

# TWO MOTHERHOODS

David Baker, prepared for the Presbytery fellowship word, 24 October 2021

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## Introduction

In our last two sessions we have been considering the marriage of Christ and the church.

The major point has been that *the marriage between Christ and the church has already taken place* on Mount Calvary.

That is where Jesus Christ laid down His life by offering on the cross, for the church, so that she was formed and fashioned from His physical body to become His wife and a comparable helper for Him.

This session we will begin to consider the purpose of the marriage of Christ and the church, which is to bring forth 'godly seed'. That is, to bring forth sons of God for the Father.

We will consider 'the motherhood of the church'. In this series of studies, we are aiming to look at the woman described in Revelation Chapter 12 who brings forth 'a manchild'.

## Key Scriptures

We will first consider many of the key Scriptures, particularly in the writings of the apostle Paul, that are necessary for us to understand the picture that we see in Revelation Chapter 12.

In the last session, we looked at the words of Paul, where he said, 'Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the Law through the body of Christ.' That is the crucified body of Christ.

'That you may be married to another, to Him who was raised from the dead.' We know that is Jesus Christ.

'That we should bear *fruit* to God.' That is bringing forth sons of God. Rom.7:4. That was our key verse last session.

In this session, our key verse will be from Paul's letter to the Galatians, where he noted that the bride city, which he called 'the Jerusalem from above', is the mother of all the sons of God. 'But the Jerusalem from above is free, which is the mother of us all.' Gal.4:26.

Before we get to this key verse, we will read the preceding verses to give it some context.

'My little children, for whom I labour in birth again until Christ is formed in you.' Gal 4:19. So the apostle Paul described the believers in the region of Galatia as his 'little children'.

We know that the apostle John, in his pastoral epistles, did likewise. He described those to whom he was writing as *little children*. Paul described the believers in Galatia as little children.

## Spiritual fatherhood

As a messenger of God in the right hand of Christ, the apostle Paul did express spiritual fatherhood toward sons of God.

For example, he wrote to the Corinthians, 'I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ.' He was referring to those who were conveying, or giving, them information.

He said, 'Although you may have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers.' 1Co 4:14-15.

This is the way that he described himself, and his relationship to them. 'You do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus, I have begotten you through the gospel.'

## The begetting of a son of God

In relation to the expression of fatherhood, we know that the messengers of God do have an important role in the begetting, or the conception, of a son of God. It is only as a person *turns in response to the word that is proclaimed to them* that they can meet Christ eye to eye and heart to heart; and, in that relational interaction, to learn to fear the Lord, and then to flee for refuge to become 'friends of God'.

We know that God then sends the Spirit of His Son – that is, Jesus Christ – into their heart. He cries, or proclaims, 'Abba! Father!' That is the faith of their sonship. As they *receive Him*, they are *receiving the adoption*; and that is the right to the full inheritance of a son of God.

Jesus Christ then breathes into their spirit, so they are *regenerated*.

He then gives them the Holy Spirit, so that the life of God *germinates* in their heart, and they are *conceived as a son of God*.

The evidence that a person has been begotten, or conceived, as a son of God is that they cry out, 'Abba! Father!'

### **Proceeding from wayside ground**

However, as we also have been considering, it is important that we don't confuse 'the conception' of a son of God by the Spirit, with 'the travail' that is involved with the formation of Christ in a son of God.

We know that this is the culmination of 'wayside ground', where the seed germinates in the heart.

Once the life of God has been conceived, or germinated, within the heart of a son of God, that person still needs to be *born of water and born of the Spirit*, to *enter* the kingdom of God as a son, so they can serve as a priest in the Father's house.

### **Spiritual motherhood – the process from germination to fruitfulness**

When we consider the natural birth process, we know that there is a process for a child between conception and when they are then born into this world. In the same way, as we look at natural creation, we know that there is a process between when a seed germinates and when that new plant then brings forth fruit.

Interestingly, when the apostle Paul called the Galatians his 'little children', he was not firstly speaking to them from the perspective of fatherhood.

We know that he had an expression of spiritual fatherhood toward them in the same way that he had an expression of spiritual fatherhood toward the Corinthians.

But he was not speaking from the perspective of a father in this passage. He was not proclaiming the gospel to them for the first time, in the spirit and power of Elijah.

Nor was he speaking to them about their growth and maturity as sons of God or the nature of their priestly service in the Father's house. Those things are the focus of *spiritual fatherhood*.

As a messenger who belonged to the church as the bride of Christ, he was identifying himself with the travail of *spiritual motherhood* to see the

Galatians *born of water and born of the Spirit* as sons of God.

We know that Paul was identifying with the travail of spiritual motherhood because he said that he was experiencing spiritual 'labour', or 'birthing', pains for them, until Christ was formed in them.

When Paul addressed the Galatians as 'my little children for whom I labour in birth', the word 'labour' is used only a couple of times in the Scripture. It is specifically the labour associated with childbirth. Notably, it is the same word that is used in Revelation Chapter 12 in relation to the woman bringing forth a manchild.

'Then being with child, she cried out in labour and in pain to give birth.' Rev 12:2.

We know that this is what the apostle Paul was identifying with, as part of the church, the bride of Christ. Recognising the personal nature of this travail for individuals and households, he expressed that he would prefer to be 'present with' them.

'I would like to be present with you now and to change my tone; for I have doubts about you.' Gal 4:20.

We are focusing here on the process between *germination* and *bringing forth fruit on good ground*, or the process between conception to birth.

### **Proceeding to be born of water and of the Spirit to walk in the Spirit, not in the flesh**

Paul had doubts over the viability of the sonship of many of the believers in Galatia because he was aware that many of them had turned aside to another gospel. Having been conceived as sons of God by the Holy Spirit, they had reverted to walking after the flesh.

He knew that this only leads to death and damnation. This is the lesson of the parable of 'the sower and the seed'. The germination of the seed, as we have said, signifies that a believer has progressed beyond 'wayside ground'.

But they then need to negotiate 'stony ground' and 'thorny ground'. Otherwise, the seed, or the life, of God that they have received will die.

We must proceed to be born of water and of the Spirit, and then continue to walk by the Spirit; otherwise, the life that we have received from

God through Christ and by the Holy Spirit will die in us. The seed dies, or the life dies, on stony and thorny ground.

Earlier in his letter to the Galatians, Paul cut right to the heart of this issue. He said to them, 'Look I want to know one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or did you receive the Spirit by the hearing of faith?' Gal 3:2.

We know that 'faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ'.

Then the Spirit comes by the hearing of faith.

This is a very succinct summary of the process of wayside ground, bringing a believer all the way through to the point where Jesus Christ gives them the Holy Spirit.

Then they are born, or conceived, as a son of God. The life of God germinates in their heart.

Paul said, 'Look, did you receive that life by the works of the Law, or did you receive that life by the hearing of faith?' The Galatians belonged to 'the Jerusalem from above', who is the mother of all sons of God.

However, by turning back to the Law Covenant, they became children of a different 'mother'.

### **Two modes of motherhood in a believing household**

Paul proceeded to illustrate his point to the Galatians by comparing the two sons of Abraham.

'Tell me, you who desire to be under the Law.' Gal 4:21. He said 'desire' because it was not possible for them to live under the Law Covenant by the time Paul wrote the letter to the Galatians, because Jesus Christ abolished the Law Covenant by His offering.

The Galatians desired to live under the Law, and it incurred only 'blood guilt' for them. He said, 'Tell me, you who desire to be under the Law, do you not hear the Law?'

The Law, along with the prophetic Scriptures 'bears witness' to Christ. We could also add here, 'Do you not also read the Scriptures?'

Paul continued, 'For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman.' Gal 4:22. Paul was referring, of course, to Isaac and Ishmael. He identified two sons and two different mothers. We know that

Ishmael was born to Hagar, and Isaac was born to Sarah.

Paul called Hagar 'the bondwoman' and he called Sarah 'the freewoman'. Using this analogy, Paul highlighted two sons and two mothers. More than this, he also compared two different modes of 'motherhood' that produced two different kinds of children.

He said that Ishmael was born 'according to the flesh', and Isaac was born 'according to the promise'. Gal 4:23. 'But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise.'

Now, when Paul referred to Hagar as 'the bondwoman', and Sarah as 'the freewoman', Paul was not primarily comparing their station in life or their position within the family. He was saying much more than the fact that Sarah was the lady of the house, and Hagar was a servant within the house.

We know that Hagar *was* a servant in the house, and she was Sarah's maid. But she was called 'the bondwoman' because she became enslaved to the fallen and carnal marriage covenant and culture that existed between Abram and Sarah.

In this bondage, her child was born according to the flesh. Remember, it was Sarah's idea to give Hagar to Abram, so that Hagar could bring forth a child for Sarah. In this regard, when Ishmael was born, Sarai was as much a bondwoman as Hagar.

She did not become 'the freewoman' until she received the new name, and embraced the order of headship that God had ordained for her marriage. Once she had embraced this order of headship, she became a freewoman, and Isaac was born according to the promise.

It is helpful to remember that even though we are comparing Hagar and Sarah, it is the two different modes of motherhood that were demonstrated *by Sarah* that is the major issue. This is important for us, because there are two different modes of motherhood that can be expressed in every believing household.

### **Receiving the faith of the Son of God to become the friend of God**

Genesis 15 recorded that the Son of God as the Word of God came and spoke to Abram. He

personally came and spoke to him. We will just consider Ishmael here to begin with.

'After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield".' This was the Son of God saying to Abram, 'I am your faith.' 'I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.' Gen 15:1.

In saying this, He was saying much more than 'You'll have many sons.' He said to Abram, 'I will become your Son. I will be your exceedingly great reward.'

In this interaction, Abram *received the faith of the Son of God*. He believed that the Son of God would become his exceedingly great reward. That is, Abram understood that Jesus Christ would be born in his lineage as his Son.

On the basis of this faith which he had received as a gift, God 'reckoned Abram to be righteous'.

As James noted, when Abram was reckoned to be righteous based on the faith that he had received as a gift – the faith of the Son of God – he became 'the friend of God'.

We have been considering this in relation to the steps of salvation; particularly the steps on wayside ground, under the prevenient grace of God.

Abram then said from his own perspective, 'How shall I know that I will *inherit the promise of sonship* in Christ, His Son?'

The Lord revealed to Abram that he would personally receive the full inheritance of a son of God, including an immortal and incorruptible resurrection body for the new heavens and the new earth. He would receive this inheritance through his *personal participation in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings*.

In response to this question, the Lord instructed him to bring an offering. He revealed to Abram the nature of his participation in Christ's offering, including the fact that all of his days had been authored and numbered for him, by Christ, in the lowest parts of the earth.

That is what Abraham learned for himself and then, also, for all of his descendants, as 'the horror of great darkness' descended upon him.

### **The nature of a fallen marriage covenant**

Despite understanding all of this, Abram still did not have a son. Sarah was evidently barren, as the Scripture tells us. It is at this point that we see the fallen and carnal expression of their marriage covenant.

The Scriptures record that it was Sarai's idea to give Hagar to Abram so she would receive a child through Hagar. This is Genesis 16 verse 2. Has there ever been a more religiously eccentric idea put forward by a wife to her husband, in the endeavour to see the will of God done in their family!

'So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the Lord has restrained me from bearing children. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her".' And then, amazingly, the Scripture continues, 'And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai.' Gen 16:2.

Remarkably, Abram listened to the voice of his wife.

We liken this to the way in which Adam listened to the voice of his wife in the very beginning, in the garden of Eden. We know that Eve was deceived when she received the word of the serpent. And then she brought that proposition to her husband as a complete alternative.

Adam was *disobedient* when he turned aside from the fellowship of Yahweh and the proceeding word that he was receiving every day, at the tree of life. He turned aside from that, and he received the alternative word that was 'fed' to him by his wife. That was the point of his disobedience.

The Scripture tells us that Eve was 'deceived', but Adam was 'disobedient'. In exactly the same way, when Sarai was feeding this proposition to Abram, she was deceived. Abram was disobedient, because he was turning aside from the fellowship that the Lord had already established with him.

He turned aside from that fellowship, and he received the proposition that was given to him by his wife.

### **The fruit of deception and disobedience in the marriage**

Now, the 'fruit' of this deception and disobedience was Ishmael. Ishmael was born 'according to the flesh'. Significantly, after the

conception of Ishmael, it did not make the marriage any better. It inflamed the enmity, and it exacerbated the division in the marriage between Abram and Sarai.

Then Sarai said to Abram, “May the wrong done to me be upon you! I delivered my servant into your arms, and ever since she saw that she was pregnant, she has treated me with contempt. May the LORD judge between you and me.” “Here,” said Abram, “your servant is in your hands. Do whatever you want with her.” Then Sarai treated Hagar so harshly that she fled from her.’ Gen 16:5-6.

Then Sarai said to Abram, ‘My wrong be upon you!’ And she even went as far as saying, ‘The Lord judge between you and me.’

That really highlights the division. And Abram effectively responded by saying, ‘What do you expect me to do about all of this - you sort it out.’ So that was the nature of their marriage covenant.

### **Walking blamelessly**

The Scriptures record that Abram was eighty-six years old when Ishmael was born. It was not until Abram was ninety-nine years old, around thirteen years later, that the Lord confronted him concerning his marriage and the fruit that he had produced in their household.

‘For when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless”.’ Gen 17:1.

We have been considering this for quite some time - what it means to walk blamelessly in the fellowship of Christ’s offering.

Walking blamelessly requires us to continue to receive His word and to walk in faith and with obedience to what the Lord is saying to us concerning each step of our pilgrimage with Him, where He has already gone ahead of us.

### **The Everlasting Covenant of adoption**

It was in this interaction that the Lord inscribed a portion of His own name into the name of Abram. By this means, the Lord gave Abram the new name of Abraham – which means ‘the father of a multitude’.

He also established the covenant of circumcision with Abraham, as the sign that the Lord had made

an Everlasting Covenant with his flesh, because of the faith that he had previously received as a gift.

The Everlasting Covenant that God made with the flesh of Abraham was ‘adoption’. Adoption is *the right to the full inheritance of a son of God*, including *the blessing of the Spirit* – ‘new birth’ - and also the resurrection body for the new heavens and the new earth.

### **The remnant of the Spirit in marriage**

Significantly, the Lord also instructed Abraham to change his wife’s name from Sarai to Sarah. When Abraham and Sarah received these new names, they received a unique portion of Yahweh’s own Spirit as an ‘anointing’ in their marriage. The Scripture calls this ‘the remnant of the Spirit’. It enables a couple to be joined to the Lord and to one another in one Spirit, so they can bring forth godly seed.

For Abraham and Sarah, the remnant of the Spirit included the grace of *resurrection life* that enabled Sarah to conceive and then give birth to Isaac, as the promised seed.

As the promised seed, Isaac was ‘a type’ of Christ, who would be born in Abraham’s lineage through Isaac. The apostle Paul called Isaac ‘the son of promise’. Remember, we just read in Galatians that he was ‘born through the freewoman, according to the promise’.

Paul called him ‘the son of promise’ because he was born according to the promise that was given to Abraham and Sarah. But, much more than that, he was called ‘the son of promise’ because, while he was still in the womb of his mother Sarah, he received *adoption* and *regeneration*, according to the promise that the Lord had made with Abraham.

As we have said, adoption is the right to the full inheritance of a son of God. Now, as we considered in our last session, the promise of the adoption belonged to all of the natural descendants of Abraham who were born in the lineage of Isaac - not in the lineage of Ishmael.

They were born in the lineage of Isaac and continued to walk in the faith of the fatherhood of Abraham and the motherhood of Sarah.

### **Two different covenants**

Having contrasted Hagar and the birth of Ishmael, to Sarah and the birth of Isaac, the apostle Paul continued to say that the two

mothers are an allegory for two different covenants.

An allegory is simply a story within a story; or it is a story that conveys a broader or hidden meaning.

For example, many of the parables that Jesus taught were allegories. When He told a story it conveyed a much more profound meaning, because He was using the parables to teach us concerning 'the mystery of the kingdom of God'.

Paul was not using a fictional story. Paul was referring here to a historical account and saying that this is also an allegory.

There is a far bigger meaning here than simply looking at the household of Abraham himself. He said that these two mothers allegorically represent two covenants.

'These things are symbolic [or, literally, an allegory]. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar.' Gal 4:24.

He was comparing Hagar with Sarah. He was comparing the Law Covenant with the New Covenant, and comparing Mount Sinai with Mount Zion.

We need to consider the great significance of Mount Zion in relation to the motherhood of the church. He said, 'Which things are symbolic [or an allegory]. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar.'

The covenant from Mount Sinai was the Law Covenant that the Lord made with the nation of Israel. As we said in our last session, if the nation of Israel had continued to walk in the faith of Abraham and Sarah, they would have continued to express the motherhood of Sarah, as a nation, in bringing forth children who were born according to the promise.

That is, their children would have continued to receive the adoption and regeneration while they were still in the womb. In this regard, the Law Covenant did not nullify the promise that had been made to Abraham.

### **Families living under the Law Covenant**

For children who had been born into a household of faith in the nation of Israel under the Law Covenant, the Law was intended to be a tutor, or

schoolmaster, that was teaching them about the offering of Christ and leading them to faith in Christ.

The parents would have raised their children according to the faith of Abraham and Sarah. They did not send them off to school; rather, the parents raised the children.

The Law itself was also 'a schoolmaster' for them, to teach them about Christ, to lead them in His offering, and to lead them to faith in Christ for themselves.

However, for the families who did not continue to walk in the faith of Abraham and Sarah, their children were in bondage to the Law Covenant and under the judgement of the curse of the Law that was invoked upon them because of their disbelief and their disobedience.

This judgement, under the curse of the Law, became the reality for most of the families in the Jewish nation. There will, however, have been some households of faith, and a remnant of faith that continued.

Having used the motherhood of Hagar as an allegory for the Law Covenant that had been given to the nation of Israel at Mount Sinai, the apostle Paul then expanded his analogy, or his allegory, by saying that the bondage of the Law Covenant applied to all the inhabitants of the natural Jerusalem and, by implication, to the entire Jewish nation.

'For this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.' Gal 4:25.

This does not only refer to an historical event at Mount Sinai. Hagar is not only an allegory for an historical event. She also teaches us about the present situation, as Paul wrote about, in the city of Jerusalem.

### **Jesus rebuked the daughters of Jerusalem for their carnal motherhood**

Jesus highlighted this point when He turned to speak to the women who were weeping for Him, as He made His way from the Praetorium to the place of His crucifixion.

'But Jesus, turning to them, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children".' Luk 23:28.

He rebuked them for their weeping, which was nothing more than a religious practice. He was not interested in their sympathy or their empathy, and their tears. He rebuked them for this, and then exhorted them to mourn to and weep in a different way, recognising that their religious and carnal motherhood was a major contributing factor toward His crucifixion, under the curse of the Law.

It was also the reason why their own children were in bondage under the curse of the Law, and under that judgement. He then proceeded to foretell the coming judgement and destruction of the earthly Jerusalem.

### **Judgement on Jerusalem and the temple**

As we considered in our study of the Seventy Weeks prophecy, the city of Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed by the Roman armies under the leadership of Prince Titus in AD70. One of the major reasons for this judgement upon the city and the temple was the fact that the Jews had continued to make animal sacrifice after Jesus Christ had brought all offering and sacrifice, according to the Law, to an end, with His once for all offering.

The continuing animal sacrifice was an abomination to the Lord.

But, even more specifically, the judgement of God upon the city of Jerusalem and upon the temple was precipitated when the elders of the Jerusalem church imposed upon Paul the need to keep the Law by paying the expenses for those men who were fulfilling the rights of the Nazarite vow. That was now 'an abomination standing in the holy place'; in the heavenly places.

Speaking about this judgement, Jesus said, 'For indeed the days are coming in which they will say, "Blessed are the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts which never nursed!" Then they will begin to say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" and to the hills, "Cover us!"' Luk 23:29-30.

This judgement in AD70 was a harbinger to the coming judgement at the opening of the sixth seal, when the kings of the earth, the mighty men, the rich men, throughout the world, will also say to the mountains, 'Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. 'For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry!'

### **A new mode of motherhood – the church, the New Jerusalem, the bride of Christ**

Significantly, when Jesus spoke to those women on the way to the cross, He was mercifully extending an invitation to them and to all the inhabitants of the natural Jerusalem to turn from their present mode of motherhood, to embrace a new mode of motherhood that belongs to the Jerusalem from above.

Returning to our key verse, the apostle Paul declared, 'The Jerusalem from above is free, and she is the mother of us all.' Gal 4:26.

The church of Jerusalem from above is free from the bondage of the Law Covenant because she is married to Christ under the New Covenant.

Jesus has united both Jew and Gentile in His physical body, through His offering on the cross. He has brought forth the church to be His wife and comparable helper through this same offering.

Once His offering was complete, the blood, the water, and the spirit of grace and supplication that flowed from the throne of God through His physical body on the cross, flowing in the river of the water of life, are the sanctifying and cleansing elements for the church as *the bride of Christ*.

This is 'the fountain for sin and uncleanness'. And it is applied to the church through the messengers of Christ who are in His right hand. It is applied to the church as 'the washing of the water of the word'.

Significantly, it is the washing of the water of the word by the messengers of Christ that *cleanses and sanctifies the church* to express the motherhood that belongs to the new Jerusalem which comes down out of heaven from God.

As we have been considering, the first manifestation of the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God was seen on the day of Pentecost, for the new Jerusalem is built on the foundation of 'the twelve apostles of the Lamb'.

### **Sons of God - priests in the Father's temple, members of the bride of Christ, His church**

On the day of Pentecost, the multitude who were born as sons of God by receiving the promise of the Spirit as the blessing of Abraham, in response to the word that was proclaimed to them by the

apostle Peter, were born as sons of God by receiving the blessing of the Spirit.

They were baptised into Christ; they were raised and seated with Him in the heavenly places. They were now part of His corporate body, which is the temple, the house, of God the Father. And they were now able to *serve as priests in that house*.

They were also part of the *church*, the bride of Christ. 'Then those who gladly received his word were baptised; and that day about three thousand souls were added.' Act 2:41.

They were added to both edifices that Christ built on Mount Calvary. They were built into the 'temple' as the house of God and they also became part of the 'church', 'the bride of Christ'.

Those who were added to the church on the day of Pentecost became part of the local expression of the bride of Christ, in the city of Jerusalem.

The bride of Christ is not mystical or ethereal. These believers became part of its local expression in the city of Jerusalem. However, they were no longer citizens of natural Jerusalem, 'the Jerusalem from beneath'.

That is the city which Paul described as 'Hagar' who is 'in bondage with her children'. They were now citizens of 'the Jerusalem from above, coming down out of heaven from God', which is the bride of Christ. They live in Jerusalem, but *their citizenship is in the Jerusalem from above*.

### **The motherhood of the church in families; and to those whom God calls**

From the day of Pentecost onwards, we begin to observe the motherhood of a local expression of the bride of Christ in relation to 'bringing forth sons of God'.

The first element of the motherhood of the church was seen in each believing family that was committed to *walking after the Spirit in the fellowship of the New Covenant*.

As we are walking after the Spirit, this also includes removing, or putting to death, our carnal and fallen modes of relating.

In the book of Galatians, Paul described this in relation to Abraham's house, where they needed to 'cast out the bondwoman and her son'.

The first element of the motherhood of the church was seen in each believing family that was

committed to walking after the Spirit in the fellowship of the New Covenant.

When he spoke to the multitude on the day of Pentecost, the apostle Peter proclaimed that the first element of the motherhood of the church is seen in believing families who have received the promised blessing of Abraham.

This is a wonderful verse, and it is a magnificent statement when he said to the multitude who had gathered, concerning the blessing of Abraham, 'For the promise is to you and to your children.' Act 2:39.

In this verse, Peter firstly *identified the motherhood of the church in relation to children who are brought forth by believing parents*.

Secondly, he proceeded to *identify the motherhood of the church in relation to the evangelistic ministry of the church*.

He said, 'For the promise is *to you and to your children* [and then he said], and to all who are afar off, *as many as our Lord our God will call*.'

In this regard, we note that as the members of the church in Jerusalem 'continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, in fellowship, in the breaking of bread and prayers, the Lord added to the church daily, those who were being saved.'