

# Restoring True New Testament Apostles & Prophets — And Why It Matters

## Post 1 — The Ascension of Yeshua/Jesus—Understanding the gifts of the New Testament

In today's spiritual landscape, we witness an abundance of posers, wannabes, and false ministers who claim apostolic and prophetic authority. Many are involved in the apostolic movements founded by C. Peter Wagner and John Kelly. They make it nearly impossible for sane, discerning believers to trust that these two ministry gifts still exist today. They give credibility to their deniers—the Cessationists, led by John MacArthur and Justin Peters—who argue that Jesus gave the ministries of apostles and prophets, along with certain spiritual gifts, only to withdraw them after a single generation of pre-Ascension apostles, or at some arbitrary date they decide, like the completion of the New Testament. Even some Charismatics, who obviously believe in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, do not believe true apostles and prophets still exist.

The point of this series of Posts is that they do exist, all the post-Ascension gifts of Ephesians 4, 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12. That to be assured they exist depends on understanding Scripture and our Father's intentions for the gifts and callings, not just seeing signs and wonders. Without this foundation, you are opened to be deceived by the counterfeits, both inside the church and those that Satan will send with great signs and wonders.

If you choose to read this, my prayer for you, if you know your gifts and callings, is that you operate boldly for the benefit of the Body of Messiah. And if you do not know, that you will hear the voice of the Lord and learn what they are.

**All Cessationists teach a false doctrine. Period.** Their doctrine prevents the equipping of the Saints for the work of the ministry. This egregious doctrinal deviation is worthy of a millstone around their necks. Instead our prayer should be that the Lord removes the scales from their eyes so that they might discern correctly the Word of Righteousness. For like Saul, after his experience on the road to Damascus, these men and women can become stalwart champions within the next outpouring

of the Holy Spirit.

**The basis for this unbelief comes down to two things:**

1. Not understanding Scripture.
2. Making decisions based on what their eyes see and their ears hear.

But the Cessationist are not central to this discussion. They are to be pitied. For it is a tough job to attempt to tear down what the Lord is building up.

**This series of posts will consists of:**

- **Post 1**
  - The Ascension of Yeshua/Jesus
  - Understanding Scriptures from a Pre-Ascension — Post-Ascension Viewpoint
  - What are the distinct differences between the pre-Ascension Apostles and the post-Ascension Apostles?
  - The Rise of Counterfeits — A Spiritual Pattern
- **Post 2**
  - The Post-Ascension Roles of the Apostles & Prophets
- **Post 3**
  - The New Apostolic Reformation (NAR), the Coalition of International Apostles (CIA) and International Coalition of Apostolic Leaders (ICAL)
- **Post 4**
  - Derek Prince on Apostles & Prophets
- **Post 5**
  - Watchman Nee on Apostles & Prophets
- **Post 6**
  - Summary comparison of the viewpoints on Apostles & Prophets from earlier posts
- **Post 7**
  - Understanding Divine Order as it applies to Elders and the 5 main ministries of Ephesians 4:11 and how they are to work together.

**—Post 1**

## **The Ascension of Yeshua/Jesus—Understanding the gifts of the New Testament**

There are two key events on specific dates after Jesus' shedding of His blood and death on the cross: His Resurrection on day 3, and His Ascension on day 40. Ten days later at Pentecost, in Hebrew—Shavuot, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was the result of these events: the death, resurrection and ascension of Yeshua, the Messiah.

Jesus' ascension does not fulfill a specific appointed time on the Jewish calendar but happens within the Spring Feasts. It is part of a sequence that fulfills many symbolic patterns.

- It sets up the giving of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, the last of the Spring Feasts.
- Jesus' ascension after 40 days matches biblical patterns of 40 days and 40 years, and often symbolize a period of testing, trial, probation, or preparation. Jesus fasted for 40 days and 40 nights in the wilderness before beginning his public ministry, Moses on Mount Sinai, Elijah traveling, and Israel's 40 years in the wilderness to name a few.
- It takes place during the Counting of the Omer, the period between Firstfruits and Pentecost, where Jews count each day in anticipation.

### **Here's the timeline as it connects to the Jewish calendar:**

- 1. Passover (Pesach) — Freedom through the Lamb's sacrifice:**  
Jesus was crucified during Passover, which commemorates the Israelites' deliverance from Egypt. Believers see Jesus as the ultimate Passover Lamb.
- 2. Feast of Unleavened Bread — A call to holiness:** For seven days, no leaven (symbol of sin) was eaten. Yeshua's sinless (unleavened) body is laid in the tomb. He is the Bread of Life.
- 3. Feast of Firstfruits — Promise of resurrection and new life:**  
Jesus rose from the dead on this feast day, which is about the first harvest being offered to God. Paul calls Jesus the *"firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep"* (1 Corinthians 15:20).
- 4. Ascension — The Key to Understanding the New Testament**

**Gifts:** According to Acts 1:3, *“He presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.”* Jesus then ascended into heaven, 40 days after Firstfruits, which is 10 days before Pentecost (Shavuot). He ascended to sit at the right hand of the Father.

5. **Pentecost (Shavuot) — The giving of the Spirit:** This feast happens 50 days after Firstfruits and commemorates both the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai and Jesus giving the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

**Jesus is the fulfillment of the seven feasts of Israel** — with Shavuot being the last of the Spring Feasts. This fulfills the connection between the giving of the Torah and the giving of the Spirit, as prophesied:

○ **Jeremiah 31:33:**

*“But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord:*

*I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”*

○ **Ezekiel 36:26-27:**

*“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.”*

**To put this into perspective:**

Just as Israel received the Law, a better translation would be instructions or teachings, at Sinai, the believers in Yeshua received the Spirit in Jerusalem. The giving of the Torah at Sinai brought God’s instruction. The giving of the Spirit at Pentecost brought God’s empowerment to live out that instruction from the heart.

**The difference between the Resurrection and the Ascension is therefore important for our ability to understand certain Scriptures and doctrines.**

## **Why the Difference Between Resurrection and Ascension**

## Matters:

1. The Resurrection is Jesus being the "*firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep,*" but is not the end of his earthly ministry.
2. The ascension ties up the past (His life and resurrection), empowers the present (the gifts necessary for believers to do the work of the ministry), and sets hope for the future, His return.
  - **Completion of His Earthly Mission** — Jesus' work of salvation through His life, death, and resurrection was complete.
    - ◆ His ascension marked the fulfillment of this part of God's redemptive plan.
    - ◆ John 17:4-5  
"I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed."
    - ◆ Hebrews 1:3  
"He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high."
  - **Exaltation and Authority**
    - ◆ The ascension is tied to Jesus being exalted to the right hand of the Father, symbolizing authority and honor.
    - ◆ Philippians 2:9-11  
"Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."
    - ◆ Ephesians 1:20-21  
"...that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and

dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come."

○ **Sending the Holy Spirit & The post-ascension gifts**

◆ Jesus ascended so that the Holy Spirit could be sent to believers, empowering them for mission and spiritual growth.

◆ John 16:7

"Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you."

◆ Acts 2:33

"Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing."

○ **Ongoing Intercession for Believers**

◆ Jesus now intercedes on behalf of believers before God the Father.

◆ Romans 8:34

"Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us."

◆ Hebrews 7:25

"Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them."

○ **Promise of His Return**

◆ His ascension also sets the stage for His promised return.

◆ Acts 1:9-11

"And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and

said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'

### **Jesus's Ascension:**

- **Luke 24:50-53:** *"He said to them, 'This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.' Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, 'This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."*

*"You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.'" When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God."*

- **Giving of the Holy Spirit:**
  - ◆ **Key Promise — John 16:7:**  
*"Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you."*
  - ◆ **Fulfillment — Acts 2:1-4:**  
*"When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit*

*and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance."*

○ **Ascension Gifts – Ephesians 4:7-13:**

*"But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it says, 'When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men.' (In saying, 'He ascended,' what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)*

*And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ..."*

## **Key Differences Between Pre-Ascension and Post-Ascension Apostles:**

### **1. How They Were Called:**

- **Pre-Ascension Apostles** (the Twelve):
  - Personally chosen by Jesus during His earthly ministry (Luke 6:13).
  - Followed Him, personally disciplined by Him, saw His ministry and got to ask questions.
  - Witnessed His death, resurrection, and ascension.
- **Post-Ascension Apostles:**
  - Called *after* Jesus ascended.
  - Their calling came through special revelation or divine appointment.
  - Example: Matthias (chosen by the church, Acts 1), Paul and Barnabas called by the Holy Spirit, Acts 13:1-3), James (commissioned after resurrection appearance, 1 Corinthians 15:7, Galatians 1:19).



## 2. Their Role in the Church:

- **Pre-Ascension Apostles:**

- They laid the initial foundation of the church.
- Eyewitnesses of all of Jesus' ministry.
- Often seen as having a unique authority because of their closeness to Jesus.
- Their teachings and experiences are the basis for much of the New Testament.

- **Post-Ascension Apostles:**

- Continued the foundation, but didn't walk with Jesus pre-resurrection.
- Still had apostolic authority, but often had to defend their calling (like Paul did).
- Played key roles in expanding the church, especially to Gentiles (Paul) or leadership in the Jerusalem church (James).

## 3. Criteria for Apostleship:

- In Acts 1:21-22, when choosing Matthias, the criteria were:
  - Had to be with Jesus from His baptism to His ascension.
  - Had to be a witness of the resurrection.
- Paul didn't meet that first part, but he emphasized being a witness of the resurrected Christ and receiving the gospel directly from Jesus (Galatians 1:12).

## 4. Revelation and Authority:

- **Pre-Ascension Apostles:**

- Received teaching directly from Jesus in person.
- Their role was more formative—to pass on the doctrine and structure of the church.

- **Post-Ascension Apostles:**

- Received visions, revelations, and guidance from the Holy Spirit (John 14:26, Acts 13:2).
- Their authority was rooted in divine confirmation (signs, wonders, establishing Divine Order, and keeping the doctrine) rather than time spent with Jesus in His earthly ministry.

### Why It Matters:

- Shows that God's calling isn't limited by human expectations— He can call anyone, anytime he wants, like Paul even after the ascension.
- Authority is based on divine appointment, not just physical proximity to Jesus.
- There's a progression: from the Jewish-focused Twelve to a more universal church led by post-ascension apostles.
- The claim by cessationists that apostles and prophets ended with the death of the last original apostle, John, makes no sense, as there is a Scriptural difference between John and the pre-Ascension and the post-Ascension apostles.

### Three Anomalies of post-ascension apostles because they were part of the first church: Mathias, James, the Lord's brother, and the Apostle Paul.

#### 1. Matthias – The "Replacement Apostle"

- **Anomaly:** He wasn't directly called by Jesus during His earthly ministry like the original Twelve.
- **Context:** After Judas betrayed Jesus and died, the apostles felt the need to restore the number of apostles to twelve (symbolic of the twelve tribes of Israel and 12 being the Hebrew number for government).
- **Acts 1:21-26:** They cast lots to choose between two men, and Matthias was selected. This is the *only* instance of someone being chosen this way in the New Testament.
- **Why he's unique:** He was there from the beginning, following Jesus, but his apostleship came after Jesus' ascension and wasn't by direct calling.
- **Interesting thought:** Jesus told the 11 pre-Ascension apostles to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit. Instead of waiting they decided they needed to replace Judas Iscariot, so they set criteria and then cast lots. You would think that if Jesus wanted Judas replaced he might have done it himself pre-ascension. Or tell them to wait until they received the Holy Spirit. Paul could be referring to this with his comment in 1 Corinthians 15:8-9 where

he calls himself one "abnormally born" or "as one untimely born." Others, after the giving of the Holy Spirit, might have wondered the same thing.

## 2. James, the Lord's Brother – Apostle by Family and Faith

- **Anomaly:** He wasn't one of the original Twelve, and he's Jesus' biological brother (or half-brother, depending on your view).
- **Galatians 1:19:** Paul calls him an "apostle" and mentions him specifically as "*James, the Lord's brother.*"
- **1 Corinthians 15:7:** After His resurrection, Jesus appeared specifically to James, which likely led to his strong leadership in the early church.
- **Acts 15:** James is a major leader in the Jerusalem council, more of a church elder role, but with apostolic authority.
- **Why he's unique:** He became a key leader despite not following Jesus during His ministry—he believed after the resurrection.

## 3. Paul – The "Out-of-Order" Apostle

- **Anomaly:** He never followed Jesus during His earthly life and actually persecuted the church at first.
- **1 Corinthians 15:8-9:** Paul calls himself one "abnormally born" or "as one untimely born" because his apostleship came later in Antioch when the Holy Spirit separated Barnabas and Saul for apostolic work. (Acts 13:1-3).
- **Galatians 1:11-12:** He emphasizes that he didn't receive the gospel from man but through direct revelation from Jesus.
- **Why he's unique:** His apostleship is validated not by being with Jesus physically, but by divine appointment and revelation. Also, he became the main apostle to the Gentiles.

## The Rise of Counterfeits – A Spiritual Pattern

- Whenever God is doing something, Satan sends in his counterfeit. This pattern is all through Scripture.
  - Exodus 7:10-12: Pharaoh's magicians mimicked Moses and Aaron.
  - Matthew 7:15: Jesus warned of false prophets who come in sheep's clothing.

- This deception always runs alongside true moves of God. False apostles, false prophets, false teachers will arise to confuse and mislead.
- If the Church can't discern the true from the false, it will fall for:
  - False Apostles:
    - ◆ 2 Corinthians 11:13-15:
 

"For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds."
  - False Prophets:
    - ◆ Matthew 7:15-16:
 

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits."
    - ◆ 1 John 4:1:
 

"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world."
  - False Teachers:
    - ◆ 2 Peter 2:1-3:
 

"But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed."
    - ◆ 2 Timothy 4:3-4:
 

"For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths."
- Satan's Current Strategy: Homegrown Deceivers in the Church

- Even now, Satan is not relying on outsiders to tear down the Church—he is raising up counterfeits from within.
- He has not yet unleashed the full force of his agents who will perform lying signs and wonders. For now, he is working through men and women already among us:
  - ◆ Many are truly born again, yet blinded by pride.
  - ◆ They believe they are God's gift to the Church, but they are deceiving themselves—and leading others astray.
- These False Apostles and Prophets:
  - They cannot bring divine order—only confusion.
  - They do not establish sound doctrine—they undermine it.
  - They do not walk in the true power of the Spirit—they imitate signs and wonders, but bear no lasting fruit.
- But the True Apostles and Prophets of God:
  - They do not seek titles, platforms, or applause.
  - They are not moved by fame or recognition.
  - They burn with a holy desire to fulfill their heavenly mandate.
  - They lay foundations quietly, in hidden places, where no applause is heard but heaven takes notice.
  - They strengthen the Church, rooting her deeper in Christ.
  - They move silently, often unnoticed by man—but fully endorsed by God.
- The Lord is drawing a line in this hour.
  - Those with eyes to see and ears to hear must discern the true from the false.
  - The counterfeit may glitter—but only the true carry the authority of God our Father.
  - This is why judgment has started in the House of God. It is the tearing down of the false to raise up the true.
  - When the true are functioning — then Satan will send in his counterfeits.

### **A Divine Revelation of Restoration**

In the early 1970s, the Father spoke to me:

“Rick, I am restoring the Apostles and Prophets, and most of the church will miss them for the same reason most of the Jews missed my Son—

because they expect them to do something different from what I have sent them to do."

Apostles and prophets were never completely removed from the church—but they've gone largely unrecognized. This has left the church weak, disordered, and unequipped.

No wonder:

- Spiritual warfare is anemic.
- Miracles and healings are rare.
- Divine order is missing.
- According to Ephesians 4, the full equipping of the saints for the work of ministry requires the functioning and cooperation of all five ministry gifts.

Jesus promised His followers would continue His mission:

- Signs and wonders.
- Preaching the Gospel.
- Expanding the Kingdom.

But why aren't we seeing it? Because we've failed to equip the saints—and without apostles and prophets, that's impossible.

Thanks for reading,  
Blessings,  
Rick

**Next the Post-Ascension Roles of the Apostles & Prophets.**