

Christchurch Stronghold

Christchurch is controlled by a powerful evil spirit that has established a corporate spiritual stronghold over the city. Many Christian leaders have spoken about this stronghold, but few have realised how powerful it is.

A corporate spiritual stronghold gets control of a city or nation when the religious and political leaders all participate in a common sin such as pride, intimidation or manipulation to enhance their leadership. This corporate sin allows the evil spiritual power behind it to gain spiritual control of the city or nation.

This corporate spiritual stronghold was given a place in Christchurch by civic leaders when the settlement was being established. Unfortunately, church leaders colluded with it by participating in similar practices.

If Christian leaders have given the evil spirit permission to be there, it may claim that they have surrendered their authority to it on behalf of Jesus. It can refuse to surrender to the name of Jesus, because it claims authority given "in the name of Jesus".

Manipulation Intimidation Control

Over the years, many people have claimed that Christchurch is controlled by a Jezebel spirit, but that is only half the problem. Ahab and Jezebel became one when they married and began working together, so we have to look at both to identify the spirits that controlled them. Emphasising Jezebel is a mistake, because it puts the blame on women by suggesting that seduction and witchcraft are the cause of the problem. Jezebel could only bring her witchcraft to Israel, because Ahab gave her authority in the nation. The real problem in the city is not seduction and witchcraft, it is manipulation and control, with a bit of intimidation thrown in for good measure.

I refer to the corporate spiritual stronghold over Christchurch as MIC (Manipulation Intimidation Control). This spirit works mostly through men, because men hold most of the positions of authority in the various business, political and religious organisation that operate in the city. When leaders slip into manipulation and intimidation to keep tricky situations under control, they unwittingly give the MIC spirit authority in their organisation or church. Those who submit to these leaders also open themselves to the MIC spirit.

Christchurch Beginning

The MIC spirit came to Christchurch with the early settlers. Although the leaders of the Canterbury Association were godly men, it took considerable manipulation and maneuvering to get the settlement underway. This gave the MIC spirit a foothold right at the beginning. Once Christchurch was established, the civic leaders maintained tight control using moral pressure to keep people in line.

[The church](#) followed the same pattern, using manipulation and intimidation to pressure people into conformity to Victorian values. This collusion between church and civic leaders allowed the MIC spirit to establish a stronghold over the city that has continued to this day.

City leaders still use manipulation and intimidation to get control of the council to achieve their purposes. Although the Holy Spirit has moved in Christchurch, many church leaders have continued unwittingly to use manipulation, intimidation and control to keep their people in line. This collusion has given the MIC spirit authority to control the city. This broad base of authority makes this spirit hard to beat.

Fruit of Manipulation Intimidation and Control

The MIC spirit produces bad fruit. King Ahab and Queen Jezebel used manipulation and intimidation to keep control over their people, so we can learn about the MIC Spirit from their behaviour.

1. Kills the Prophets

The MIC spirit attacks people who resist its control and intimidation. It seeks to kill the prophets and other people who oppose it.

- When Elijah embarrassed the prophets of Baal, the MIC spirit took offence and threatened to kill him (1 Kings 19:2).
- Jezebel took offence at Naboth when he refused to give in to Ahab's demand for his land and had him killed (1 Kings 21:1-16).

2. Breathless

The Holy Spirit and the MIC spirit cannot work together. People in an organisation or church that is influenced by the MIC spirit will find themselves spiritually breathless, because the Holy Spirit is quenched. When Elijah stopped running from Jezebel and Ahab, he was exhausted (1 Kings 19:3-9). God hid him in a cave until his strength was restored. People with strong giftings will find themselves shut up in caves and unable to function.

3 Blocks Healing

The MIC spirit inflicts sickness on those who come under its power. Jehoram King of Judah married a daughter of Ahab (and possibly Jezebel). After Elijah wrote a letter challenging his immoral behaviour, he was struck with an incurable disease of the bowel and died (2 Chron 21:18-19).

Sickness is the favourite weapon of the MIC spirit (Rev 2:22). That is why people with healing ministries have always struggled in Christchurch. Although the Pentecostal movement arrived in Christchurch many years ago, and the charismatic renewal brought an awareness of the Holy Spirit to the more traditional churches, they have struggled to get victory over sickness. The Holy Spirit has moved in many amazing ways, but the gift of healing has never been free and powerful in this city.

This MIC spirit that dominates Christchurch seems to be able to resist the name of Jesus and block prayers for healing.

***It refuses to surrender to the name of Jesus,
because it was put in place in the name of Jesus.***

If Christian leaders have given the evil spirit permission to be there, it can claim that they have surrendered their authority to it on behalf of Jesus. It can refuse to surrender to the name of Jesus, because it claims authority given "in the name of Jesus".

This stronghold seems to have the power to resist the gift of healing. This is why many prayers for healing in Christchurch have not been answered. People have blamed God, but the real cause is the MIC spirit.

4. Weak Pastoral Care

Ahab sent Obadiah out to find hay for their horses (1 Kings 18:5). Ahab and Jezebel cared more for their horses than they cared about their people who were starving to death. They should have been killing their horses to feed their people. In an organisation where the MIC spirit is strong, pastoral care will be poor. The leaders will be so focussed on their ministry and the tools needed to support it that people who are suffering and hurting will often be neglected.

5. Fear and Dread

The MIC spirit has the ability to feed fear and dread into people who oppose it. After his victory on Mount Carmel, Elijah was attacked by fear and dread, so he fled for his life (1 Kings 18:3). People who are afraid are easier to manipulate and control. Fear allows ruthless leaders to gain greater political power.

6. Money Manipulation

Leaders influenced by the MIC spirit will be tempted to use money (or people with money) to get what they want. Ahab took gold and silver from the Lord's temple and used it to bribe the King of Aram to withdraw his attack against Israel. Using the Lord's wealth in this way is a serious sin.

7. Compromise to Survive.

When they come under attack, the leaders influenced by the MIC spirit will compromise to survive. When Jezebel and Ahab were attacked by Aram, they offered their silver and gold and the best of their children to the invader to appease him. This appeasement led to further demands, which they eventually had to resist (1 Kings 20:1-12).

Compromise is always tested. Leaders who compromise to get things done will eventually be tested and required to compromise again. Even when he won a victory, Ahab could not avoid compromising with his enemies (1 Kings 20:30-34). The MIC spirit makes leaders vulnerable to compromise with evil.

8. Political and Religious Collusion

The MIC spirit loves political alliances. Ahab and Jezebel formed an alliance with the King of Israel to attack Damascus (1 Kings 22:4, 2 Chron 18:1; 22:5). Our only alliance should be with the Lord. Christian leaders should be careful about collusion with political authorities to advance their cause because it can lead to compromise.

Ahab colluded with religious power. Jezebel had 400 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Asherah sitting at her table every day. Their religious power strengthened Ahab's ability to intimidate people.

When religious and civic leaders collude together, they strengthen each other's power. Instead, the church should be acting prophetically and challenging civic and business leaders.

9. Decline

The consequence of the MIC influence in Israel was that God reduced its size.

In those days the Lord began to reduce the size of Israel (2 Kings 10:32).

An institution that is controlled by the MIC spirit will shrink in size, even though good things seem to be happening. The leaders may appear to be effective, but the fruit will not follow.

Power Messages

Jezebel often worked in the background by sending messages to get Ahab's work done. These messages were mostly lies intended to intimidate. Sometimes they were flattery to entice.

When Elijah killed the prophets of Baal, she sent a message to him, warning that he would be dead in a day. That was a lie, because his life was in God's hands, but it still had the desired effect (1 Kings 19:2).

She dealt with Naboth by sending a letter to the nobles and elders of his city. The letter lied about his character, but told the city leaders what to do. They carried out her instructions (1 Kings 21:9).

When Jehu came to kill Jezebel, she called out her message. This time she used flattery, but Jehu was too ruthless to be taken in (2 Kings 9:31).

The MIC spirit has stifled the gift of healing in Christchurch by delivering a negative message to Christians living in the city. When a person who has been prayed for by the church dies, it prompts people to say,

God does not heal everyone.

God could have healed them, but he chose not to.

It was God's will that they died.

These words are not true, but grieving Christians often believe the negative message and blame God for the death of the person that they loved. By doing this, they unwittingly take offence at God.

In a city where the leaders have taken offence at God, the Holy Spirit cannot do many miracles. Nazareth took offence at Jesus, and he could not do any great work there (see [Rock of Offence](#)).

Negative Power

Mark 6:5 is an amazing verse. "Dunamis" the Greek word for explosive power is used twice, with a negative.

And he had no power (dunamo) in that place to do any mighty work (dunamis).

Jesus was the Son of God, who had come down from heaven. The Holy Spirit had come upon him when he was baptised. Yet in Nazareth, he had no power (dunamo) and he could do no mighty work (dunamis).

Why was Jesus powerless? The cause was the declarations made by the people for Nazareth in the previous two verses, denying that Jesus was the son of God, and denying his wisdom.

Where did this man get these things?" they asked. "What's this wisdom that has been given him? What are the remarkable miracles he is performing? Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son (Mark 6:2-3)?"

Negative declarations by people with authority in a place can shut down the power of God.

The MIC spirit cannot shut down the power of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God is much too strong for that. What this spirit can do is speak messages to people with authority in a town or city. If they accept and declare this negative message, they have authority to shut down the power of the Holy Spirit. This is how Jezebel killed Naboth (1 Kings 21:9).

The same thing has happened in Christchurch. The MIC spirit gave a false message to the leaders of the church when people they had prayed for died.

God can decide not to heal a person.

God does not heal everyone".

When the leaders declared these words, the power of the Holy Spirit was shut down. He has no power in the place, nor can he do any mighty works there.

Church leaders have authority in the city. When believers are praying for people to be healed in Jesus' name, their words from the past seep down and stifle the Holy Spirit. When they get defeated by MIC Spirit and a person they were praying for dies, the leaders of the church build a Rock of Offence, which quenches the Spirit's power even more.

Mode of Operation

The MIC spirit operates in several different directions.

1. Leaders

The leader of the organisation or church can be deceived into using manipulation and control to get their vision fulfilled. When they face opposition, they slip into intimidation to overcome it. A leader can use their spiritual authority to intimidate people into following their guidance. For example, they might warn the person that they will lose their “covering” if they reject their leader’s advice. Usually, it will be more subtle.

The leader’s vision is good, so they believe that the end justifies the means. They get to build something for God, but they do not realise that they have unwittingly allowed the MIC spirit into the foundation of their work. It will keep popping out to harm it.

Leaders will often get their way by sending subtle messages to the people opposing their vision. These messages will often be delivered by loyal supporters. For example, when a person is troublesome, the leader might say the right words to the right people, to ensure they are side-lined. Or they can make sure that they do not know what is going on.

All leaders in Christchurch should look at themselves and ask if their control of people is opening the doors for the MIC spirit. If it has been part of their life for a long time, they might not be able to see it and will need to ask a wise person who can see more clearly. That person will not be a wise friend who only sees good in them. It will more likely be that pesky wise person on the fringe who is often a nuisance because they always ask annoying questions.

2. Loyal Supporters

The leader will have loyal supporters who back him. They may see the manipulation and control, but will turn a blind eye to support the cause. They will sometimes be able to dampen down the worst effects of the spirit of control and tone down the intimidation.

Obadiah was in charge of Ahab and Jezebel’s palace. He managed to hide a hundred prophets in two caves. Yet he still had to do Ahab and Jezebel’s dirty work, and hunt down Elijah when he had prophesied the drought (1 Kings 18:3-5).

This is the dilemma faced by a close supporter of a leader under the influence of the MIC spirit. They will often have to choose between loyalty to their leader and doing the right thing.

3. Members

The members of the organisation or church are expected to submit to their leader. They must support the leader’s vision, or move out. However, they do not get to flourish in their ministry.

There were a hundred prophets in the land of Israel in Ahab and Jezebel’s time, but they had to hide in caves. Israel was in tumult, so it needed prophets, but they were not effective, because they were shut away in caves.

In an organisation or church where the MIC spirit has control, the gifts and ministries of many members will be stifled. If they are used, they will be distorted to support the leader’s vision. Many will be frustrated and feel like they are shut up in a cave.

4. Opposition

People who oppose the MIC spirit will be attacked. These attacks can often be quite ruthless. Elijah had to cross the Jordan and go into the desert and hide, because Ahab and Jezebel were trying to kill him. People who oppose the MIC spirit will often find themselves shunted into the wilderness.

Jezebel stirred up scoundrels to speak lies against Naboth when he refused to hand his vineyard over to Ahab. They accused him of hating God and the King. The MIC spirit will often use gossip and lies against those who oppose the leader it controls.

5. Prophets

Wise prophets can expose the MIC spirit, but they should expect intense opposition. When Jehoshaphat and Ahab got together to war against the king of Aram, the court prophets urged them on. When Jehoshaphat asked for a real prophet, Ahab said there was one called Micaiah, but he always prophesied bad things.

Micaiah said that he saw a spirit of deception agreeing to manipulate Ahab into war. Micaiah's words were fulfilled and recorded permanently when Ahab died. An arrow shot at random hit his back where he had no protection and killed him. He was actually slain by the manipulation and control of the MIC spirit that led him into the wrong battle.

Micaiah opposed the MIC spirit, but ended up in prison for his troubles.

Vulnerability

People who belong to an organisation in which the leaders (usually one leader) rely on manipulation, control and intimidation are vulnerable to the MIC spirit. This is true regardless of whether the organisation is a business, a government agency, a church, the city council, or a club or society.

Any church where control and manipulation are at work is not safe, because the MIC spirit has authority to resist the name of Jesus and shut down the gift of healing. We need to be alert,

Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith (1 Pet 5:8-9).

When the principalities and power have such a stronghold over a city, attacking them directly is unwise. We need to be careful about confronting the MIC spirit, because we may not have authority to deal with it if civic and religious leaders have put it there.

In his book, "The Needless Casualties of War", John Paul Jackson gives a number of examples of sincere Christians taking on spiritual power that they did not have authority to deal with. Each one received a severe spiritual beating.

Jackson says that these spirits are hard to deal with because they operate in the second heaven, but that is wrong. They are hard to defeat because they have been given a place by people with political authority.

One young girl had seen a demonic principality sitting on the dome of the college administration building at the place where she had begun studying. Within a week of engaging in warfare against the spirit, she was struck with chronic fatigue and fibromyalgia, and eventually had to leave her studies behind.

The management of the college had authority over it. They had far more authority than the young girl. They had given the spirit permission to be there, perhaps unwittingly. To attend the college, the girl had to submit to the college management.

This put her under the authority of the spirit that controlled the college, so she was beaten up.

The city fathers and spiritual leaders in Christchurch have far more authority than ordinary Christians, no matter how strong their faith. When Christians stand against the MIC spirit, the greater authority of the leaders who have given this spirit a stronghold in the city nullifies their limited authority. Civic and religious authority trumps the limited authority of ordinary Christians.

Key to Protection

The key to protection is for two or three people in the organisation or church to stand together and resist the MIC spirit in unity.

- ***Two or three can see.***

They will see what the spirits are doing. They will continue to submit to their leader, but in a different way. They will do what their leader is asking them to do, but they will see the spirit behind his request and silently resist it. They will submit to his requests, but not to the spirit behind them. They will pray for their leader's eyes to be opened, so he can see how the enemy is using him.

- ***Two or three will agree.***

Where two or three people are gathered in Jesus name, he is there in their midst.

Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them (Mat 18:19-20).

Two or three people who are united by love should commit to supporting each other. They will agree to watch over each other, and if one is being attacked, they will resist it together. They will agree that the MIC spirit has no right in their lives. They will agree in commanding the spirit to stop harassing the one being attacked.

By submitting to each other, two or three people can create an island of safety within a dangerous organisation.

Defeating a Corporate Stronghold

A corporate spiritual stronghold is put in place when civic leaders submitted to a powerful evil spirit in the past. Because it was given a place by corporate leaders, its power has to be broken by current corporate leaders. The people with the authority in the city or nations have authority to break its power. The people of the city or nation are under the authority of their corporate leaders, so they cannot remove the spirit, if the leaders with authority give it permission to remain.

Jezebel and Ahab represent collusion between religious and political leaders. If Christian leaders are in agreement with political authorities when a corporate stronghold is being established, it becomes very strong and difficult to break. It can resist prayers "in the name of Jesus" because it claims to have been given its place of authority "in the name of Jesus".

If the religious and civic leaders of Christchurch agreed to renounce the stronghold that is controlling their city, it would lose its power. However, this is unlikely to happen. They will find this difficult as they would have to give up the use of manipulation, intimidation and control. Some leaders who have relied on these for a long time would find it hard to function without them.

Fortunately, God had another way that he can defeat the MIC stronghold. He can do it by bringing enmity between the political and religious leaders and breaking their agreement with each other. That is what happened in Israel.

Prophetic Failure

The spirit of Manipulation and Intimidation for Control (MIC) is hard to beat.

- Elijah was a powerful prophet, but Jezebel outlasted him. He challenged Ahab and Jezebel head-on but was forced to flee in fear (1 Kings 19:1-3). Jezebel remained in power and was still alive and influential when Elijah was taken up to heaven. Prophets must be careful about attacking a MIC spirit head-on, unless God has directed them.
- Elijah used a democratic process to overthrow the power of Baal. He stirred up a crowd to kill some of the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:40), but Jezebel remained in power because she had the backing of King Ahab and his sons. Democracy cannot defeat a corporate spiritual stronghold like the MIC spirit if it was established by political and religious leaders.

Slower but Better

When Elijah recovered, God gave him a strategy that would undermine and destroy the MIC Spirit without the need for head-on confrontation by prophets or people.

God used Miciah, a prophet in Judah, to release events that resulted in Ahab being killed (1 Kings 22).

When Elijah recovered in the cave, God told him to anoint three people, who would bring down Jezebel (1 Kings 19:15-16).

- God told Elijah to anoint Elisha as his successor. This ensured that God's word would continue to be spoken to Israel and the surrounding kings.
- God told Elijah to anoint Hazael to be King of Aram. He would attack Israel and weaken Ahab's family line.
- God told Elijah to anoint Jehu son of Nimshi to be king over Israel. He as a ruthless man without loyalty to Ahab. When he became king, he would destroy Jezebel, and Ahab's sons.

God's strategy took a long time to be fulfilled. About fifteen years went by before Jehu became King of Israel and killed Jezebel, Ahab's children and the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 9-10).

Political Defeat

Ahab represents political power Jezebel represents religious power. Her power was safe as long as she had the support of King Ahab and his sons. Elijah's prophetic activity broke that support by anointing a new generation of leaders in Israel. The young men surrounding Jehu were ruthless and arrogant. They trusted their own strength, so they did not care about the power of witchcraft. These haughty young men had lost respect for Jezebel, so they were glad to support Jehu in defeating Jezebel (2 Kings 9:12-13).

When Jehu approached Jezebel's palace, some eunuchs threw her over the wall and she died when she hit the ground. Her body was crushed by Jehu's chariots rushing past. The dogs licked some of her blood from the walls, as Elijah had prophesied (2 Kings 9:32-33). The eunuchs were political organisers within Israel. They switched their allegiance to Jehu because they could see that Jezebel was finished.

Jezebel had gained authority when King Ahab and the other leaders of the nation gave her authority. She lost her authority when the people with political power changed their allegiance. Jezebel's corporate stronghold in Israel was destroyed because her authority was gone. A staunch prophet people had confronted her head on, but had been unable to remove her. A small group of ruthless political leaders who refused to collude with her did it easily.

The power of the MIC spirit will be broken in Christchurch when God brings division between the political and religious leaders that have colluded together in the city. Fracturing their agreement will undermine and weaken the authority of the MIC spirit. This enmity might be prompted by Christian leaders speaking prophetically to the political powers in the city. However, it will not be effective until the political powers turn and attack the religious leaders in the way that Jehu and his friends attacked Jezebel. Division between political and religious leaders will significantly weaken the authority of the MIC spirit in Christchurch. The weakened corporate stronghold will then be defeated by bold and faithful prayer.

We might already be seeing this division emerging through the debate about the restoration of the cathedral that was seriously damaged by the Canterbury earthquake. The Bishop of Christchurch wanted to rebuild the cathedral in a modern style more useful for the activities of the church, but this decision produced a strong reaction. The opposition was led by two eunuch politicians. They went to court and forced the bishop to change her mind and agree to repair the cathedral, as demanded by the politicians. She has since resigned from her position.

This disagreement between a traditional church leader and retired politicians is probably the first step towards the breaking of the MIC spirit that dominates the city. If this is what God is doing, we can expect to see secular political leaders making further attacks on key Christian leaders. They should be prepared because the attacks could get quite nasty. The most serious attacks will come from the eunuchs, the bureaucrats who have no authority in their own right, except for their place in the bureaucracy and their skills in working it.

Ruthless Political Power

Jehu was ruthless in attacking the religious powers that dominated Israel. He tricked the prophets of Baal into believing that he was on their side. He announced.

Ahab served Baal a little; Jehu will serve him much. Now summon all the prophets of Baal, all his servants and all his priests. See that no one is missing, because I am going to hold a great sacrifice for Baal. Anyone who fails to come will no longer live (2 Kings 10:18-19).

Jehu was "acting deceptively in order to destroy the servants of Baal". When all the prophets of Baal had gathered in their temple, he got someone to check that none of the servants of the Lord were there (2 Kings 10:23). Then when an offering was made to Baal, Jehu ordered soldiers that he had stationed at the entrance to go in and kill them all. When the prophets were all dead, the soldiers burned the temple to the ground (2 Kings 10:24-27).

So Jehu destroyed Baal worship in Israel (2 Kings 10:28).

This is a warning that when secular political powers turn against the religious organisations controlled by a MIC spirit, they will be deceptive. They will pretend to be on the same side as the Christians to entrap them into speaking bluntly or acting unwisely, but will then use their words and actions against them. Once they have been entrapped, the political leaders will be ferocious in the attacks on them. The leaders of God's people will need wisdom during this season when dealing with political powers.

Underground Preparation

God has a strategy for dealing with the MIC stronghold over Christchurch, but it might take some time. While he is moving his strategy towards completion, he will continue to advance his kingdom by using underground tactics. He does not want his people to attack the MIC spirit head on, as the casualties would be too great. The MIC spirit is strongest at the centre of the city where political and religious power is focussed. This makes the city centre a dangerous place to be, so starting there would be a mistake. God's tactic is to will work on the edge of the city where the stronghold is not as powerful.

This tactic worked in Judah. Jehoshaphat had been a good king, but his son Jehoram married a daughter of Ahab (probably Athaliah). He walked in the ways of Ahab. He brought the evil of Jezebel to the kingdom of Judah (2 Kings 8:16-18).

After Jehu had killed Joram the son of Ahab, he also killed Ahaziah the king of Judah. When his mother Athaliah realised that he was dead, she tried to seize control of Judah, by organising for all the royal family to be killed. She ruled Judah for six years (2 Kings 11:1-3).

Athaliah was foiled by her niece Jehosheba. She was an outsider, but was ready to act. Jehosheba arranged for the baby son of the king to be hidden with his nurse in a room at the temple (house of Yahweh). No one of any importance knew he was there, but Jehoiada, the priest, trained the young boy in the ways of the Lord. When he was seven years old, Jehoiada presented Joash with a copy of the covenant and prepared to crown him king.

Jehoiada had organised to keep the new king safe in a very clever way. He did not trust the palace guards in Jerusalem, because he knew many of them would be loyal to Athaliah. The book of Chronicles explains that he chose five of the commanders of hundreds that guarded the palace and made a covenant with them to be loyal to the new king. He chose them because they knew how to organise small squads of soldiers. These leaders went to the Levites and households of Judah and identified people who would be loyal to God.

On the day when Joash would be crowned, this underground army was in Jerusalem and committed to the king. Jehoiada placed these five squads in strategic places to protect the temple from the palace powers. He gave them weapons from the temple.

The Levites are to station themselves around the king, each with weapon in hand. Stay close to the king wherever he goes (2 Chron 23:7).

Each group was led by one of the five commanders of hundreds. Once they were in place around the temple, Jehoiada brought out Joash and crowned him.

When Athaliah heard the disturbance in the temple, she called out "Treason, Treason!", but the soldiers guarding the boy king killed her. This brought the influence of Jezebel to an end. Joash kept the covenant and restored part of the temple. He was a good king, who reigned for forty years (2 Kings 11).

Jehosheba knew that she could not confront Athaliah head on, because her power was too strong. Instead, she worked underground to nurture and develop a new king who would love God. When the time was right, the new king was revealed, and God's authority was restored through the covenant.

Jehoiada knew that he could not confront the military forces guarding Athaliah, because they would be too strong. Instead, he sent some key leaders (apostles) to establish an invisible army and prepare them for the season when the crunch would come. These small squads of committed people were the key to the new king's success. God's underground tactics were effective.

Healing

While waiting for the MIC spirit to be defeated, God will continue to work out of sight and demonstrate his grace by healing unbelievers who live in the city. When God heals a person listening to the gospel, it is an act of grace, so the MIC spirit has no authority to obstruct the healing. The unbeliever is not under the authority of church leaders, so they are not bound by their commitments.

Sharing the gospel with people who do not know the Lord and seeing them healed is the most effective witness to Jesus. Healing prayer for unbelievers is a good way to undermine the stronghold that controls Christchurch. When Christians see people being healed, their faith will be strengthened.

The gift of healing is primarily for unbelievers. It is essential for confirming the power of the gospel. One reason that the modern gospel is so ineffective is that the gift of healing has been shut up in the church.

People with a gift of healing should focus on praying for the lost. Praying for Christians is often messy, because they often carry a lot of junk, and need to have faith. It also provokes the MIC spirit unnecessarily. Prayer for unbelievers will usually produce more quick fruit.

Invisible Army

To support his underground tactic, God is raising up an invisible army in Christchurch that will help win back the city for him (like Jehoiada's teams). They will gather in small groups on the edge of the city, where they will not be noticed, either by the church, or the spiritual powers of evil.

The MIC spirit is strongest at the centre of the city where political and religious power is focussed. This makes the city centre a dangerous place to be. Starting there would be a mistake.

These small groups of Christians will be totally committed to Jesus. They will be drawn together by love for him and bound together by a commitment to love each other. They will be able to support each other through the struggles and storms that come. They will stand together in Jesus while everything around them is shaken.

These followers of Jesus will have laid aside the things of the world that would encumber them. They will live simply on what God provides. They will share everything with each other and the people around them.

The anointing of the Holy Spirit will be upon them. As they follow his leading, he will release his gifts among them. They will be mighty warriors in prayer and be able to deal with anything that arises.

These people will be prepared for distress and equipped for victory.

When they share the gospel, they will pray for the sick. When people are healed, the power of the gospel will be confirmed, and the love of God manifested. Many will come to faith in Jesus.

As their numbers grow, the leaders will move out and start new groups. Lights will come on all over the place on the edge of the city. As the groups multiply, they will move towards the centre of the city. They will squeeze the MIC spirit from the outside, but because they are so many, they will be hard to attack. Because small groups are united by love, there will be no use of manipulation or control, so the MIC spirit will struggle to get a foothold against them.

Centreless City

When this invisible army is in place, the spiritual, political and business powers entwined together at the centre of the city will be swept away by an economic crisis. Those with authority will flee because they are scared of the responsibility. Power structures will collapse as their resources disappear.

God will build his kingdom from the edges, as the invisible army rises up. This will be the time for the frontal attack. Without political, religious and business powers to work through, the MIC spirit will be dramatically weakened. It will not be strong enough to resist the invisible army.

The people of God will move into the centre of the city in the power of the spirit. They will care for people who are struggling. The gospel will advance in the power of the Spirit. Many sick people will be healed.

God's Kingdom will come in Christchurch and will shine as a prophetic light to the nations. All the authority in this city will be submitted to Jesus and Christchurch will be filled with his glory. The Lord's presence will be so strong that his glory will be visible.