

## **Elder Vernon Johnson**

### **Numbers**

#### **Seven**

##### **Sending of the Dove**

It may seem a little strange to speak of Noah sending a dove out of the ark three times when writing about the association between the number seven and the subject of completions. However, Noah waited seven days between the first sending of the dove and the second sending of the dove. He again waited seven days between the second sending of the dove and the third sending of the dove.

God had sent the judgmental waters upon the earth and destroyed all in whose nostrils was the breath of life except for those that were in the ark with Noah. After the judgmental waters had been on the earth a long time, the occupants began to look for evidence that the judgment of God would soon be over. First Noah sent a raven out of the ark which returned not again. Then Noah sent a dove out of the ark, which returned to him having found no rest for the soles of her feet. Noah waited seven days and sent the dove again who returned with an olive leaf plucked off. Noah waited another seven days and sent the dove a third time and she returned not again unto the ark.

The dove is used to represent the church in three ages of time. The first age was the age of the law. Under the law, there was no rest, but a continual testimony of coming judgment for sin. However, to fulfill this age and to usher in the New Covenant age, the Lord Jesus Christ came to fulfill the law to a jot and a tittle. This he did and then presented himself a sacrifice unto God to redeem his people from their sins. Christ fulfilled or completed the law. There was nothing left to fulfill in the law. Christ had completely fulfilled it. He also ushered in the New Testament Church. The church bears witness that the judgment is past, just as the dove had an olive leaf plucked off.

Just as the dove went forth a third time from the ark, so the New Testament church waits for the day when Christ shall come again and we shall be translated into the glory world. At God's appointed time, the New Testament age will come to a completion and we and all the elect will be raised up and our vile bodies will be fashioned like the glorious body of Christ and we shall return this way no more, but we shall be forever with our Redeemer.

