

**Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Prophesying**  
**Message Twenty-One : Ministering to the Lord to Enjoy Him**  
**as the Hidden Manna, the Budding Rod, and the Law of Life**

**I. Overview :**

When Israel went astray, the sons of Zadok, who kept the charge of My sanctuary; they shall come near to Me to minister to Me, and stand before Me to present to Me the fat and the blood. Those who ministered to the Lord had to be clothed with linen material, not with woolen garments or with anything that caused sweat. The hidden manna is the portion of Christ that we enjoy in the presence of God when there is no distance between us and Him. The budding rod signifies that Christ, the resurrected One, should be our life and should bud, blossom, and bear fruit to maturity. The tablets of the covenant, which are the tablets of the law, signify the law of the divine life to conform us to the image of Christ.

**II. Truth and Enlightenment :**

Day 1 --

A. What kind of the ministering that the Lord is after?

The ministering that He is continually after—is to minister to Him. His desire is not for us to do His work. Laboring is certainly important, plowing the fields is important, and feeding the cattle is also important, but the Lord does not look at these things. Rather, He is after the ministering to God and the serving of God. He wants His slaves to minister to Him and to serve Him.

B. What are the two groups of Levites according to God?

Although all were Levites belonging to God and to one tribe, the majority among them were only worthy to minister to the house. Yet there was a small minority, who were not only Levites but also the sons of Zadok, who could minister to “Me”—that is, minister to Jehovah.

Day 2 --

A. What differs the ministering to the Lord in the sanctuary from outer court?

The ministering to the Lord in the sanctuary is not that interesting. But this is the place where the Lord wants us to be. Here it is calm and dark with only seven olive oil lamps, and there are no crowds or great multitudes of people. Here one finds the genuine ministry to the Lord. Men can see you in outer court; the work is very apparent and others will praise you. Many people are thrilled at the outward achievement of the work.

B. Why do we say that the basis for the ministry to the Lord is to draw near to Him? No one can minister to Him without drawing near to Him. No one can minister to the Lord without approaching Him in prayer. Spiritual power is not the power of preaching but the power of praying. How much you pray indicates how much inner strength you really possess.

Day 3 --

A. Why could no one who ministered to the Lord be clothed with wool?

No one who ministered to the Lord could be clothed with wool. Before God, no one could ever put on woolen garments, because those who minister to the Lord should not sweat. Sweat is a result of the curse. Due to God's curse, the ground ceased to yield its fruit; due to the absence of God's blessing, human effort is necessary, and this causes sweat.

B. How should the genuine spiritual work be?

The biggest aspect of the spiritual work is to deal with God. The first person we should contact is God, not man. The work of the flesh is different; the first one it contacts is man. We are not idle; rather, we are doing a work that causes no sweat. If we deal properly with God, there is no need to sweat before man. We can accomplish the most amount of work with the least amount of strength.

Day 4 --

A. What differs a place to minister to the Lord from outer court?

Ezekiel 44:16 tells us that there is a place to minister to the Lord. The ministry to the Lord is in the sanctuary—a hidden, quiet place, not public like the outer court. Actually, a day there is better than a thousand days in another place.

B. What is the special point on Acts 13 the work of beginning in Antioch?

The work of the church in Antioch began during the time of ministering to the Lord. The Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me now Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Those who volunteer for the army are not wanted by God. God only has conscripted, or drafted, soldiers. When they ministered to the Lord, only the Holy Spirit has the authority to commission men to work.

Day 5 --

A. How's your relationship with God if you want enjoying 'hidden manna'?

If you are a priest, you may be in the Holy Place and be closer to God than the Levites who are serving in the outer court. Although you may be a priest ministering in the Holy Place, you are not yet in the Holy of Holies. If you want to enjoy the hidden manna, there must be no distance between you and God. All the distance between you and the Lord must be eliminated.

B. What will we enjoy when we enter into the presence of the divine glory in the Holy of Holies?

The closer we are to Him, the more service we render to Him. Eventually, when we enter into the presence of the divine glory in the Holy of Holies, all service ceases. Here we only have the presence of the Lord and enjoy the hidden Christ, the hidden manna. It is here that we have direct fellowship with the Lord and know His heart and His intention.

Day 6 --

A. Explain that the principle to every service lies in the budding rod.

God returned all the eleven rods to the leaders, but kept Aaron's rod inside the Ark as an eternal memorial. This means that resurrection is an eternal principle in our service to God. Authority to serve God lies in resurrection. All services to the Lord must pass through death and resurrection before they will be acceptable to God.

**B. Explain the significance and function of the law of the new covenant**

According to its life, the law of the new covenant is the Triune God, and according to its function, it is the almighty divine capacity. According to this capacity we can know God, live God, and be constituted with God in His life and nature that we may become His increase, His enlargement, to be His fullness for His eternal expression.

**III. Conclusion :**

In the Ezekiel's time, Israel went astray after their idols, but the Levitical priests, the sons of Zadok, who kept the charge of the sanctuary, and they shall come near, minister, stand before Jehovah to present the fat and the blood to Him. Those who ministered to the Lord had to be clothed with linen material, not with woolen garments or with anything that caused sweat. The work that causes sweat is the work that comes out of human effort without the blessing from God. If we spend an adequate amount of time in God's presence and deal properly with Him, there is no need to sweat before man; we can accomplish the most amount of work with the least amount of strength.