

TRIBES AND HOUSES.

We must understand the difference between a Tribe and a House. We must be careful with our terminology otherwise others will misunderstand what we are saying and how it actually works. For this reason alone we need to be clear ourselves and then create terminology that minimizes the possibility of being misunderstood.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof and instruction in righteousness". (2 Tim.3:15-17; 2 Pet.1:19-21).

"These things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come". (1 Cor.10:11).

As God established the nation of Israel, it became twelve well established tribes. Within these tribes, certain men or women who served God in an outstanding way were established permanently as heads of houses which were perpetuated generationally along with the tribes and became hereditary lines within the tribes.

So a man and his family belonged to a house as well as to a tribe. In some cases these hereditary houses were established only in the third or fourth generation after the direct sons of Israel and sometimes they came from a lineage that was formerly wicked and apostate or from another nation altogether.

The number of houses mentioned in scripture (about 68) were distributed very unevenly among the tribes and depended on the number of outstanding men or women God could find there.

Each House Is Built by Someone.

One principle we learn from this is that a man or woman who rises up to serve God with all their heart from any kind of background can be a blessing in their generation and also become a source of a river of blessing that can flow on through their family line for many generations.

A second principle we learn is that God has given to certain men a house to steward for him and under God he has responsibility for it. Heb.3:4 says "Every house is built by someone, but he who built all things is God. And Moses was indeed faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken of afterwards".

When Abraham went to war against the four kings and slaughtered them he did so with a covenant community of 318 "born in his own house" although at that time he had no natural children. This was his family household and his fatherhood (Gen.14:14). (Fatherhood and family are the same word in Greek - "patria" e.g. Eph.3:14,15).

When a man has a house given to him by God, it is necessary for him to be free to express his own unique personality within the will of God in the building of that house. As a result, it will carry his genes, his family likeness and his style of doing things. That house with all its members is the extent of his fatherhood. Like Abraham, they are to be a community "born in his house".

Anyone coming into that house must recognize whose house it is and respect his fatherhood and headship. He has no right to try to change the house style unless of course the father agrees with it and himself initiates the change.

As part of their training, most young apostolic ministries serve for a while in another man's house before God will give them one of their own. God is looking to see if they will serve faithfully. If they pass the test then He may release them into another work with a house of their own, or they may inherit their father's house as Joshua, Elisha and Solomon did (Luke 16:12).

Within the house, any leader, but especially an Elder, must recognize that he is set in to serve the head and to help him fulfill his vision. In a particular house there can only be one vision and that must be set by the one who has headship, though others can make valuable contribution to its formation.

Those outside the house, even if they are apostles must recognize the integrity of the house and the authority of the father within that house. The father is the shepherd and is the door of the sheepfold. Even an apostle must not "climb over the wall" to try to directly influence the sheep. He must go through the door who is the Shepherd or Father of that house. If he attempts to come in any other way this still makes him a thief and a robber, even if he is an apostle (John 10:1). The father is the head of that house and the apostle must respect the father and his way of doing things and not attempt to stamp his own style on the church. The apostle's concerns are good foundations and good building principles and not the style of the house.

If an external apostolic ministry or an Elder or other leader within the house finds

himself irretrievably incompatible with the father/head, he should withdraw gracefully seeking to do as little damage as possible. He must not try to reach and influence the church members so as to undermine or remove the head. If he claims the authority to change the head and tries to do so it will end in disaster..... Head transplants rarely if ever take!

Tribes Are Different.

When it comes to a tribe, things are different. The tribe has a head but he is not the father of the whole tribe and more remote relationships are permissible and indeed are a practical necessity.

To be part of a tribe it is necessary to be loyal to that head, accept his leadership and carry the vision and ethos of the tribe but there will be many different family genes within the one tribe.

The purpose of a tribe is:-

- 1) To dwell together for mutual strength and protection against a common enemy.
- 2) To work together to accomplish certain common goals in the City, the Region and the Nations.
- 3) Together the tribe has far greater resources.
- 4) The tribe will have a greater than local identity and profile.
- 5) Many battles can be won if we go to war in the power of our corporate strength.
- 6) We can help each other to possess our individual and corporate possessions.

The Tribal Head has a responsibility to give a tribal strategy in consultation with the other tribal leaders. He needs to set a vision and lead the people to the fulfillment of that vision. But He does not exercise to same governmental control over the leaders as the father of an individual house. It is a much looser relationship with far more freedom for individualism and different genes within the grand design.

All the different regional centers and the churches that relate to that tribal head are part of the tribe but still keep the integrity of their own individual houses.

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