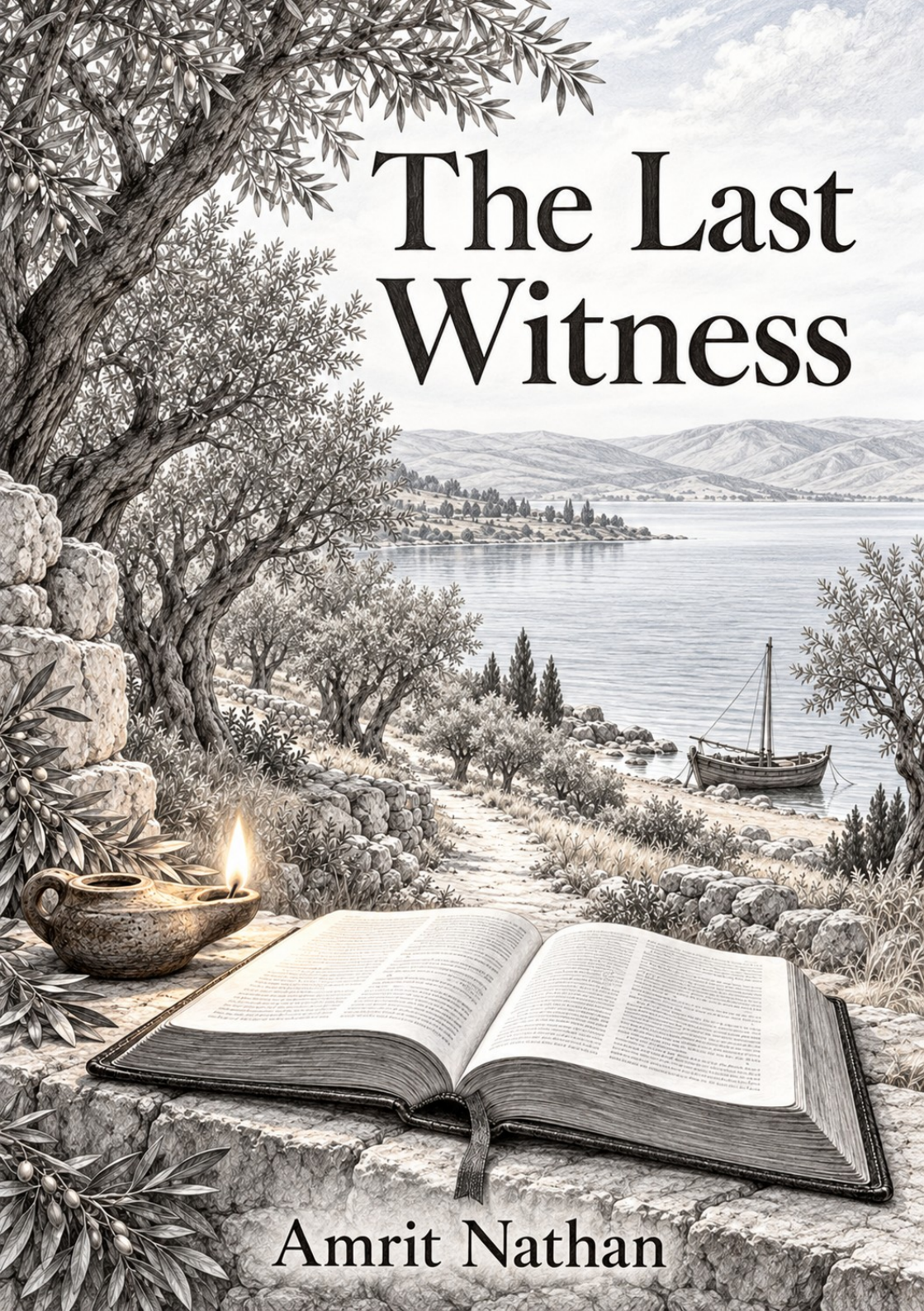

The Last Witness
Amrit Nathan

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Publication and Scripture

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Yahshua is the name used in the author’s discussion. Scripture quotations retain the wording of the cited translation.

The prophetic connections in these studies are interpretations offered for examination alongside Scripture. How It Began recounts the author’s personal experience and his understanding of its meaning.

Acknowledgement

With gratitude to God for his mercy and to the family.

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Chapter 1

The Two Sauls and the Waiting Shepherds



Two men named Saul came from Benjamin. The first was anointed king over Israel by Samuel. Centuries later, Yahshua chose Saul of Tarsus, and the Holy Spirit set him apart with Barnabas. Each received a calling and help from God. Their lives differ, but reading them together raises a question: who was being prepared while each Saul held a prominent place? (1 Samuel 10:1–10; Acts 9:15; 13:2–4; Philippians 3:5.)

King Saul’s beginnings were full of promise. Samuel anointed him, the Spirit came upon him, and he led Israel through real victories. His first turning point came at Gilgal. With the people scattering and Samuel delayed, Saul offered the sacrifice before Samuel arrived. Samuel told him that his kingdom would not continue as it might have done. Later Saul was sent against Amalek with

instructions to destroy all that belonged to it. He spared Agag and the best of the animals. When confronted, he spoke of offering them to God, then admitted that he had feared the people. Samuel's answer was that obedience was better than sacrifice. These were two separate incidents, and after the second, Samuel announced Saul's rejection as king. (1 Samuel 11; 13:8–14; 15:1–24.)

Saul did not immediately leave the throne. David of Judah was anointed, but the shepherd had to wait. He defeated Goliath, won battles for Israel, and married Saul's daughter. As David's standing grew, Saul pursued him and sought his life. David nevertheless refused to kill the king, even when the opportunity came. He would not seize by violence what God had promised to give. (1 Samuel 16 –19; 24; 26.) Before the throne, David had cared for his father's sheep. He had faced the lion and the bear to protect them. His preparation as a shepherd preceded his calling as king. (1 Samuel 17:34–37.)

That restraint continued after Saul's death. A young Amalekite told David that he had killed Saul, although the earlier account says Saul fell on his own sword. David ordered the young man's execution on the basis of his own claim that he had struck the Lord's anointed. David's response shows the care due to one whom God had anointed, even after his failures. Saul's reign lasted forty years. David began ruling Judah after Saul's death and became king over all Israel after seven and a half years in Hebron. (1 Samuel 31:3–6; 2 Samuel 1:1–16; 2:1–11; 5:1–5; Acts 13:21–22.)

Paul, likewise, did not begin by taking a place for himself. Yahshua met him on the Damascus road. Ananias, whom Acts calls a disciple, laid hands on him; Paul regained his sight, was filled with the Holy Spirit, and was baptised. He then gave years to preaching, travelling, and caring for the assemblies.

The question arises on his journey to Jerusalem. Paul said that he was going there “bound in the spirit,” while the Holy Spirit testified that chains and troubles awaited him. At Tyre, disciples told him through the Spirit not to go. Agabus foretold his binding, and Paul’s companions pleaded with him. He continued and was arrested. His journeys as a free preacher ended, though Acts closes with him still teaching under custody. In this reading, Paul repeated King Saul’s mistake: he mistook his inward resolve for the Spirit’s direction. The Holy Spirit does not speak with two opposing voices. (Acts 20:22–24; 21:4, 10–14, 27–33; 28:30–31.)

Was another shepherd being prepared during the long period shaped by Paul’s work? Yahshua had told Peter to feed His sheep. Peter led and preached before Paul’s missionary journeys, but the fuller expression of the shepherding charge already entrusted to him reaches further than that first generation. Paul’s prominent role was an interim stewardship, just as Saul’s reign preceded David’s. This suggests we are yet to see the full picture. The reasons for those timings deserve their own chapters. (John 21:15–17; Acts 2; 10) Peter’s charge was to feed the lambs, tend the sheep, and feed the sheep. Gathering people would bring the responsibility to care for them.

The number forty deepens the question. Saul reigned forty years. Forty jubilees of fifty years suggest a span of about two thousand years in which Pauline teaching has strongly shaped the Church. A change toward the fuller expression of the shepherding already entrusted to Peter is anticipated. These conclusions are offered as a correspondence, as a pattern to examine, not a calendar by which to announce an exact day. (Acts 13:21; Leviticus 25:8–13.)

Two fishing scenes offer a final image. In Luke, Peter’s first catch was so great that the net was breaking. Yahshua then told him that from that time on he would catch people. After the resurrection,

seven disciples fished through a fruitless night. At Yahshua's word they cast the net again, and though it held a great catch, it did not tear. Peter was present on both occasions, so the nets are not literal labels for Paul and Peter. The first is a picture of an age whose gathering strains the net, and the second pictures an anticipated gathering under Yahshua's direction through the shepherd He appointed. (Luke 5:4–11; John 21:1–17.)

Could Peter be the last witness in this pattern? The second fishing invites a closer look. After the gathering comes the responsibility to feed the flock.

Chapter 2

The Second Cast



The Witness of the Unbroken Net

There are two remarkable fishing stories in the Gospels.

They stand near opposite ends of Yahshua's earthly ministry. The first appears near the beginning, when He calls His disciples to follow Him. The second appears after His resurrection, when those same disciples have returned to the Sea of Tiberias.

In both accounts, fishermen who have caught nothing obey Yahshua and bring in an extraordinary catch.

In the first cast, the net begins to break.

In the second cast, the net does not break.

That difference may contain a picture of the Gospel witness itself.

The First Cast

Luke records the first miraculous catch in Luke 5. Simon Peter and the others had worked through the night and caught nothing. Yahshua entered Simon's boat and taught the multitude from the water. When He had finished speaking, He gave an unexpected instruction:

"Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."

Luke 5:4, NKJV

Peter knew the sea. Human experience told him that another attempt was pointless. Nevertheless, he obeyed.

"Nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net."

Luke 5:5, NKJV

The result was immediate.

"And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking."

Luke 5:6, NKJV

The catch was so great that they signalled to their partners in the other boat for help. Both boats were filled until they began to sink.

"Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men."

Luke 5:10, NKJV

Yahshua connected their work as fishermen with the gathering of people. They would now follow Him and bear witness.

What followed is history. The Gospel went out from Jerusalem into Judea, Samaria and far beyond the borders of Israel. The apostles preached. Churches were established. Scripture travelled across nations and languages.

The first cast produced an enormous catch. But the net was breaking.

The Gospel spread across the earth. Over the centuries, churches also divided, traditions multiplied, and teachings came into conflict. Read as a prophetic picture, the breaking net recalls this divided gathering.

The Second Cast

After the resurrection, John records another night of unsuccessful fishing. Seven disciples were together at the Sea of Tiberias. Peter announced:

"I am going fishing."

John 21:3, NKJV

The others went with him. Once again they worked through the night. Once again they caught nothing.

Morning came, and Yahshua stood on the shore, although the disciples did not yet recognise Him.

"Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some."

John 21:6, NKJV

Their experience had brought them no catch that night. Now they cast where Yahshua told them.

And when they obeyed His direction, the disciple whom Yahshua loved suddenly recognised Him:

"It is the Lord!"

John 21:7, NKJV

The disciples had knowledge, experience, equipment and willingness. Yet the entire night produced nothing. Fruit came only when Yahshua directed the cast.

Could a final witness depend on that same willingness to hear Yahshua and follow His direction?

Seven Disciples And Two Unnamed Men

John makes the unusual decision to tell us exactly who was present. There were seven disciples.

He names Simon Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, the sons of Zebedee, and then adds a curious final description: 'two others of His disciples.' Five are identifiable. Two remain unnamed.

"Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together."

John 21:2, NKJV

Why leave two unnamed?

John does not explain. Therefore the text does not permit us to identify them with certainty. But in a passage that may prophetically picture a final cast, the presence of two unnamed disciples is worth noticing alongside Revelation's final pair of prophetic witnesses.

"And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."

Revelation 11:3, NKJV

The comparison remains a possibility to examine: seven fishermen take part in the second cast, and two are unnamed.

Seven Fishermen And Seven Churches

The seven fishermen invite comparison with the seven churches addressed in Revelation 2 and 3. Those letters describe faithfulness and endurance, as well as failure, compromise and correction. In this reading, they also provide a picture of the Church's long history.

Among the seven fishermen stands Peter. John tells us something else unusual:

"Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he had removed it), and plunged into the sea."

John 21:7, NKJV

Peter was exposed. The detail recalls the condition of Laodicea, the seventh church:

"Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' - and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked..."

Revelation 3:17, NKJV

John does not explicitly say that Peter represents Laodicea. Yet the imagery is worth noticing: seven disciples, an exposed Peter, Yahshua not immediately recognised, and a seventh church described as blind and naked.

Both passages draw attention to the need to recognise Yahshua and respond to Him.

The Disciple Who Recognised Him

John recognises Yahshua, and Peter responds.

The beloved disciple sees what has happened and declares, 'It is the Lord!' Recognition precedes Peter's movement toward Yahshua.

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day..."

Revelation 1:10, NKJV

John’s recognition on the shore invites comparison with his later testimony in Revelation.

In this reading, a witness needs spiritual recognition as well as willingness to act.

Preaching and labour can continue for a long time. The question is whether the work follows Yahshua’s direction.

The Unbroken Net

When the disciples reached the shore, Yahshua told them:

"Bring some of the fish which you have just caught."

John 21:10, NKJV

Peter went to the boat and dragged the net to land. John then records the detail that distinguishes this catch from the first:

"Simon Peter went up and dragged the net to land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not broken."

John 21:11, NKJV

The first net was breaking. The second remained whole.

If the first miraculous catch pictured the beginning of the Gospel harvest, the second may foreshadow its completion.

The second comes after the resurrection, after the long night, and at the approach of morning. This time the net reaches the shore intact.

The catch reaches the shore in an unbroken net.

A Witness Sent Before His Face

Yahshua had already established the principle of paired witness during His ministry. Luke records:

"After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go."

Luke 10:1, NKJV

They went before His face. Their mission prepared the way for Him.

Revelation again presents two witnesses whose testimony belongs to the prophetic picture of the end.

These accounts suggest a witness carried by people who serve together under Yahshua's direction. Their work points to Him.

The Question The Second Cast Leaves Behind

Yahshua said:

"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come."

Matthew 24:14, NKJV

The Gospel has already travelled around the earth for nearly two thousand years.

The first cast gathered multitudes while the net began to break. The second presents the disciples obeying the risen Yahshua and bringing their catch ashore in a net that remains whole.

John 21 does not speak of a different Gospel. It does, however, invite us to consider the meaning of this later gathering.

If the Gospel has already been preached throughout the world, why should Scripture still point toward a final witness?

The Gospel Preached Again takes up that question.

For now, we return to the Sea of Tiberias. After a fruitless night, the fishermen hear Yahshua’s instruction from the shore.

"Cast the net on the right side..."

They obey Him, and the catch reaches the shore. The gathering belongs to Yahshua, and the unbroken net gives us a picture of its unity.

Chapter 3

How It Began



At the cross, a condemned man acknowledged his guilt and declared Yahshua innocent. He asked to be remembered. A centurion who witnessed His death confessed that He was the Son of God.

Nearly two thousand years later, while reading alone in a students' hostel, I experienced a vision of that crucifixion. In it, I recognised myself as the man driving the nail.

This is the account of that experience and what followed.

February 1976

I was twenty years old, studying engineering and living in a hostel. I came from a family with a strong Catholic tradition. It was expected

that I would continue in that tradition, perhaps even become a priest.

One day in February, I was sitting on my bed reading a book called Right with God. The author's first name was John. I no longer remember his surname with certainty.

The book described the fall of Adam and Eve and God's unfolding plan of redemption through Abraham and his descendants. The narrative reached Moses, the plagues of Egypt, and the final warning to Pharaoh.

Then came the Passover.

The blood of a lamb was placed on the doorposts. The Israelites were delivered from bondage and instructed to remember that deliverance each year.

As I read about the connection between the Passover lamb and the death of Jesus, a familiar prayer from the Mass suddenly acquired meaning:

"Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on me."

I had heard those words many times. Now I understood whom they meant. Jesus was the Lamb.

The thought that He had died for the sins of the world horrified me. Then a scene unfolded before me.

The Nail

In the vision, a man was being nailed to a cross.

My attention was drawn to His right arm. A soldier stood on a rung of a ladder, holding a long nail in his left hand and a heavy hammer

in his right. He swung the hammer, gathering enough momentum to raise it and strike.

At first, I seemed to be watching from the foot of the cross. Then my viewpoint changed. I was looking down from above and could see the soldier's face.

It was me.

I screamed, "No!"

But the hammer was already falling.

The nail went in. Blood splashed onto my face, and I fell to the ground.

I cannot explain the physical experience that accompanied this. My recollection is that I was thrown from the bed into the corner of my room. I was alone.

The experience continued. I found myself kneeling before a Judge, and my life seemed to pass before me in an instant.

One incident appeared with particular clarity. I had stolen an equipment part from my college laboratory.

I had no explanation. There was no excuse I could offer.

I fell on my face and begged for forgiveness.

The moment I said, "Sorry," the scene dissolved.

I became aware of myself lying face down in my room, with tears streaming.

What Followed

From that day, reading the Bible became a sacred exercise for me. Whenever I had an idle moment, I wanted to read it.

Much of it remained beyond my understanding. Yet passages stayed in my memory with a clarity I had not known before.

The lasting meaning of that encounter, for me, was forgiveness. In the vision, I had seen myself striking the blow. The blood that fell on my face became associated with the mercy I had sought.

Twenty years passed.

In 1996, I was struggling to provide for my family. I was doing poorly paid, menial work that helped keep us together.

During that period, I experienced what I understood to be a voice teaching me to interpret the Scripture stored in my memory, especially Genesis.

The understanding that grew from this is what I call The Foundation. I can speak about it to an audience, although arranging it coherently in writing has been difficult.

I came to regard those twenty years as a period of preparation. The biblical account of Israelites entering military service from the age of twenty became, for me, a personal picture of that preparation and commissioning.

Fifty Years Later

In 2026, fifty years have passed since that day in the hostel. I think of this as my personal jubilee.

I find myself able to write again. The website, thelastwitness.in, has become a place to share my testimony and the understanding of Scripture that has developed over the years.

That is how its name came to be.

When I say, “I WAS THERE,” I am speaking of the vision I experienced in 1976. I cannot explain how it happened. I can describe what I remember and the course my life took afterwards.

In that vision, I recognised my own face above the hammer.

I asked for forgiveness.

And fifty years later, it is that forgiveness I wish to bear witness to.

Chapter 4

The Gospel Preached Again



Why should something already preached to the world need to be preached again?

For nearly two thousand years the Gospel has travelled across nations and continents. Yet Yahshua said:

"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come."

Matthew 24:14, NKJV

The interpretation offered here rests on several passages read together. Each contributes something to the question.

Witness One A People Without Knowledge

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."

Hosea 4:6, NKJV

They are still called "My people," yet something essential is lacking. Hosea also says, "After two days He will revive us" (Hosea 6:2). Whatever the "two days" signify, the witness is clear: God's people lack knowledge, and revival still lies ahead.

Witness Two Dry Bones Must Hear

"O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD!"

Ezekiel 37:4, NKJV

The bones are dead and "very dry." The Word is spoken; they come together; yet only when breath enters them do they live and stand as "an exceedingly great army." Something belonging to God must hear the Word and live again.

Witness Three What Did We Inherit?

"Surely our fathers have inherited lies, Worthlessness and unprofitable things."

Jeremiah 16:19, NKJV

The nations discover that some of what they inherited was wrong. God's answer follows: "I will this once cause them to know ... And they shall know that My name is the LORD" (Jeremiah 16:21).

First comes recognition: "Our fathers have inherited lies." Then comes God's response: "I will cause them to know."

The Leavened Loaves The Centre

"They shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits to the LORD."

Leviticus 23:17, NKJV

The detail is striking because these two loaves belong to Pentecost, the feast at which the disciples received the Holy Spirit.

Yahshua warned of "the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees" (Matthew 16:6), which Matthew identifies with doctrine. Paul later confirms the spreading character of the image: "a little leaven leavens the whole lump" (1 Corinthians 5:6).

Scripture does not explicitly identify the leaven in these loaves with corrupted doctrine within the Church. That connection is an interpretation, prompted by Yahshua's warning about leaven and doctrine.

The loaves are called firstfruits. Firstfruits point beyond themselves toward a harvest still to come. Pentecost is real and God-given, yet the image does not require us to conclude that everything has reached its final condition.

Was Pentecost ever intended to be the destination?

Witness Four A New Heart

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you ..."

Ezekiel 36:26, NKJV

God promises to change the inward condition of His people by giving them a new heart and spirit.

Witness Five The Potter’s Hands

“So he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make.”

Jeremiah 18:4, NKJV

The vessel remains in the Potter's hands. Its present form does not determine its final form.

Witness Six A Double Prophetic Witness

Daniel and Ezekiel spoke in different settings during the Babylonian captivity: two prophetic voices in one extraordinary period. Near the end of Scripture another double witness appears:

“And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy ...”

Revelation 11:3, NKJV

Scripture does not say Daniel and Ezekiel are Revelation's Two Witnesses. The observation is simply that God has used a simultaneous double prophetic witness before.

The Seven Witnesses

A Hosea: knowledge → revival

B Ezekiel 37: dry bones → life

C Jeremiah 16: inherited lies → knowing God

X LEAVENED LOAVES: firstfruits → harvest still ahead

C′ Ezekiel 36: stone → new heart

B′ Jeremiah 18: marred vessel → reshaped vessel

A′ Double prophetic witness

The loaves are firstfruits. In this reading, they point towards a harvest whose completion is still ahead.

If the work is not finished, what comes next?

The Second Cast Revisited

"They caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking."

Luke 5:6, NKJV

The First Cast was no failure. It produced an extraordinary catch. But the net began to break.

Later, at the Sea of Tiberias, Yahshua directs another cast. One hundred and fifty-three large fish are gathered:

"And although there were so many, the net was not broken."

John 21:11, NKJV

In Luke 5, the great catch strains the net until it begins to break. In John 21, the great catch is brought ashore with the net intact.

Both casts produce fish. The difference lies in the net. At the risen Yahshua's direction, the later catch is gathered into one unbroken net.

And They Shall Be One

"Join them one to another for yourself into one stick, and they will become one in your hand."

Ezekiel 37:17, NKJV

God joins the divided houses pictured by the two sticks. Read beside the unbroken net, they offer another image of a people gathered into unity.

Why Preach The Gospel Again?

The witnesses have spoken: knowledge must be restored; dry bones must live; inherited falsehood gives way to knowing God; the loaves stand as firstfruits; a new heart is promised; the vessel remains in the Potter's hands; a double prophetic witness appears; and Yahshua directs another cast.

None of these passages alone says, “The Gospel must be preached again.” That conclusion is an interpretation drawn from their combined testimony. Together they ask:

Has the Gospel reached the end of its appointed witness,

or is another cast still before us?

The Second Cast does not require another Gospel or another truth. It requires obedience to the same Lord, that what God began reach its appointed harvest, and that the two sticks become one in His hand.

These pictures lead us to consider a work moving towards maturity, harvest and unity.

The Gospel is preached again, in this interpretation, through a people brought into one under Yahshua.

Chapter 5

The Preparing Witness



Gathering people is followed by caring for them. Peter was charged to feed and tend Yahshua's sheep. The preparing witness serves that same need: people must be nourished in the Word and cared for as they await the Lord.

The connections drawn in this chapter are offered as a prophetic reading, to be examined alongside the Scriptures.

Two Who Follow The Lamb

John was in prison. His public ministry had ended, but he had already pointed out the One for whom he had prepared the way. "Behold the Lamb of God," he had said, and two disciples had followed Yahshua.

Now he sent two disciples with a question: Was Yahshua the Coming One, or should they look for another?

John had already recognised Him and seen the Spirit descend upon Him. Even before their births, John had leaped for joy when Mary visited Elizabeth. Why, then, did he send these two men with a question?

Luke does not tell us what was passing through John's mind. Prison may have raised questions about how the Messiah's work was unfolding. The disciples themselves may have needed to see. Whatever prompted the question, the way Yahshua answered deserves attention.

He allowed them to witness His works. In that very hour, people were healed, delivered, and given sight. Then He told the men to carry back what they had seen and heard. Among the signs He named was the gospel being preached to the poor.

John had sent them with a question. Yahshua sent them away with testimony.

Earlier, two had heard John and followed the Lamb. Now two stood before the Lamb and received a message for John. Scripture does not identify them as the same men, but the repeated pair and the reversed direction are worth noticing.

The gospel in their report brings another saying of Yahshua into view. In Matthew 24:14, He speaks of the gospel of the kingdom being preached throughout the world as a witness to all nations. Then the end will come.

The men in Luke were sent back to John, not out to all nations. Yet both passages place testimony concerning Yahshua before people who must respond to it. Could this small scene from His first coming give a glimpse of the preparing witness before His return?

A Witness Before His Coming

After the messengers left, Yahshua spoke about John. He was more than a prophet. He was the messenger sent to prepare the way.

Malachi had spoken of that messenger in chapter 3. In chapter 4, he promised Elijah before the great and dreadful Day of the LORD. Yahshua identified John with the Elijah who was to come. John had fulfilled that preparing role in Elijah's spirit and power.

But Malachi's closing words also direct the reader to Moses: remember the Law entrusted to Israel at Horeb. The promise of Elijah follows immediately. The prophet who turns hearts stands beside the instruction the people are told to remember.

Malachi describes hearts turning both ways, from fathers to children and from children to fathers. Luke’s description of John repeats the first direction, then speaks of the disobedient turning to the wisdom of the just. The difference does not by itself establish two fulfilments. Read alongside the coming Day of the LORD, however, it raises a question: might a final preparing ministry call the children back to the faith and instruction entrusted to their fathers?

Revelation 11 brings Moses and Elijah to mind again. Two witnesses prophesy. They can shut heaven against rain, as in Elijah's ministry. Waters turned to blood and plagues recall Moses.

Their names are not given. The signs draw attention to the authority and character of their testimony. Read beside Malachi, they suggest a prophetic call to remember God's instruction before the Lord's coming.

John was rejected and killed. The two witnesses also meet rejection and death after completing their testimony. Their story goes further: God raises them. John's death and their death are corresponding

features, though John's two messengers are not said to have died with him.

What joins these accounts is a ministry directed toward the Lord. The preparing witness has no reason to draw people to himself. He points them to Yahshua.

John pointed to the Word made flesh. The preparing ministry considered here also calls hearts and minds back to God’s Word. What is seen and heard must be received within.

God promises to write His Law upon the heart, give a new heart, and put His Spirit within His people, enabling them to walk in His ways (Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 36:26–27).

Seeing Yahshua and remembering God's instruction must reach this inward depth. Otherwise, the encounter remains something a person once saw, and the Law remains something a person can recite. The Spirit brings the Word into life. This inward preparation concerns the people awaiting Yahshua; it does not replace His return.

Meat In Due Season

A people awaiting the Lord must also be fed.

In Matthew 24, Yahshua speaks of the gospel reaching the nations. Later in the same discourse, He asks about the faithful servant appointed to give His household food in due season. When the Lord returns, He finds that servant still attending to the household.

The servant knows his master is coming. While he waits, the household still needs its daily food.

Applied to the preparing ministry, that nourishment is the Word. People need help to understand it and encouragement to live by it. They need correction when they wander, and care when they are weak. A witness who gathers people must not leave them hungry.

After the great catch in John 21, Yahshua charged Peter to feed His sheep. The catch had filled the net; Peter's responsibility continued on the shore.

Testimony concerning the Coming One should prepare a household that can receive Him. The Spirit renews the heart, while faithful servants attend to the people in their care.

The Lord's blessing rests upon the servant He finds doing that work.

The Witness Must Bear Fruit

In the parable of the talents, a master leaves his property in the care of three men. One receives five talents, another two, and another one, according to their abilities.

After a long absence, the master returns. The first two have put what they received to use and produced increase. Both hear the same commendation. The third has buried his portion.

The man with two is not praised less than the man with five. The man with one is not condemned for having received less. The reckoning concerns what each has done with the master's goods.

This makes the parable relevant to those entrusted with testimony. Gospel ministry is one such responsibility, though the talents need not be confined to preaching. Receiving something from the Lord calls for its faithful use.

The sower looks at the other side of the encounter: what happens when the word is heard?

On the wayside it is snatched away. On stony ground it has no lasting root. Among thorns it is choked by cares and the deceitfulness of riches. These three conditions fail to bring it to maturity.

The good soil bears fruit in differing measures: thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and a hundredfold. There are four soils, with three measures of yield in the fruitful soil. As with the faithful servants, the measures differ without making the lesser yield a failure.

The preparing witness can proclaim the Word, but the hearer must receive it and hold to it through trouble and competing cares. The response of the hearer gives the testimony its fruit.

A People Who Follow The Lamb

The fishermen in John 21 had worked through the night without a catch. At Yahshua's direction they cast again, and the net filled with fish. There were one hundred and fifty-three large fish, yet the net was not broken.

The scene invites comparison with Luke 5, where the earlier miraculous catch began to break the net. At this later gathering, the net holds.

In the reading developed here, the second cast offers a picture of a final gathering under Yahshua's direction. The unbroken net suggests preservation. John does not explain the scene in those terms, but its place after the resurrection makes it a fitting image to consider alongside the promised gathering.

Revelation 7 describes the hundred and forty-four thousand as sealed servants of God. Revelation 14 shows them with the Lamb. They bear the Father's name and follow the Lamb wherever He goes. They are called firstfruits to God and the Lamb.

The word “firstfruits” brings a harvest into view. Following the Lamb returns us to the opening of this chapter. John pointed Him out, and two disciples followed. Revelation shows a company whose allegiance is to the same Lamb.

Their relationship to the two witnesses needs care. Revelation expressly gives the witnesses a prophetic commission. It describes the hundred and forty-four thousand through their belonging, sealing, and faithfulness. It does not identify the two groups as one, or directly commission the hundred and forty-four thousand to preach. In Revelation 14, the everlasting gospel is proclaimed by an angel.

The witnesses' testimony and the faithfulness of those who follow the Lamb belong within the preparation considered here. Matthew 24 sets that testimony in the wider setting of the nations before the end.

The question raised by John's messengers can now be heard again. Why this repeated journey of two men to the Coming One? Might their encounter show, in miniature, how a preparing witness receives testimony and carries it before the Lord's return?

Such a witness points people to Yahshua and His Word. Those who hear are called to follow. Those who serve are entrusted with care for the household.

John's two disciples took their first steps toward the Lamb. Those who follow Him are also entrusted with what they have received: feeding the household, caring for the flock, and sharing His Word with others.

Scriptures For Further Examination

John 1:14, 29–42; Luke 1:17, 41–44; Luke 7:18–35; Malachi 3:1–5; 4:1–6; Matthew 17:10–13; 24:14, 45–47; 25:14–30; 13:18–23; Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 36:26–27; Luke 5:4–6; John 21:3–17; Revelation 7:3–8; 11:3–15; 14:1–6.

The Last Witness

The stories of Saul and David, the miraculous catches of fish, and a personal encounter raise questions about how God prepares His witnesses.

These five studies consider the witness of those who recognised Yahshua, followed His direction and were entrusted with care for others. They also examine possible connections between those earlier accounts and a witness still to come.

The invitation is to open the Bible, examine the passages and consider what they reveal.

Books, booklets, Sabbath Missives and videos

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