feared the Lord *spoke* to one another.' Mal 3:16.

*Speaking* is, then, the *first work of faith*.

And as we *participate* together, we grow in our *understanding*, which is granting us illumination concerning the *implications* of the word for us and our household.

Again, we *need each other*. We need each other for that journey; and to receive the proclamation; and to know the ministry of faith and equipping for the journey ahead of us.

We need *sanctified allocations of time* through the week. We need opportunity to *meet together*, to

meditate, to speak, to pray, to tarry for each other, and to speak with grace on our lips.

There is a very real need for a *time commitment* for these things. And there is a very real need for *relational commitment* – to give ourselves to these activities.

### **Embracing our personal accountability to participate in fellowship**

Why, in Malachi's time, did they call it 'a weariness'?

It is as though they wanted someone to *do the work for them*. I think they wanted to be spoon-fed, like a baby.

I think they wanted a leader to *tell them what to do* – because the thought of meeting with their brethren for *fellowship* to discuss and consider the word, to invite *prayer*, to confess their *lameness* and to walk in *weakness*, was not only an *inconvenience*; but, of more concern, it was also a *loss of face*.

And loss of face, for many, is a kind of *death*. Listen to the children of Israel: 'Then they said to Moses, "You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die".' Exo 20:19.

They did not want *relationship*; they simply desired a *script* for how to live their lives. They wanted a *go-between*.

The thought of being made *personally accountable* by the word – inviting them to *participate* in fellowship, to receive understanding – required them to *make offering; life laid down for another*.

It was not that they were out of reach of the word or that the word was not being ministered.

The issue was that they were *too relationally lazy* to present themselves for fellowship.

### **The house of the lazy man is vulnerable to 'wolves'**

This is where we become vulnerable to 'wolves'. There are, among the church, those whom Jesus called 'wolves', but who *appear* as though they are sheep.

Jesus also referred to these ones as 'false prophets'. They speak lies in the name of the Lord.

Jude referred to them as 'hidden reefs in your love feasts'. Jud 1:12.

The difficult point which we must accept is that these ones *sit among us* at our *agape* meals.

And I want you to know that they take advantage *in the context of a house*.

They are much less active in public gatherings, because they choose settings where, often, there are *no doorkeepers* and *no shepherds*. That is how wolves work. They are aware of what to avoid.

These ones typically have ministry aspirations. They are particularly drawn to homes where men *lack understanding*, and demonstrate *no initiative of faith*. Such men lack in this way because they are *too lazy to eat the word* given to them at the *agape* meal. They have it in their hand and they are too lazy to bring it to their mouth.

Rather, the lazy person prefers to be 'scripted for' by those who seek ministry affirmation. Accordingly, the lazy person is 'devoured' by the conquering mechanism of a wolf, who then subjects the lazy man's household to his ministry projection, compelling them to serve his ministry agenda.

My warning today is not concerning the wolf. My *warning is to the lazy man who lacks diligence*.

Wolves will only circle when they know that there is someone to devour. Don't let that be you.

The Lord is coming. He is inviting us, saying, 'Come! Come! Come to this *agape* meal.'

### **The Lord remembers those who fear Him and came together for fellowship**

We know from the book of Malachi that, at the same time as some profaned the Lord's table, there were others who *feared the Lord*.

Malachi recorded that they 'spoke to one another'. Mal 3:16. They lifted their voice for understanding; they came together for fellowship, honouring the word of the Lord.

Malachi recorded that 'the Lord listened and heard them; and wrote a book of remembrance.' Mal 3:16. That means that Yahweh was right there among them, and He remembered them. He *knew* them.

### **Unworthy participation in the agape meal brings judgement, the curse, into our homes**

However, Malachi continued, ' "And you bring the stolen, the lame, and the sick; thus you bring an offering! Should I accept this from your hand?" says the Lord.' Mal 1:13.

In the day of Malachi, the faith of the people toward the table of the Lord was expressed by their participation in the continual, or the daily, offering; and that was expressed by the offering that they brought to the altar.

When they brought a blind, a stolen, a lame or a sick offering, it revealed their heart toward the Lord's table. This demonstrated *a lack of the fear of the Lord*.

Paul referred to it as eating and drinking the *agape* meal 'in an unworthy manner', *which brings us under the judgement of the curse*. And, for this reason, many are weak and sick. 1Co 11:29-30.

The key point to note is that *the judgement of the table is the commencement of the curse in a home*. The two are inextricably linked.

### **We cannot ask our brethren to embrace unworthy participation in His agape meal**

We are walking together in a season where the Lord is addressing *how* we are coming to His *agape* meal.

One of the major points that we must understand is that *we cannot ask our brethren in Christ to embrace the blind, the stolen, the lame or the sick offerings that we are bringing*.

When we do this, we demonstrate that we *despise the word of the Lord and the fellowship of His table*.

We impose our spiritual *blindness* upon our brethren when we speak at the *agape* meal from *our own darkened perspective*, but believe that it is 'light'.

We impose upon our brethren what is *stolen* when we speak at the *agape* meal according to that which *does not belong to us*. This is indicative of the unrepentant thief.

We impose what is *lame* upon our brethren when we speak in the *agape* meal *without faith*. We do not have faith for the works of our obedience, and we are not *ministering faith* to another.

We impose our spiritual *sickness* upon our brethren when we speak at His *agape* meal as one under judgement, because we have not discerned the Lord's body.

This is to eat and drink in an unworthy manner.

When we bring such offering to the *agape* meal, we invite our brethren to embrace a projection

that we have created for ourselves. We do this to cover the shame of our nakedness.

### **The curse to purify the holy place works by entering the home**

In this regard, Malachi pointed the people to the prophecy of Zechariah regarding the flying scroll. Zec 5:1-4. Do you remember Zechariah's scroll? It was written on both sides.

The flying scroll was the curse that belongs to the holy place. The scroll was twenty cubits by ten cubits - the exact dimensions of the holy place. Zechariah saw that *there is a curse connected to the holy place*. This curse was working to expel *from the Lord's house* every unrepentant thief, according to one side of the scroll; and every perjurer, or deceiver, according to the other side of the scroll.

Significantly, the way in which the curse worked to expel either the thief or the perjurer from the Lord's house was that the curse *entered their household*.

It enters your home on the basis of how *you* participate in the *agape* meal.

So we are linking this curse to 'eating and drinking judgement to ourselves' when we participate in the *agape* meal in an unworthy manner.

### **The restoration of headship is the only means by which the curse can be removed from a house**

In this current season, we have heard the call to walk before the Lord and to be blameless.

Inherent in this call is His desire for the church, and for every family, to be *delivered* from familiar and unclean spirits.

We know that a person becomes unclean when they *reject the word of Christ*, and give ear to an alternative word.

Alternatively, a person is described as 'clean', through their *obedience* to the word of Christ. Joh 15:3.

*Deliverance* is then found as we avail ourselves of the remnant of the Spirit from the Father, through our *submission to the headship of the Father*.

The first thing that must happen as we set our houses in order is that *Christ is set as the Head of His church*, which establishes this *headship of each home*.

The *restoration of headship* is the only means by which the curse can be removed from a house.

As I said at the beginning of our session, the ministry of Elijah is a specific initiative of the Lord, ministered by *presbyteries*, to *restore* families to the order of headship, so that, in the day of the Lord, they are *protected from the curse* with which He comes to strike the earth. Mal 4:5-6.

**Expelled or included according to our participation in the *agape* meal**

So the judgement of this curse had a specific application in the days of Malachi.

However, Zechariah prophesied that this scroll would go out over the face of the whole earth, *following the offering of Christ*, to expel the thief and the perjurer *from the sanctuary of the true temple* in the heavenly places.

As we participate in the *agape* meal, in the offering of Christ, we will either go *out* under the curse into judgement, or we are *coming back with Him* from the death of our sin, and are remembered as *part of the new creation*.