

# **Crystallization-Study Outlines**

**Joshua  
Judges  
Ruth**

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## **CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES**

### **JOSHUA, JUDGES, RUTH**

#### **KEY STATEMENTS**

We need to know that the land of Canaan  
has a twofold significance in typology:  
on the positive side, Canaan typifies the all-inclusive Christ  
with His unsearchable riches,  
and on the negative side, Canaan signifies the heavenly part  
of the dark kingdom of Satan with its satanic forces.

In order for us to fully gain and possess Christ  
as the all-inclusive land for God's building,  
we must learn to be kept, to be ruled,  
to be governed, and to be guided  
by the direct, firsthand presence of the Lord;  
if we have the Lord's presence,  
we have wisdom, insight, foresight,  
and the inner knowledge concerning things;  
the Lord's presence is everything to us.

We need to be rescued from lawlessness  
and from being workers of lawlessness,  
do what is right in the eyes of God  
by obeying the principle of serving God,  
and conquer the satanic chaos in the old creation  
and carry out the divine economy for the new creation.

To be a normal Christian, to be one of today's overcomers,  
to answer the Lord's present calling,  
and to meet His present need in His recovery,  
we need to be today's Ruths to turn to God's economy,  
to enter into the land of Immanuel,  
and to marry ourselves to Christ  
that we may bring forth Christ  
to meet today's need of both God and men.

**The Hidden, Intrinsic Significance  
of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth**

1. In studying the histories and the prophecies of the Old Testament, we need the full scope, the full view, of the entire Scriptures concerning God's eternal economy for Christ and the church, which consummates in the New Jerusalem. This will render us not only a broader view but also the deeper intrinsic significance of God's purpose in presenting to us the histories and giving us the prophecies of the Old Testament. The scope, the center, and the intrinsic significance of all the histories and the prophecies of the Old Testament must be Christ and His Body, which will ultimately consummate in the New Jerusalem for God's eternal economy.
2. For God to accomplish such an eternal economy of His, He needed to create the heavens for the earth, and the earth for man (Zech. 12:1). God created man in His own image and according to His own likeness with a spirit for man to contact Him, receive Him, keep Him, and take Him as man's life and content. It was very sad that this man became fallen from God and from God's purpose for His economy. Then out of the fallen humankind God chose a man by the name of Abraham and his descendants, and He made them a particular people as His dear elect among all the nations (the Gentiles). It took God over four hundred years to produce, constitute, and form such an elect to replace the Adamic race for the fulfilling of His eternal economy. God brought such an elect of His through trials, sufferings, in both Egypt and the wilderness that they might be trained, disciplined, and qualified to coordinate with Him in taking His promised land for Christ on this earth and in providing the proper persons to bring forth Christ into the human race. To take possession of God's promised land for Christ and

to provide the proper persons to bring forth Christ into the human race are the two major points of the section of the history in the Old Testament in the three books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth. These two main points, to take the land for Christ and to provide the bonafide ancestors for Christ, are the spirit of the history from Joshua to Ruth. They are the hidden, intrinsic significance of this section of the Old Testament history. We have to have a clear vision concerning this. Otherwise, our crystallization-study on these three books will be in vain, just like the studies of so many historians, Bible students, and Scripture teachers, either Jewish or Christian.

3. If by the Lord's mercy we would see such a vision, this section of the history in the Old Testament will benefit us the same as the New Testament does. Such a vision will help us to see that the history of God's people on the earth is actually the history of the working God energizing among His chosen people in the Old Testament and even the history of the operating God energizing in His redeemed people and having them to energize together with Him for the accomplishment of His eternal economy concerning Christ and His increase, which will consummate in the New Jerusalem. I hope that through this training we all can see and realize that our living, our daily walk, our schooling, our job, and our business must be a part of God's history in His marvelous and excellent move on the earth today. To be a normal Christian, to be one of today's overcomers, to answer the Lord's present calling, and to meet the Lord's present need in His recovery, it is altogether not sufficient to just be a so-called good brother or good sister, attending the church meetings regularly, behaving rightly, and living a life that is somewhat perfect in the eyes of men. We need to be one with God in His history, moving and energizing in His loving overcomers, in

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life, in living, and in our entire doing today on this earth! We need to write God's today's history! We need to march on as one with the energizing God! In Him! With Him! By Him! And for Him! We need to be vital! Living! And Active! We need to be today's Joshuas and Calebs to take possession of the God-promised land for Christ that we may become His possession! We need to be today's Ruths to turn to God's economy, to enter into the land of Immanuel, and to marry ourselves to Christ that we may bring forth Christ to meet men's need today. This should be the intrinsic significance of these three books—Joshua, Judges, and Ruth. The issue of this training should be the gaining of the God-promised land for Christ and the bringing forth of the excellent Christ to meet today's need of both God and men.

## JOSHUA

### Message One

#### God's Charge, Promise, and Encouragement to Joshua

Scripture Reading: Josh. 1:1-9

#### I. Joshua is a type of Christ in the following aspects:

- A. The Greek equivalent of the Hebrew name *Joshua* is *Jesus* (Heb. 4:8; Acts 7:45), which means “Jehovah the Savior,” or “the salvation of Jehovah” (Matt. 1:21; Num. 13:16):
  1. Christ as our Leader is our real Joshua as the Captain of our salvation (Heb. 2:10; 4:8) to lead us into glory and into the rest of the God-promised land with Christ as our perfect peace and full satisfaction (2:10; 4:11; Deut. 12:9; Matt. 11:28-30).
  2. Joshua typifies Christ as grace replacing the law, signified by Moses (Josh. 1:2a; John 1:17); it was when Moses the lawgiver died that Joshua came in to bring the people into the good land (Josh. 1:1-4); he typifies the Lord Jesus as our Leader bringing us into the enjoyment of Himself as our rest, as the reality of the good land (Deut. 8:7-10; 12:9; Phil. 1:19; Eph. 3:8; Col. 1:12; 2:6-7; Heb. 4:8-9; Matt. 11:28-29).
- B. In the war against Amalek (Exo. 17:8-16), Amalek typifies the flesh as the totality of the fallen old man; Joshua typifies the present and practical Christ as the indwelling, fighting Spirit, the One who fights against the flesh and puts it to death (Rom. 8:9-13; Gal. 5:16-17, 24):
  1. The purpose of the flesh is to keep us from entering into the full enjoyment of the all-inclusive Christ as our good land.
  2. God's economy delivers us from the flesh to the Spirit so that we may participate in the blessing of the riches of the Triune God—Rom. 7:17—8:2; Gal. 3:14; Eph. 1:3-14.
- C. At the age of forty Joshua joined Caleb, as two of the twelve spies, as ones who had hearts full of faith by taking the word of God as their faith to care for God's interests for His people to possess the good land; only two overcomers among God's redeemed in the wilderness, Joshua and Caleb, received the prize of the good land—Num. 13:30; 14:6-9, 27-30; Rom. 10:17; Gal. 3:3, 5; Heb. 11:5-6; Phil. 3:13-14; cf. Acts 6:5:
  1. According to the record in Numbers 13 and 14, the people of Israel had an evil heart of unbelief; Joshua and Caleb exhorted and warned the people by saying, “Do not rebel against Jehovah” (v. 9); these words indicate that not to believe in the Lord is to rebel against Him—Num. 13:31-33; 14:1-3, 6-11; Deut. 1:26, 32.

Message One (continuation)

2. If we are going to fully possess Christ as the good land, we must ask the Lord to save us from having an evil heart of unbelief; to have such a hardened heart is to fall away, to turn away, from the living God—vv. 25-26, 28, 35-39; 9:23; Acts 6:5a; Heb. 3:7-13.
3. Our Christian walk is by faith, not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7); thus, we must continually look away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith (Heb. 12:1-2); our faith is not of ourselves but of Him who imparts Himself as the believing element into us that He may believe for us (Gal. 2:20; 2 Pet. 1:1).
4. We need to realize that for a Christian, unbelief is the greatest sin; if we grasp hold of God's Word and believe His Word, all will be well; when we live by our feelings and do not exercise our spirit of faith and turn our heart to the Lord in order to believe in the divine facts in God's Word, which is His covenant, His will, to us, we are rebelling against the Word of God, insulting God, and making Him a liar—Deut. 1:25-26; Heb. 3:12, 16-19; 4:2, 6; 11:1; Rom. 3:4.
5. We should not be threatened or frightened by the clouds of our convictions, feelings, and environments; we must live under the new covenant and not believe in any failure, weakness, darkness, or negative thing; we are the covenanted people, and we have a verse of promise to meet every situation—Gen. 9:8-17; Rev. 4:2-3; Lam. 3:22-23; Rom. 8:1; 2 Cor. 12:9; 2 Tim. 1:10; 2:1; Jude 24; 1 John 1:9; 1 Cor. 1:9.
6. Our spirit is the "bank account" of the resurrected, pneumatic Christ as the reality of all the bequests of the new covenant; by the law of the Spirit of life, all these bequests are dispensed into us and made real to us; because the church people are a people under the covenant, we can actually be called the church of the covenant—Isa. 42:6; 49:8; Rom. 8:2, 10, 6, 11, 16; Heb. 8:10; John 16:13.

**II. "No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you nor forsake you. Be strong and take courage, for you will cause this people to inherit the land which I swore to their fathers to give to them. Only be strong and very courageous, being certain to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you. Do not turn away from it to the right**



## JOSHUA

### Message One (continuation)

#### **or to the left, that you may have success wherever you go”— Josh. 1:5-7:**

- A. For Jehovah to tell Joshua that, as He was with Moses, He would be with Joshua was a great matter; at one point the Lord told Moses, “My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest” (Exo. 33:14); because Moses was a person very near to God’s heart and according to God’s heart, he had God’s presence to a full extent.
- B. In the New Testament the presence of Jesus is Emmanuel, meaning “God with us” (Matt. 1:23; 18:20; 28:20); Christ as the Spirit of reality, the life-giving Spirit, is Emmanuel, the presence of the Divine Trinity in our spirit (2 Tim. 4:22).
- C. We should continually exercise our spirit of faith to be strong and very courageous to enjoy the all-inclusive Christ, signified by the good land, as the pledge of our inheritance today, which is a sample of our full and eternal inheritance of the wonderful Christ in the next age and for eternity—2 Cor. 4:13; Eph. 1:14, 18; 2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5-6a.
- D. We should take the Lord as our strength and our courage to magnify Christ under any circumstances, which is to experience Him with the topmost enjoyment (Phil. 1:20; 4:11-13); we can always declare, “Jehovah is my light and my salvation; / Whom shall I fear? / Jehovah is the strength of my life; / Whom shall I dread?”—Psa. 27:1.
- E. Death once reigned over us (Rom. 5:14), and we were under its slavery, continually fearing death; since the Lord destroyed the devil and nullified death (Heb. 2:14-15; 2 Tim. 1:10), we now have no more fear of death and are released from its slavery.
- F. “Jehovah will not abandon His people, / Nor will He forsake His inheritance” (Psa. 94:14); “The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear. What shall man do to me?” (Heb. 13:6); “If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Rom. 8:31).
- G. We need to be those who fan into flame our God-given spirit, which is not a spirit of cowardice but of power and of love and of sobermindedness (2 Tim. 1:6-7); our feelings are altogether a lie; we should always believe and declare that we are strong, that we are full of love, and that we are very clear; then we can “be strong and take courage” (Josh. 1:6) to enter into and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ as the reality of the good land.

## Message One (continuation)

- H. We should not turn away “to the right or to the left” (v. 7) from the holy Word concerning the heavenly vision of God’s eternal economy, so that we may have success wherever we go by walking worthily of the Lord “to please Him in all things” (Col. 1:10); thus, before our translation we can obtain the testimony that we have been “well pleasing to God” by continually believing that God is and we are not (Heb. 11:5-6; Gen. 5:21-24).

**III. “This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall muse upon it day and night so that you may be certain to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous and then you will have success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and take courage; do not be afraid or dismayed. For Jehovah your God is with you wherever you go”—Josh. 1:8-9:**

- A. Joshua was to be occupied with God’s word and let the word occupy him (cf. Col. 3:16); by being occupied and filled with the word, he would have prosperity and success in taking the God-promised land.
- B. The key to Joshua’s carrying out all that is written in God’s Word and the key to his prosperity, success, strength, and courage in taking the God-promised land were for him to not let God’s word depart from his mouth by musing upon it day and night; the words *your mouth* show that musing was mainly practiced by speaking aloud:
1. The Hebrew word for *muse* is rich in meaning; it implies to worship, to converse with oneself, and to speak aloud; to muse on the word is to taste and enjoy it through careful considering—Psa. 119:15, 23, 48, 78, 97-100, 148, cf. vv. 9-11.
  2. Prayer, speaking to oneself, and praising the Lord may also be included in musing on the word; to muse on the word of God is to enjoy His word as His breath (2 Tim. 3:16) and thus to be infused with God, to breathe God in, and to receive spiritual nourishment.
  3. To muse upon the Word is to “chew the cud,” like a cow eating grass (Lev. 11:3); when we muse upon the word of God, we receive it with much consideration and reconsideration; just as a cow chews its cud, we may do this while we are pray-reading the word early in the morning so that we may receive nourishment by reconsidering what we receive from God’s word.

## JOSHUA

### Message One (continuation)

- C. The psalmist said, “I will muse upon Your precepts / And regard Your ways. / I will take delight in Your statutes; / I will not forget Your word”—Psa. 119:15-16:
1. When the psalmist mused upon God’s word, it became his delight, his gladness and joy (Jer. 15:16), and he would not forget God’s word; thus, it became a constant and eternal nourishment to him (Psa. 119:105, 130).
  2. By musing upon God’s word, we remember His word and are enlivened by it—“Remember the word to Your servant / In which You have made me hope. / This is my comfort in my affliction, / For Your word has enlivened me”—vv. 49-50.
- D. Musing upon the word is even richer, broader, and more inclusive than pray-reading, for it includes prayer, worship, enjoyment, conversation, bowing down, and even lifting up our hand to receive God’s word (v. 48); to lift up our hand unto the word of God is to indicate that we receive it warmly and gladly and that we say Amen to it (Neh. 8:5-6).
- E. When we touch the Lord’s word with our spirit in this way and remain in continual fellowship with Him, we should have a feeling of being bathed, warmed, refreshed, moistened, and supplied by the word in the Bible; the one thing, the best thing, we should do is to touch Him, worship Him, believe in Him, absorb Him, enjoy Him, pursue Him, and gain Him—Psa. 27:4; Phil. 3:8, 14.
- F. When we truly take time to muse upon God’s word, we are being infused with God to glow with God and to shine forth God (2 Cor. 3:15-18); this is why we sing, “Pray to fellowship with Jesus, / Bathing in His countenance; / Saturated with His beauty, / Radiate His excellence” (*Hymns*, #784, stanza 6).
- G. Because our Lord and our God has commanded us to enter into and enjoy Him as the reality of the all-inclusive good land, we should say Amen to His word to be strong, to take courage, and to not be afraid or dismayed, for Jehovah our God is with us wherever we go, as we disciple all the nations to make them the kingdom people until the end of this age, the time of His coming—Josh. 1:9; Matt. 28:20.

Message Two

**Possessing the Land of Canaan  
by Defeating the Satanic Forces**

Scripture Reading: Josh. 1:2, 6, 11; 5:13-15; 6:1

- I. In the Old Testament there is a typology, a set of types, and in the New Testament there is a complete fulfillment of that typology concerning God's economy—1 Cor. 10:3-4, 1, 11.**
- II. The book of Joshua is a book with profound types—1:13; 2:18; 3:3, 10-11; 5:12; 6:6.**
- III. The intrinsic significance of the book of Joshua is the taking of the land—1:2, 6; 5:12.**
- IV. In order to understand the significance of the Israelites entering Canaan and the warfare in Canaan, we need to know that Canaan has a twofold significance in typology—Col. 1:12; Eph. 1:3; 2:2; 6:12:**
  - A. On the positive side, Canaan, a land of riches, typifies the all-inclusive Christ with His unsearchable riches—Deut. 8:7-10; Col. 1:12; Eph. 3:8:
    1. The good land is the ultimate type of Christ found in the Scriptures—Deut. 8:7.
    2. The good land, the land of Canaan, is a type of the Christ who is all and in all and who is everything to us—Eph. 3:8.
    3. In the Bible the land is a figure, a symbol, of Christ—Gen. 1:9; 2 Pet. 3:5:
      - a. The land that came out of the death water on the third day in Genesis 1:9-10 and 13 is a type of the resurrected Christ who came out of death on the third day.
      - b. Many different kinds of life in Genesis 1:11-12 and 24-25 came out of the land; this signifies that Christ is the source of all kinds of life.
      - c. God's intention revealed in the Scriptures is that Christ should be our land—Deut. 8:7-10.
    4. Christ as the good land, the land that came out of the death water, is depicted by the land of Canaan—Gen. 1:9; Josh. 1:13.
  - B. On the negative side, Canaan signifies the aerial part, the heavenly part, of the dark kingdom of Satan, the heavenlies that are full of Satan's forces—Eph. 2:2; 6:12:
    1. Satan has his authority and his angels, who are his subordinates as principalities, powers, and rulers of the darkness of

Message Two (continuation)

this world; hence, he has his kingdom, the authority of darkness—Acts 26:18; Matt. 12:26; 25:41; Eph. 6:12; Col. 1:13.

2. Satan, the enemy of God, has been doing his utmost to hinder the people of God from enjoying the all-inclusive Christ as the good land; to this day, evil forces are veiling the all-inclusiveness of Christ from God's people—2:8, 18; 2 Cor. 4:3-4.
  3. The book of Ephesians indicates that in the heavenlies there are different layers—1:3; 2:2; 6:12:
    - a. Christ is in the highest layer, the third heaven, to be our everything as our good land—Deut. 8:7-10.
    - b. There is a lower layer of the heavenlies—the air, where Satan as the ruler of the authority of the air is frustrating the people on earth from contacting God and receiving Christ; this is typified by the Canaanites, who were frustrating Israel from entering into the good land—Eph. 2:2.
  4. The Canaanites typify the fallen angels, the rebellious angels who follow Satan, who have become the powers, rulers, and authorities in Satan's kingdom, the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies—Rev. 12:4, 7; Eph. 6:12.
- C. The two aspects of the significance of Canaan in typology are spoken of in Ephesians; in this sense, the book of Joshua in the Old Testament is comparable to Ephesians because both books are a record of "Canaan":
1. As soon as the children of Israel entered Canaan, they enjoyed the riches of Christ and engaged in warfare—Josh. 5:12; 6:1-21.
  2. Ephesians 3:8 speaks of the riches of Christ, and 1:3; 2:6; and 6:12 speak of the heavenlies; this indicates that in the church we should enjoy the riches of Christ and engage in spiritual warfare.
  3. Without the book of Joshua we cannot fully understand the spiritual warfare in Ephesians 6:10-20.

**V. If we would possess the good land for the fulfillment of God's purpose, we must engage in spiritual warfare to defeat the satanic forces—Josh. 6:21:**

- A. We need to realize the necessity of spiritual warfare—a warfare between the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God—Matt. 6:10; 7:21; 12:26, 28; Isa. 14:12-14.

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- B. When Israel was ready to take possession of the land of Canaan, the land was filled with demon-possessed people, idol worshippers, and the Nephilim—Num. 13:33.
- C. Because the Nephilim, a mixture of fallen angels and fallen man, dwelt in the land of Canaan, God commanded the children of Israel to take over this land and to destroy every living being there so that the human race could be cleared up—Deut. 7:1-2:
  - 1. According to the divine thought, the nations in the land of Canaan had to be exterminated because they were devilish and mingled with demons—v. 2; Josh. 11:21-22; 14:6-14.
  - 2. The Canaanites signify not only the fallen angels but also human beings who have joined themselves to the evil spirits, to the satanic power of darkness in the air—Num. 14:45.
- D. Israel's fighting against the inhabitants of the land portrays the invisible spiritual warfare that is taking place behind the visible scene on earth—Dan. 10:10-21; Eph. 6:10-20:
  - 1. It is crucial for us to see that behind the scene a spiritual struggle is taking place, a struggle not seen with human eyes.
  - 2. In addition to the war on earth, there is a war between God and the satanic forces in the air—2:2; 6:12.
- E. The fighting of the children of Israel against the Canaanites that they might possess and enjoy the good land typifies the spiritual warfare of the church as a whole, including all the members, against "the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies" (v. 12) that the saints may enjoy Christ as the all-inclusive land.
- F. Christ is our good land, and God wants us to gain Christ, but there is a layer of devilish, demonic forces between us and the good land; if we would take possession of the good land for our enjoyment, we must defeat these satanic forces—Col. 1:12-13; 2:15; Eph. 3:18; 6:11-12:
  - 1. There is an exceedingly real spiritual warfare in which we must engage; we must fight the battle to gain the all-inclusive Christ for the building up of the church as the Body of Christ, the new man, and the kingdom of God—vv. 10-12; 1 Tim. 6:12a; 2 Tim. 2:3-4; Col. 1:13, 18; 2:19; 3:10-11.
  - 2. If we would take possession of Christ for our enjoyment, we must be a corporate warrior, the church as the Body of Christ, fighting against and defeating the satanic forces so that we

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can gain more of Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ, setting up and spreading the kingdom of God so that Christ can come back to inherit the earth—Eph. 3:8; 4:16; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 11:15.

**VI. In order to engage in spiritual warfare, we need to see the vision that unveils Christ as the Captain of Jehovah's army—Josh. 5:13-14:**

- A. Whereas Joshua was the visible captain of Jehovah's army, Christ was the invisible Captain to fight against the seven tribes of Canaan for Israel—v. 14.
- B. Because of the vision of Christ as the Captain of Jehovah's army, Joshua needed to stand on the position of sanctification (holiness) all the time—v. 15:
  - 1. Holiness is the nature and quality of being holy—Rom. 1:2.
  - 2. Sanctification (to God) is the practical effect, the character in activity, and the consummate state produced by being sanctified—6:19, 22.

**VII. We need to know the vital factors that enabled the people of Israel to be victorious in their first warfare—Josh. 6:1-20:**

- A. The shutting up of Jericho, with no traffic coming in or going out, signifies that the powers of darkness, the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies, were bound—Matt. 12:29; Eph. 6:12.
- B. God's people did not need to do anything to destroy Jericho.
- C. They only needed to believe and trust in God, to listen to the instruction from the Captain of the army of Israel, and to exalt Christ by bearing the Ark—Josh. 6:3-11.
- D. The bearing of the Ark here by the priests shows that in the spiritual warfare the first thing we should do is exalt Christ, giving Him the first place, the preeminence, in all things—vv. 4, 7-11; Col. 1:18:
  - 1. When the people of Israel attacked Jericho, they did this under the commanding of Christ typified by the Ark—Josh. 5:14; 6:3-11.
  - 2. The Ark, a type of Christ, who was their Commander in chief, took the lead to attack the enemies—v. 4.
- E. To remain silent until the command was given to shout means to carry out the matter in the Lord's way without expressing any thought, opinion, or feeling—v. 10.

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Message Two (continuation)

- F. The victory over Jericho in Israel's first battle after crossing the Jordan was won not by Israel's fighting but by their blowing the trumpets and shouting, signifying the testifying and proclaiming of God with Christ (the Ark) through faith in God's word of instruction—vv. 2-5.

**VIII. A unique principle is that spiritual victory does not depend on warfare—it depends on praise—2 Chron. 20:20-22:**

- A. We need to learn to overcome Satan by our praise.
- B. A person who praises God transcends everything and overcomes continually by his praise; this is a principle, and this is a fact—Heb. 11:30, 33-34; 13:15.



Message Three

**Crossing the Jordan River  
and Being Prepared for Battle**

Scripture Reading: Josh. 3:1—4:24; 5:1-10

**I. Joshua 3:1—4:24 is a record of the people of Israel crossing the Jordan River:**

- A. When the people of Israel saw the Ark of the Covenant of their God and the Levitical priests bearing the Ark, they set out from their place and followed it—3:3, 6:
  - 1. The Ark was a type of Christ as the embodiment of the Triune God—Exo. 25:10-22.
  - 2. When the Ark of God went with the children of Israel, the Triune God went with them, taking the lead and thus being the first to step into the water—Josh. 3:8, 11.
  - 3. That the Ark was on the shoulders of the priests indicates that, in type, the priests who bore the Ark became one entity with the Triune God—v. 3:
    - a. They and God were one corporate person—a corporate God-man.
    - b. God walked in their walking, and they walked in God's walking.
- B. The Jordan River typifies the death and resurrection of Christ—Acts 2:23-24; 3:15:
  - 1. The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord crossed over before the people into the Jordan—Josh. 3:11.
  - 2. The Ark's entering into and coming out of the Jordan indicates Christ's death and resurrection—v. 15; 4:11.
- C. Israel's crossing of the river Jordan typifies not the believers' physical death but the believers' experience of the death of Christ, in which the old man is terminated and buried—Rom. 6:3-6; Gal. 2:20:
  - 1. According to typology, the Jordan River denotes the death of Christ into which the believers have been baptized—Rom. 6:3-4.
  - 2. The children of Israel passed through the death of Christ to bury their old man and become a new man in Christ—2 Cor. 5:17:
    - a. They were ready to enter into the good land, take the land as their possession, and engage in warfare against the Canaanites; however, in their old man they could not gain the victory.

Message Three (continuation)

- b. In type, they were buried in the death of Christ, and then they were resurrected in the resurrection of Christ to become a new man in Christ for the fighting of the spiritual warfare—Eph. 6:10-20.
  - c. We need to realize that our old man, our natural man, is not qualified to fight the spiritual warfare for the gaining of Christ; in Christ we are no longer the old man but a new man—4:22-24.
3. The believers' baptism into the death of Christ, as the crossing of the Jordan River, leads the believers into the resurrection of Christ—Rom. 6:3-6; Col. 2:12:
- a. In the aspect of burial, baptism is the termination of our old man.
  - b. In the aspect of resurrection, baptism is the germination of our spirit so that we may be made alive in Christ with the divine life—John 3:6, 15; Rom. 8:10.
  - c. In the realm of resurrection we enjoy Christ as the all-inclusive good land in which we walk and even are being rooted and built up for the accomplishment of the economy of God—6:4; Col. 2:7.
- D. Israel's crossing the Jordan and entering into the good land are related to Israel's possessing and enjoying the good land, which typifies the believers' practical experience of the riches of the blessings in Christ as revealed in the book of Ephesians—Josh. 4:1.
- E. Israel's entering into the good land after crossing the Jordan typifies the believers' experience of taking over the heavenlies, where Satan and his power of darkness are—Eph. 2:2; 6:12.
- II. Twelve stones were taken out of the Jordan, and another twelve stones were erected in the Jordan—Josh. 4:3-9:**
- A. The twelve stones taken from the Jordan signify the twelve tribes of the new Israel—vv. 3-7.
  - B. The stones' being raised up from the waters of the Jordan signifies resurrection from death—v. 7:
    - 1. These twelve stones were a sign, showing that the “resurrected” new Israel would be a testimony of the crossing of the death water—vv. 6-7, 21-24.
    - 2. This typifies the believers' experiencing with Christ the resurrection from death—Rom. 6:3-4.

Message Three (continuation)

- C. The other twelve stones erected in the middle of the Jordan signify the twelve tribes of Israel in their old life and in their old nature—Josh. 4:9:
    - 1. Joshua erected these twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan where the Ark was, signifying that the Lord wanted Israel in their old nature to remain under the death water of the Jordan.
    - 2. This typifies that the old man of the believers should remain in the death of Christ—Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 3:10.
  - D. The two sets of twelve stones signify that our old man has been buried and our resurrected new man is living and working with the Triune God as one; this corresponds with the revelation in Ephesians 2:1, 4-6, 15, and 10.
- III. The priests carrying the Ark of the Testimony stood firmly on dry ground at the bottom of the river Jordan until all the nation had completely crossed over the Jordan—Josh. 3:8, 13-15, 17; 4:10-11, 15-18:**
- A. The priests bearing the Ark were the first ones to go into the water and the last ones to come up out from the water; they waited at the bottom of the river for all of God's people to cross over—3:17; 4:15-16.
  - B. God put the priests in the place of death so that the Israelites would have a way to the land of life—v. 10:
    - 1. The bottom of the river is the position of death; it is not comfortable or attractive.
    - 2. To bear the Ark of the Testimony at the bottom of the river is a great suffering.
    - 3. The Lord is seeking for a group of people who, like the priests in Joshua 3 and 4, step into the water, that is, walk into death first—3:8, 17:
      - a. They are willing to be dealt with by the cross first, to stand in the place of death in order that the church will find the way of life—2 Cor. 4:10-12.
      - b. God must first put us in the place of death before others can receive life—John 2:19; 12:24; 1 Cor. 15:36.
  - C. Because the apostle Paul ministered life by dying, he could testify, saying, "So then death operates in us, but life in you"—2 Cor. 4:12:

Message Three (continuation)

1. The work of the apostles is the work of death operating in them so that life may operate in the believers—vv. 10-12.
2. The issue, the result, of the operation of death in us is wonderful—it is life in others—v. 12.
3. The real work of the new covenant ministry is not a matter of working; it is a matter of dying—v. 1; 3:8-9; 5:18.
4. In the Lord's recovery we need to die so that life may work in others; hence, our dying is our working—4:12.
5. "The Lord does not need you to accomplish a work for Him. He needs you to die. If you die, life will work in others. You will minister life to others by dying. Therefore, our work is to be put to death"—*Life-study of 2 Corinthians*, p. 295.

**IV. Although the Israelites had been disciplined, trained, and qualified, after crossing the Jordan they still needed further preparation before the attack—Josh. 5:1-10:**

- A. The crossing of the river Jordan was for war against the seven tribes in Canaan—4:12-13.
- B. As Joshua was participating in the miracle of crossing the Jordan, he was strengthened to take the lead to war against the demonic Canaanites—3:6-7, 10; 4:14.
- C. Jehovah charged Joshua to "circumcise again the children of Israel a second time"—5:2:
  1. The purpose of circumcision was to make God's chosen people a new people for the inheriting of God's promised land—cf. Gen. 17:7-12.
  2. The circumcising of the new Israel typifies the circumcision of Christ, by His death, applied to the believers in the putting off of the body of the flesh that they may inherit Christ in resurrection as the portion allotted to them by God—Col. 2:11-12; 1:12.
  3. Spiritual circumcision is a continuation of the burial in the death of Christ—Rom. 6:3-4:
    - a. Through the crossing of the river Jordan, the old Israel was buried and a new Israel came forth; this was an objective work done by God.
    - b. The children of Israel's being circumcised was their practical application of what God had done in the crossing of the river Jordan—Josh. 5:2-9.

## JOSHUA

### Message Three (continuation)

4. In the New Testament spiritual circumcision is the constant application of Christ's death to our flesh—Phil. 3:3; Col. 2:11:
  - a. Although in fact we have been baptized into the death of Christ and have been buried and raised with Him, in practicality we still must apply the circumcision of the cross to our flesh by the Spirit day by day—Rom. 8:13; Gal. 5:24.
  - b. This is the reality and practicality of remaining in the death and burial of Christ.
- D. The children of Israel camped in Gilgal and held the Passover on the plains of Jericho—Josh. 5:10:
  1. The Feast of the Passover was held to remember Jehovah's redeeming of Israel from the death-judgment on their first-born sons and also Jehovah's saving of Israel from Egypt and from the tyranny of Pharaoh—Exo. 12:3-7, 11-14; 14:13-30.
  2. The keeping of the Passover indicated that just as Jehovah had saved Israel from Pharaoh and Egypt, so He would destroy the tribes of Canaan and deliver Israel from them—Josh. 5:10.
  3. Israel's keeping of the Passover typifies the believers' keeping of the Lord's table to remember the Lord as their Redeemer and Savior—Matt. 26:26-28.

Message Four

**The Need for God's People to Seek the Lord's Direction  
and Have the Lord's Presence  
to Display His Victory for the Building Up of His Body  
and the Spreading of His Kingdom**

Scripture Reading: Matt. 1:5; Josh. 6:22-26; 7:1-6, 10-15, 20-21; 9:14

- I. When the two spies came to Jericho, Rahab (who was both a harlot and a Canaanite) contacted them and was willing to receive them, hide them, and deliver them by acts that issued out of her faith (Josh. 2:1b-7, 15-16, 22; James 2:25); she believed in the God of Israel and declared, "Jehovah your God, He is God in heaven above and upon earth beneath" (Josh. 2:11b):**
- A. Jehovah provided Rahab the harlot to Joshua for the gaining of the land; because of her faith in God, she "did not perish with those who were disobedient" (Heb. 11:31); she turned to Israel and their God, and she trusted in Him and His people (Josh. 2:12-13).
  - B. The sign for Rahab and her house to be saved was for her to hang a line of scarlet thread in the window of her house (vv. 18, 21); the scarlet thread tied in the window typifies an open confession of the redeeming blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:18-19); she believed that by this sign she and her household would be delivered.
  - C. Although Rahab was a condemned Canaanite and a prostitute in Jericho (Josh. 2:1), a place cursed by God for eternity (6:26), after she turned to God and to God's people (vv. 22-25; Heb. 11:30-31), she married Salmon (Matt. 1:5), the son of a leader of Judah, a leading tribe of Israel (1 Chron. 2:10-11), and probably one of the two spies; then she brought forth Boaz, a godly man, out of whom Christ came, and she became associated with Christ in His incarnation for the fulfillment of God's eternal economy (Matt. 1:5).
  - D. This shows that regardless of our background, if we turn to God and His people and are joined to the proper person among God's people (not in a physical sense but in a spiritual sense), we will bring forth proper fruit and participate in the enjoyment of the birthright of Christ—Exo. 24:13; 33:11; Num. 27:18; Deut. 34:9; Josh. 1:1; 2 Kings 2:2-15; Phil. 2:19-23; 1 Cor. 4:17.
- II. After the destruction of Jericho, Israel was defeated at Ai; at Jericho, according to God's economy, Joshua sent out spies, not for fighting but to gain Rahab; but at Ai, because Israel had lost the presence of the Lord (Josh. 7:12c), Joshua sent out spies for fighting (vv. 2-3):**

## JOSHUA

### Message Four (continuation)

- A. The report of the spies to Joshua concerning Ai indicates that Israel had set God aside; instead of asking God what they should do against Ai, they forgot God and cared only for themselves; at that time they were not one with God but acted on their own, without seeking the Lord's direction and without having the Lord's presence; Israel was separated from God because of their sin—vv. 1-5, 12c:
1. The secret of Israel's defeat at Ai was that they had lost God's presence and were no longer one with God; after this defeat Joshua learned the lesson of staying with the Lord before the Ark (v. 6); eventually, the Lord came in to speak to him and to tell him what to do (vv. 10-15).
  2. The spiritual lesson to be learned from this account is that we, the people of God, should always be one with our God, who is not only among us but also in us, making us men with God—God-men.
  3. As God-men, we should practice being one with the Lord, walking with Him, living with Him, and having our entire being with Him; this is the way to walk as a Christian, to fight as a child of God, and to build up the Body of Christ.
  4. If we have the Lord's presence, we have wisdom, insight, foresight, and the inner knowledge concerning things; the Lord's presence is everything to us—2 Cor. 2:10; 4:6-7; Gal. 5:25; Gen. 5:22-24; Heb. 11:5-6.
- B. If we would enter, possess, and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ as the reality of the good land, we must do so by the presence of the Lord; the Lord promised Moses, "My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest" (Exo. 33:14); God's presence is His way, the "map" that shows His people the way they should take:
1. In order for us to fully gain and possess Christ as the all-inclusive land for God's building, we must hold on to this principle: God's presence is the criterion for every matter; regardless of what we do, we must pay attention to whether or not we have God's presence; if we have God's presence, we have everything, but if we lose God's presence, we lose everything—Matt. 1:23; 2 Tim. 4:22; Gal. 6:18; Psa. 27:4, 8; 51:11; 2 Cor. 2:10; Ezek. 48:35.

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

Message Four (continuation)

2. The presence of the Lord, the smile of the Lord, is the governing principle; we must learn to be kept, to be ruled, to be governed, and to be guided, not by His secondhand presence but by the direct, firsthand presence of the Lord; His precious presence is the power for us to possess the all-inclusive Christ as the reality of the good land flowing with milk and honey—Exo. 3:8; 25:30; Deut. 26:9; Ezek. 20:6.
  3. “In my youth I was taught various ways to overcome, to be victorious, to be holy, and to be spiritual. However, not any of these ways worked. Eventually, through more than sixty-eight years of experience, I have found out that nothing works but the Lord’s presence. His being with us is everything”—*Life-study of Joshua*, p. 48.
- C. When the Israelites entered into the land of Canaan and gained the victory over Jericho, the first person to commit sin was Achan; the intrinsic, spiritual significance and divine view of Achan’s serious sin was his coveting a beautiful Babylonian garment (Shinar is the area that was later called Babylon) in his seeking to improve himself, to make himself look better for the sake of appearance—Josh. 7:21:
1. Ananias and Sapphira, who lied to the Holy Spirit, sinned in the same principle—this is the principle of Babylon, which is hypocrisy—Acts 5:1-11; Rev. 17:4, 6; Matt. 23:13-36:
    - a. They did not love the Lord very much, but they wanted to be looked upon as those who greatly loved the Lord; they were just pretending; God’s children need to be delivered from pretending before men.
    - b. They were not willing to offer everything cheerfully to God, but before man they acted as if they had offered all; whenever we put on a garment that does not match our actual condition, we are in the principle of Babylon—6:1-6; 15:7-8.
  2. Everything done in falsehood to receive glory from man is done in the principle of the harlot, not in the principle of the bride; false consecration and spirituality are sins, but true worship is in spirit and truthfulness; may God make us true men—Rev. 17:4-5; 19:7-9; Luke 12:1; 1 Cor. 2:9-10; 2 Cor. 2:10; 5:14-15; John 4:23-24.



Message Four (continuation)

3. “It is not how man sees that matters; for man looks on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looks on the heart” (1 Sam. 16:7); if we treasure up God’s word in our heart (Psa. 119:11) and allow Christ to make His home in our heart (Eph. 3:16-17), He will become the good treasure of our heart, and out of the abundance of our heart we can dispense Him as this wonderful, good treasure into others (Luke 6:44-45).

**III. After Israel dealt with their sin, the sin of Achan (Josh. 7:11-12, 20-21), they were victorious over Ai (8:1-35), but then there is a record of how the children of Israel were deceived by the Gibeonites (9:1-27):**

- A. The Gibeonites were Hivites (vv. 3, 7; 11:18-19)—one of the nations in the land of Canaan that had to be exterminated by Israel because they were devilish and mingled with demons (Deut. 7:2; 9:4-5; 18:9-14); the inhabitants of Gibeon deceived Israel with their craftiness (Josh. 9:3-14).
- B. Because they had heard of Israel’s defeating both Jericho and Ai, they wanted to make peace and a covenant with Israel so that Israel would let them live; they went out as though they were envoys and pretended to have come from afar; they went to Joshua at the camp of Gilgal and said to him and to the men of Israel, “From a faraway land we have come...We will be your servants; make then a covenant with us” (vv. 6, 11).
- C. Joshua 9:14 is a very powerful portion of the Scriptures that shows us why the children of Israel were deceived by the Gibeonites—“they did not ask for the counsel of Jehovah”; thus, Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them to let them live (v. 15):
  1. The children of Israel were deceived because they were like a wife who forgot her husband; the entire Bible is a divine romance, a record of how God courts His chosen people and eventually marries them (Gen. 2:21-24; S. S. 1:2-4; Isa. 54:5; 62:5; Jer. 2:2; 3:1, 14; 31:32; Ezek. 16:8; 23:5; Hosea 2:7, 19; Matt. 9:15; John 3:29; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-32; Rev. 19:7; 21:2, 9-10; 22:17a).
  2. The Bible shows us that we, as God’s elect, are His wife and that between Him and us there must be a marriage union of mutual love; the universe, therefore, is a wedding place, the place where the Husband, the processed and consummated

Message Four (continuation)

Triune God, is being joined in marriage to the redeemed, regenerated, sanctified, renewed, transformed, and glorified tripartite man; eventually, the Bible ends with the New Jerusalem as the ultimate consummation of God's elect in the new heaven and new earth, as the universal wife for eternity—21:9-10; 22:17a.

3. A wife should never leave her husband; rather, she should always rely upon him and be one with him; when the Gibeonites came to Israel, as the wife Israel should have gone to her Husband and checked with Him about what to do—Josh. 9:14.
4. As believers who love the Lord and aspire to be the constituents of His overcoming bride, we should consult God related to every problem that we encounter; we need to bring every matter to the Lord and to consider, examine, and determine things before Him and in fellowship with Him:
  - a. In this respect, every believer needs to be weak to the extent that he does not have his own ideas, make his own decisions, or take any action related to what he encounters without contacting the Lord and consulting with Him, allowing Him to make the decisions; this is the sweetest living of a Christian—2 Cor. 12:9-10.
  - b. We have no alternative but to fellowship with God in all things, discuss all things with Him, and allow Him to handle all things, speak in all things, and make every decision; it is glorious for a Christian to be dependent on another One—God—at every moment and in every matter—Phil. 4:6-7; Prov. 3:5-6; Jer. 17:7-8; 2 Cor. 1:8-9; Psa. 62:8; Psa. 102, title and v. 7.
5. If God leads you to take a way that you do not know, “this forces you to have hundreds and thousands of conversations with Him, resulting in a journey that is an everlasting memorial between you and Him”—*The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 7, p. 1144.
6. The result of Israel's not seeking the counsel of her Husband was that this independent and individualistic wife was deceived, and she had no protection, no safeguard; from this record in the Scriptures, we need to learn that, as the Lord's wife, we should co-live with Him, always relying on Him and being one with Him all the time; this is the intrinsic significance of Joshua 9.

Message Five

**The Produce of the Land of Canaan  
and  
the Intrinsic Significance  
of the Allotment of the Good Land**

Scripture Reading: Josh. 5:12; 13:1—22:34; Col. 1:12; Acts 26:18

**I. After the children of Israel entered the land of Canaan, the manna ceased; there was no longer manna, but they ate of the yield of the land of Canaan—Josh. 5:12:**

- A. The ceasing of the manna when the people began to eat the produce of the land indicates that the produce of the land was the continuation of the manna.
- B. The manna eaten by Israel in their wandering in the wilderness (Exo. 16) typifies Christ as the heavenly food given directly by God to His chosen people, which requires no labor on the part of the eaters.
- C. The rich produce of the promised land given by God to Israel in their fighting in Canaan typifies Christ as the consummated life supply given to the believers, which requires them to labor on Him—Deut. 8:7-10:
  - 1. As portrayed in the typology here, after possessing Christ as the land, we need to labor on Him to produce something of Him that will become our food, our life supply.
  - 2. As we eat Christ and enjoy Him as the produce of the good land, we are constituted with Him, being made the same as Christ in life, nature, and expression—John 6:57; Phil. 1:19-21a.
  - 3. Ultimately, our enjoying of Christ as our inheritance, our possession, will constitute us to be God's inheritance, God's treasure and possession—Eph. 1:11-14, 18b; cf. Exo. 19:5.
- D. In Egypt, the wilderness, and the good land, the people of Israel experienced three stages of eating:
  - 1. In Egypt the people of Israel ate the passover lamb—12:3, 8-9:
    - a. Just as the roasted flesh of the passover lamb was to be eaten for life supply, so we need to eat Christ for our life supply—vv. 8-10; John 6:53, 55-57:
      - 1) To solve the problem of the fall of man and to accomplish God's original intention, both life and redemption are needed.
      - 2) God's judicial redemption through the blood of Christ is the procedure to reach God's goal of dispensing Christ as life into us for our organic salvation—Rom. 5:10.

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

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- b. The children of Israel were to eat the passover lamb with its head, legs, and inward parts—Exo. 12:9:
  - 1) The head signifies wisdom, the legs signify activity and move, and the inward parts signify the inward parts of Christ's being, including His mind, emotion, will, and heart with all their functions.
  - 2) Eating the passover lamb with the head, legs, and inward parts signifies taking Christ in His entirety with His wisdom, His activity and move, and His inward parts—John 6:57; 1 Cor. 1:24; Rev. 14:4b; Phil. 1:8.
- 2. In the wilderness the people of Israel ate manna—Exo. 16:14-16, 31; Num. 11:7:
  - a. By giving His people manna to eat, God indicated that His intention was to change their constitution by changing their diet—Exo. 16:14-15:
    - 1) In name the children of Israel were not Egyptian, but in nature and in constitution they did not differ from the Egyptians in the least—v. 3.
    - 2) The Egyptian diet denotes all the things we desire to feed on in order to find satisfaction—Num. 11:4-6.
  - b. God wanted His redeemed people to forget the Egyptian diet and to partake of heavenly food—Deut. 8:3:
    - 1) The more manna we eat, the more we correspond to God, are identified with Him, and live and walk according to what He is.
    - 2) What helps us most in our daily living with the Lord is eating Christ as the heavenly food; by eating Christ, we become Christ; that is, Christ becomes our constituent—John 6:56-58.
- 3. In Canaan the people of Israel ate the produce of the good land—Josh. 5:11-12:
  - a. In the third stage of eating, they ate the rich supply of the good land, which constituted them further to be an overcoming people.
  - b. The good land was a land of wheat, barley, vines, fig trees, pomegranates, olive trees with oil, and honey, all of which typify the unsearchable riches of Christ—Deut. 8:8; Eph. 3:8.
  - c. By enjoying the riches of the good land, the people of Israel conquered the tribes in the land, established the kingdom

Message Five (continuation)

- of God, and built up the temple as God's dwelling place on earth—Josh. 5:11-12.
4. These three stages typify the three stages of the believers' enjoyment of Christ by eating Him—John 6:51-57; 1 Cor. 5:7-8; 10:3-4; Phil. 1:19:
    - a. By their eating in the first two stages, the believers are energized to leave the world and are constituted with Christ as the heavenly element—John 6:51-57; 1 Cor. 5:7-8; 10:3-4.
    - b. To reach the goal of God's economy, we need to progress until we enter into the highest stage of eating Christ as the rich produce of the good land so that we may overcome the spiritual enemies, be built up to be God's dwelling place, and establish God's kingdom on earth.
    - c. As we eat Christ as the produce of the good land, we are constituted with Him and are made the same as Christ in life, nature, and expression for the building up of the church as the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:16.

**II. The intrinsic significance of the allotment of the good land is that we, the possessors of the land, experience the one Christ in different ways—Josh. 13:1—22:34:**

- A. Within God's economy there is something called the allotment of the land—Col. 1:12.
- B. After Joshua took possession of the land, God commanded him to allot the land that had been possessed and even the land that had not yet been possessed, because in God's eyes all the land was for Israel—Josh. 13:6:
  1. In His wisdom, God did not allot the good land as a whole to all the children of Israel; rather, He allotted that land, that is, Christ, to the different tribes—v. 7.
  2. Because the tribes were different, God could not give the same land in the same way to every tribe.
  3. All the tribes were possessors of the land, but the tribes possessed particular portions of the land according to what they were—14:6-15; 18:1—19:27.
  4. The fulfillment of this type of the allotment of the land is among us today—Col. 1:12:
    - a. We all have the same Christ, but we experience Christ in different ways—1 Cor. 1:2.

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- b. The land (Christ) we possess is according to what we are—  
Rom. 12:3; Eph. 4:7.
- C. In Colossians 1:12 Paul employs the concept of the all-inclusive land, speaking of “the allotted portion of the saints”:
  - 1. The Greek word rendered “portion” can also be rendered “lot,” referring to an allotment.
  - 2. When Paul was writing the Epistle to the Colossians, he had in mind the picture of the allotting of the good land to the children of Israel; he used the word *portion* with the Old Testament record of the land as the background—Josh. 14:2:
    - a. In Colossians Christ is revealed as our portion, our lot—1:15-19; 2:6-15.
    - b. Just as the land of Canaan was everything to the children of Israel, so Christ, the reality of the type of the good land, is everything to us—1:12.
  - 3. Christ as the preeminent and all-inclusive One is the allotted portion of the saints—v. 12.
  - 4. The New Testament believers’ allotted portion is not a physical land; it is the all-inclusive Christ as the life-giving Spirit—2:6-7; Gal. 3:14:
    - a. The riches of the good land typify the unsearchable riches of Christ in different aspects as the bountiful supply to His believers in His Spirit—Deut. 8:7-10; Eph. 3:8; Phil. 1:19.
    - b. By enjoying the riches of the land, the believers in Christ are built up to be His Body as the house of God and the kingdom of God—Eph. 1:22-23; 2:21-22; 1 Tim. 3:15; Matt. 16:18-19; Rom. 14:17.
- D. In Acts 26:18 Paul refers to the all-inclusive Christ as our inheritance:
  - 1. As the result of having our eyes opened and of being transferred from the authority of Satan to God, we not only have the forgiveness of sins, but we also receive a divine inheritance.
  - 2. This inheritance is the Triune God Himself with all that He has, all that He has done, and all that He will do for His redeemed people; this Triune God is embodied in the all-inclusive Christ, who is the portion allotted to the saints as their inheritance—Col. 2:9.
  - 3. The good land truly is a type of the all-inclusive Christ, the embodiment of the processed and consummated Triune God, who has been given to us as our inheritance—1:12.

Message Six

**The Intrinsic Significance of the Book of Judges  
and  
the Apostasy of Israel in the Worshipping of God**

Scripture Reading: Judg. 1:1; 2:1; 17:1-5; 18:1, 30-31;  
2 Thes. 2:2-3; 2 Pet. 1:3-21; 2:1, 15

**I. We need to know the intrinsic significance of the book of Judges:**

- A. Israel's inquiring of Jehovah in Judges 1:1-20 describes the beautiful scene of Israel's trusting in God; this marvelous picture of oneness with the Lord, prefiguring the organic union of God with His people, is a continuation of the oneness in the book of Joshua when the people of Israel first entered into the good land as described in Joshua 6—Num. 27:21; 1 Sam. 22:10; 23:9-10; 2 Sam. 2:1.
- B. According to the full scope of the Old Testament, at Mount Sinai God married Israel—Exo. 20:6, footnote 2:
  - 1. In His concept and desire, God wanted to be a Husband to Israel, and He wanted Israel to be a wife to Him, living in the most intimate contact with Him in this marvelous marriage union.
  - 2. In writing the books of history, Samuel put Judges after Joshua to show us the kind of life Israel lived toward her Husband.
  - 3. As unveiled in Judges, Israel did not have a heart to be the wife of Jehovah; rather, she forsook God as her Husband and went about as a harlot after other gods and worshipped them—2:11-13, 17; 3:7; 8:33; 10:6; cf. Jer. 11:13; Ezek. 16:25-26; Hosea 1:2; 2:2.
- C. After the account of Judah and Caleb in Judges 1:1-20, Israel's history as recorded in this book is full of the rottenness and corruption of a harlot:
  - 1. Whereas Joshua is the book of Israel's history full of marvelous victories over the inhabitants of Canaan in the presence of Jehovah, Judges is the book of Israel's history full of miserable defeats under their enemies in the forsaking of Jehovah.
  - 2. This is the intrinsic significance of the book of Judges.
- D. The content of Judges consists of the children of Israel trusting in God, forsaking God, being defeated by their enemies, repenting to God in their misery, being delivered through the judges, and again becoming corrupted; this became a cycle repeated seven times in Judges—1:1-2; 2:11—3:11.

Message Six (continuation)

**II. Judges 2:1 speaks of the Angel of Jehovah—5:23; Num. 22:22:**

- A. The Angel of Jehovah is God Himself in His Divine Trinity serving His elect as a Servant—cf. Heb. 1:14.
- B. The embodiment of the Triune God is Christ, and Christ is the Angel of Jehovah, who took care of Israel as Jehovah in action in the Old Testament—Exo. 3:2, footnote 1.
- C. For Christ to be the Angel of Jehovah means that God has appointed and commissioned Himself in His Divine Trinity to act in caring for His people.
- D. Because Israel did not act as a proper wife, the very Jehovah who was the Husband, the Head, and the King of Israel became a Servant to His wife:
  - 1. Jehovah came to her not as a Husband, Head, or King but as the Angel of Jehovah, who was sent by Jehovah—Zech. 2:9-11.
  - 2. Since Israel did not regard Jehovah as the Head, He became a Servant to serve her; His word to Israel in Judges 2:1-3 was not a rebuke or a command but the admonition of a servant.

**III. Judges 17 and 18 reveal the apostasy of Israel in the worshiping of God:**

- A. Apostasy means to leave the way of God and to take another way to follow things other than God, and it is to do things for the self under the name of Jesus Christ and under the cloak of worshipping God—Acts 9:2; 18:26; 2 Pet. 2:2, 15, 21; Jude 11; Judg. 18:30-31.
- B. “The man Micah had a house of gods; and he made an ephod and teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons to become his priest”—17:5:
  - 1. The house of Micah as a house of gods, with its idols (as replacements of Christ), its ephod (representing the authority of God), and its hired priest (representing the clergy-laity system, vv. 7-13), portrays the apostate situation related to the worship of God among Christians today.
  - 2. Micah’s mother offered something to God, but her offering was mixed with the leaven of idolatry (vv. 1-4); the same mixture and apostate situation exists in Christianity.
  - 3. We may apply the picture of Micah’s “house of gods” (v. 5) to the situation of Christianity.



## JUDGES

### Message Six (continuation)

4. Today's Christianity has many "houses of Micah"; the Roman Catholic Church, the state churches, the denominations, and many of the independent groups are "houses of Micah," full of idols as replacements of Christ.
- C. "The children of Dan erected for themselves the sculptured idol," and they "set up the sculptured idol that Micah had made the whole time that the house of God was in Shiloh"—18:30-31:
  1. The apostasy with Dan was the setting up of a divisive center of worship—17:9-10; 18:27-31; 1 Kings 12:26-31.
  2. Dan fought as a young lion to gain more land (signifying Christ), but after being successful and victorious, he became proud, individualistic, and independent—Deut. 33:22; Josh. 19:47; Judg. 18:27-31.
  3. What the Danites gained made them proud and independent, unwilling to submit to what the Lord had ordained—vv. 1-31; Deut. 12:5, 8:
    - a. Because Dan was successful, he became proud and individualistic; he cared only for himself, not for others—33:22; Judg. 18:27-31.
    - b. The source of Dan's apostasy was in not caring for the other tribes; not caring for other parts of the Body is the source of apostasy.
  4. Nothing throughout the history of Israel was more sinful or more damaging to God's people than Dan's apostasy in setting up a divisive center of worship—Gen. 49:16-18; Deut. 33:22; Judg. 18:1, 30-31.
  5. Every divisive center is set up for someone's self-interest; such a practice causes not only division but also competition—vv. 1, 13-31; Gen. 49:16-18; Deut. 33:22:
    - a. The tabernacle was in Shiloh, and the graven image was in Dan—Josh. 18:1.
    - b. "They set up the sculptured idol...the whole time that the house of God was in Shiloh"—Judg. 18:31; 1 Sam. 1:3.
  6. In the history of Christianity there have been many "Dans," who were not willing to submit to others but set up another center of worship—Judg. 18:1, 13-31.
  7. The best way to be safeguarded from falling into apostasy is to care for the entire Body and the Lord's unique testimony in the Lord's one work—1 Cor. 10:17; 12:12, 27.

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

Message Six (continuation)

- D. There is a strong prophecy in the Bible that before the Lord's coming back there will be a great apostasy among His people—2 Thes. 2:3:
  - 1. The day of the Lord's coming will not come unless the apostasy comes first—vv. 2-3.
  - 2. This apostasy will be a falling away from the straight way of God's economy as revealed in the Scriptures—1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 1:10; 3:9.
  - 3. Even today there is a tendency among some Christians to leave the straight way of the New Testament—2 Pet. 2:15.
- E. The background and burden of 2 Peter is apostasy—a deviation from the right track of God's truth—2:1:
  - 1. The apostasy distracted the believers from the economy of God by leading them into the human logic of puzzling philosophies—Col. 2:8.
  - 2. The teachings of the apostates did not lead the believers to partake of the tree of life, which gives life, but to participate in the tree of knowledge, which brings in death—Gen. 2:9, 16-17; 2 Cor. 11:2-3, 12-15.
  - 3. The antidotes used by Peter in dealing with apostasy are the provision of life and the revelation of truth—2 Pet. 1:3-21:
    - a. In verses 3 through 11 Peter used the provision of the divine life for the proper Christian life to inoculate against the apostasy.
    - b. In verses 12 through 21 he used the revelation of the divine truth to inoculate against the heresy in the apostasy—2:1, footnote 3.
  - 4. Because today's Christianity is filled with apostasy, the Lord needs a recovery—the recovery of life and truth—John 1:4; 8:12; 10:10b; 14:6; Rev. 2:4, 15.
- F. Today, in a time of apostasy, we need to testify the full revelation of the pure Word of God and to fight for the deeper truths revealed in the Word of God, including:
  - 1. The revelation concerning the eternal economy of God—Eph. 1:10; 3:9.
  - 2. The revelation concerning the Divine Trinity—2 Cor. 13:14; Rev. 1:4-5.
  - 3. The revelation concerning the person and work of the all-inclusive Christ—Col. 2:9, 16-17; 3:11.

## JUDGES

### Message Six (continuation)

4. The revelation concerning the consummated life-giving Spirit—John 7:39; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rev. 22:17.
5. The revelation concerning the eternal life of God—John 3:15-16.
6. The revelation concerning the Body of Christ, which is the church of God—Eph. 1:22-23; 1 Cor. 12:12-13, 27; 10:32.

Message Seven

**God's Raising Up of Deborah as a Judge of Israel  
and as a Mother in Israel  
Who Practiced the Female Submission to the Man  
in Order to Keep God's Ordination  
and Bring All of Israel into a Proper Order  
under God's Kingship and Headship**

Scripture Reading: Judg. 4—5

- I. The book of Judges shows that Israel had offended God by rejecting Him as their King; it is a great wickedness, a great evil, in the sight of God if we reject Him as our King, our Lord, our Head, and our Husband—1 Sam. 8:7; 12:17, 19; Judg. 21:25; 17:6; Luke 19:11-14; Jer. 11:13; Ezek. 16:24:**
- A. We should continually take, experience, and enjoy Christ as our King, our Lord, our Head, and our Husband so that He can be our blessing to make us a channel of blessing to the saints and all the churches—Matt. 2:2; John 1:49; Heb. 7:2; Isa. 32:1-2; 33:22; Phil. 2:9-11; Rom. 14:6-9; 2 Cor. 4:5; Col. 2:19; Eph. 1:22-23; 2 Cor. 11:2-3; Hosea 2:19-20; Num. 6:23-27; Psa. 128:5; 48:2.
  - B. Matthew 1:1 speaks of Christ as “the son of David, the son of Abraham”:
    - 1. Because we are rebels, we need to repent and receive Christ as the son of David, that is, as our authority, as our Sovereign and King, so that He may rule in us and over us in God's kingdom.
    - 2. If we have Christ as the son of David, the greater Solomon, we will also have Him as the son of Abraham, the real Isaac; this means that the more we take Christ as our King (the son of David), the more we are under His ruling, and the more we are under His ruling, the more we enjoy Him as our blessing (the son of Abraham); this is the blessing of the processed Triune God consummated as the all-inclusive Spirit—v. 1; Gal. 3:14, 16, 29.
    - 3. This will cause us to become channels of blessing for the saints' progress (their growth in life) and for their joy of the faith (their enjoyment of Christ); we have been called to bless others, so we, as a blessed people, should always bless others that we may inherit blessing—Phil. 1:25; 1 Pet. 3:9.
- II. God raised up Deborah as a judge of Israel who practiced the female submission to the man in order to keep God's ordination and bring all of Israel into a proper order under God's kingship and headship—Judg. 4—5:**

## JUDGES

### Message Seven (continuation)

- A. The children of Israel again did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah after Ehud died (4:1), so Jehovah sold Israel into the hand of Jabin the king of Canaan, the captain of whose army was Sisera; he had nine hundred iron chariots, and he oppressed Israel severely for twenty years—vv. 2, 3b.
- B. At the time of Judges 4, the men of Israel had failed in their God-ordained function of leadership; this forced God to do something extraordinary and unusual in raising up a female, Deborah, as a judge of Israel; the raising up of such a female changed the entire condition of Israel—vv. 4-5.
- C. The children of Israel cried out to Jehovah (v. 3a), and Deborah, a prophetess, was raised up as a judge of Israel; she would sit under the palm of Deborah, and the children of Israel went up to her for judgment (vv. 4-5).
- D. In the Bible a proper female indicates one who is in submission to God, one who keeps God's ordination; this is the position that Israel should have taken before God as her King, her Lord, her Head, and her Husband, but Israel violated God's ordination, leaving her position as God's wife and forsaking Him for hundreds of idols; this brought Israel into a miserable situation and condition:
  - 1. Samson was a Nazarite from his mother's womb for the full course of his life; the Nazarite was to let his hair grow long, signifying that he was to remain in subjection to the Lord's headship, wherein is power—Num. 6:5; Judg. 16:17; 1 Cor. 11:3-6, 10, 15.
  - 2. But Delilah pressed him with her words every day and urged him to tell her the secret of his power until "his soul was tired to death" (Judg. 16:16); because of Satan's wearing-out tactics, Samson fell into Satan's snare, his hair was shaved by Delilah, and he was captured by the Philistines, losing his Nazarite consecration, his power, his testimony of sanctification, and God's presence (Dan. 7:25).
  - 3. Those who accept the different and wrong teaching that the believers should not submit to deputy authorities appointed by God will be spoiled by this teaching; with us (especially with the married sisters—Eph. 5:22-24), there should be a submissive spirit, standing, atmosphere, and intention; if you are such a person, there will be a great blessing for you and for your future.

## Message Seven (continuation)

- E. By reading Deborah's song in Judges 5, we can see that she was full of ability, capacity, insight, and foresight, but such an excellent and capable person was very submissive; God made her the leader, yet she kept the proper order and took Barak as her covering—4:6-9; cf. 1 Cor. 11:3-6, 10.
- F. Deborah realized that she needed a man to be her covering; as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 11:3: "Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of the woman, and God is the head of Christ."
- G. When this excellent, extraordinary woman took the lead to practice the female submission to the man, the entire country came into an excellent and proper order; all the leaders took the lead, all the people followed, and the army was formed; everyone returned to his or her proper position before Jehovah.
- H. Thus, Deborah could say in her song, "That the leaders took the lead in Israel, / That the people have willingly offered themselves, / Bless Jehovah... / Then a remnant of the nobles went down; / The people of Jehovah went down with me against the mighty"—Judg. 5:2, 13.
- I. The first and greatest function of the sisters in the church is to be submissive; if the sisters can learn this lesson, the church will be strong, enriched, and renewed:
  1. To be submissive requires the supply of life, the enjoyment of grace, the working of the cross, and the denial of the self.
  2. Those who are filled with Christ are filled with submission; the Lord, who was submissive throughout His life, has given us His life of submission and obedience—Phil. 2:5-11; Heb. 5:7-9.
  3. For a sister to marry a brother means that she is willing to offer herself up and say, "I am willing to submit"; if a sister has never intended in her heart to submit to the one whom she intends to marry, she should not be his wife and should not marry him—Eph. 5:22-23; 1 Pet. 3:1-6.

### **III. Deborah rose up not only as a judge of Israel but also as a mother in Israel—Judg. 5:7:**

- A. When the church life in practicality reaches a peak, there should be some real mothers in every church; in Romans 16:13 Paul says, "Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother as well as mine":

## JUDGES

### Message Seven (continuation)

1. The apostle Paul needed a mother; without a sister as a mother to take care of them, all of those who bear the burden for the Lord's service would be sorrowful; we all need the care of spiritual mothers, whose care is our real nourishment and our real protection.
  2. Paul's having a spiritual mother indicates that the saints in the church life in Rome had a life transfer through the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ; the best way to have a life transfer is by following the pattern of Paul, who did not determine to know anything but the all-inclusive Christ, and this One crucified—1 Cor. 2:2.
- B. The Gospel of John is a book on life, not on the natural life but on the transferred and transformed life; originally, John was not Mary's son, and Mary was not John's mother, but by Christ's life-releasing death, by His life-dispensing resurrection, and by His life union with them, His beloved disciple could be one with Him and become the son of His mother, and she could become the mother of His beloved disciple—19:26-27.
- C. Our first relationship is in the flesh, but the second is in the spirit, that is, in the transferred life; because we have the second birth (3:6), surely we have the second relationship, the second family relationship with the real sisters and the real mothers.
- D. If the sisters exercise their spirit of prayer and faith to be real mothers (2 Cor. 4:13), they will realize how selfish they are and how much they are in themselves; having good children in the spirit will expose them to the uttermost; furthermore, the sisters will grow and mature in life by taking care of some spiritual children.
- E. If the sisters love the Lord and mean business to be for the church life in the Lord's recovery, they need to consider themselves as serving nurses, as church nurses, who give nursing care in the church as a true hospital; all the sisters need to be serving sisters by prayer and loving mothers by the most excellent way of love in order to help the needy ones and the younger ones in their spiritual life and church life; this is the best way to receive the blessing, the growth, the spirituality, and the real enjoyment of the Lord—Rom. 16:1-2, 13; Isa. 66:12-13; 1 Cor. 12:31b; 13:4-7.
- IV. The Bible says that at that time among God's people, there were "great resolutions in heart," and there were "great searchings of heart"—Judg. 5:15-16:**

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

Message Seven (continuation)

- A. To have a great resolve is to make a firm decision, and to have a great searching is to devise a plan to live to the Lord and to live out the Lord for His up-to-date recovery in the building up of His Body, the preparation of His bride, and the ushering in of His kingdom in its manifestation—2 Cor. 5:14-15; Rom. 14:7-9; Rev. 19:7-9.
- B. As Brother Lee was in the process of being oppressed by the Japanese military police in 1943, the Lord gave him a dream in which he saw the day dawn, like the dawning in the morning, with a broad highway, very bright, very straight, and stretching on boundlessly; this is the broad highway, the rising sun, and the boundless future of the Lord's recovery—cf. Prov. 4:18.
- C. We need to aspire and pray to be like those whom Deborah describes at the end of her song, which concludes in a glorious way: "May those who love Him be like the sun / When it rises in its might"—Judg. 5:31:
  - 1. For the sun to rise in its might means that it shines brightly, brilliantly, and gloriously; if all the churches would experience the resolutions, the searchings, and the rising up to shine like the sun, they surely would enjoy the Lord as their victory.
  - 2. The overcomers who are reconstituted with the healing Christ as the Sun of righteousness will shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their Father—Mal. 4:2; Luke 1:78-79; Matt. 13:43.



Message Eight

**The Intrinsic Significance of Gideon  
as God's Valiant Warrior**

Scripture Reading: Judg. 6—9

- I. Gideon was raised up by God as His valiant warrior and sent by God to save Israel (Judg. 6:12-14; cf. John 8:29) from the oppression of the Midianites (Judg. 6:1—8:32); we must see the intrinsic significance of Gideon's success:**
- A. Gideon listened carefully to the word of God, something that was rare among the children of Israel at that time:
    - 1. The Lord always wants to open our ears to hear His voice so that we may see things according to His economy—Rev. 1:10, 12; Job 33:14-16; Isa. 50:4-5; Exo. 21:6.
    - 2. As the Spirit is speaking to the churches (Rev. 2:7a), we all need an opened, circumcised (Jer. 6:10; Acts 7:51), cleansed (Exo. 29:20; Lev. 8:23-24; 14:14), and anointed ear (vv. 17, 28) to hear the Spirit's speaking.
  - B. Gideon obeyed God's word and acted on it—cf. Heb. 11:32-33a:
    - 1. In the New Testament we have Christ's life of obedience and submission, and if we walk according to the spirit, we will spontaneously fulfill the righteous requirement of the law—Phil. 2:5-11; Rom. 8:4.
    - 2. If our attitude in coming to the law is to care only for the commandments in letters, we will have the law in the aspect of the killing letter; however, if we take every part of the law as the word breathed out by the God whom we love, we will have the law in the aspect of the life-giving Spirit; then the law will function to dispense God Himself as life into us as His loving seekers—Psa. 119:25, 116, 130; 2 Cor. 3:6; 2 Tim. 3:16-17.
    - 3. To be vital is to be living and active by being filled with the Spirit inwardly and outwardly and by preaching the gospel and teaching the truths at any time and in any place by diving into the Word for the increase and propagation of the Lord—Dan. 11:32b; Acts 13:52; 4:8, 31; 13:9; 2:38; 5:32b; 2 Tim. 4:1-2.
  - C. Gideon tore down the altar of Baal (the chief male god of the Canaanites) and cut down the Asherah (the chief female goddess); this touched God's heart because God hated the idols, which He regarded as men with whom His wife Israel had committed harlotry; intrinsically, an idol is anything within us that we love more than the Lord and that replaces the Lord in our life—Judg. 6:25-28; Ezek. 14:1-3.

## Message Eight (continuation)

- D. By tearing down the altar of Baal and cutting down the Asherah that belonged to his father, Gideon sacrificed his relationship with his father and his enjoyment of society to follow Jehovah; for Gideon to do such a thing required that he sacrifice his own interests, and his sacrifice was a strong factor of his success—Judg. 6:28-32.
- E. As a result of the above four factors, Gideon received a reward—the economical Spirit came upon him (v. 34); hence, he became powerful and with only three hundred men defeated two princes and two kings, who had people “like a locust swarm in number” and “camels...without number” (v. 5; 7:25; 8:10-12); with Gideon we have a picture of a man who lived in union with God, a God-man, to fulfill God’s word and to carry out God’s economy.
- II. The selection of the overcomers is seen with God’s selection of Gideon and the three hundred men to fight with him to defeat the Midianites—6:1-6, 11-35; 7:1-8, 19-25; 8:1-4:**
- A. The account of Gideon shows us how to be an overcomer:
1. We must know the self, realizing ourselves to be the least—6:15; Eph. 3:8; Matt. 20:27-28; Gal. 6:3.
  2. We must see the heavenly vision of Christ as the centrality and universality of God’s eternal economy—Judg. 6:12; Acts 26:16-22; Col. 1:17b, 18b; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; Phil. 3:8, 10.
  3. We must offer up ourselves to God as a living sacrifice according to His good, well-pleasing, and perfect will to have the reality and living of the Body of Christ (Rom. 12:1-5; cf. Judg. 6:21-24); we must be those who hear and answer the Lord’s call in Revelation 2 and 3 for the overcomers—2:7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 20-21; *Hymns*, #894.
  4. We must tear down the idols in our heart, in our life, and in our work for the Lord’s testimony, realizing that on the one hand, God leads us into the enjoyment of Christ as life, light, and power, and on the other hand, God is faithful to allow us to have financial difficulties, emotional sufferings, physical sufferings, and the loss of natural goodness in order that we would take Christ as our satisfaction, be filled with Christ, and allow Him to have the first place in all things—Judg. 6:25-28; John 10:10; 8:12; 2 Tim. 2:1; Col. 1:17b, 18b; 1 John 5:21; Job 22:24-26; Matt. 10:35-39; 2 Cor. 12:7-9; Job 1:1, 22; 2:9-10; 3:1, 11; 2 Cor. 4:5; 1 Cor. 2:2.

## JUDGES

### Message Eight (continuation)

- B. How the overcomers are selected is seen with the selection of the three hundred; by telling Gideon that he had too many people, God was indicating that He would fight for Israel; the first selection resulted in twenty-two thousand leaving:
1. Those who left wanted to glorify themselves—Judg. 7:1-2; John 5:41, 44.
  2. Those who left were fearful and afraid—Judg. 7:3; Matt. 25:25; cf. Deut. 20:5-8.
- C. The second selection was determined by how the people drank; those who drank directly with their mouth were eliminated by God; those who drank by bringing water in their hand to their mouth were selected by God because they were self-denying persons; by drinking in this way, they were able to watch diligently for any attack by the enemy—Judg. 7:4-6:
1. Those who have the chance to indulge themselves but will not do so are self-denying persons who have been dealt with by the cross, sacrificing their personal rest and comfort for the sake of God's purpose in the day of His warfare—v. 7; Psa. 110:3.
  2. The overcomers are absolute for God's glory and are afraid of nothing except offending the Lord and losing His presence (Exo. 33:14-16); they allow the cross to deal with the self (1 John 3:8; Heb. 2:14; Rom. 6:23; Gal. 2:20).
- D. God gave Gideon three hundred men and made them one body, signified by a "round loaf of barley bread" tumbling through the camp of the Midianites for their defeat and God's victory—Judg. 7:9-25:
1. Gideon and his men moved and acted together in one accord as one man, signifying the oneness in the Spirit and the living in the Body; they were blended together in resurrection, signified by barley, the first-ripe grain (6:16; 2 Sam. 21:9; Lev. 23:10; 1 Cor. 15:20), to be one bread, signifying the church (10:17).
  2. Paul's thought of the church being one bread was taken from the Old Testament with the meal offering (Lev. 2:4-5); we are the many grains (John 12:24) so that we may be ground into fine flour mingled with oil for making the cake, the bread, of the church (1 Cor. 12:24-25).

## Message Eight (continuation)

3. All the co-workers and elders should shepherd one another and love one another to be a model of the Body life, a model of those who are learning to be tempered, blended, and crossed out in order to do everything by the Spirit to dispense Christ into one another for the practical Body life—Rom. 12:1-5; cf. 2 Chron. 1:10.
- E. Gideon and his three hundred men fought the battle and labored, yet the whole congregation chased the enemy and reaped the harvest, signifying that when we overcome, the whole Body is revived until Jehovah as peace, Jehovah-shalom (Judg. 6:24), reigns on the earth—7:22-25; 8:1-4; Col. 1:24; Psa. 128:5; Isa. 32:17; 66:12.
- F. As Gideon and his men were pursuing the kings of Midian, they were “weary yet pursuing” (Judg. 8:4b); because we have received God’s mercy to minister and live in the reality of God’s eternal economy, we do not lose heart (2 Cor. 4:1, 16-18); we may labor to the point of exhaustion, but our labor is according to God’s operation, which operates in us in power (Col. 1:28-29; 1 Cor. 15:58).

**III. We must see the intrinsic significance of the secret of Gideon’s failure:**

- A. First, Gideon was not kind; he killed those countrymen who did not support him (Judg. 8:16-17), breaking the sixth commandment of God (Exo. 20:13); Christ as the kindness of God led us to repentance (Rom. 2:4; Titus 3:4; Eph. 2:7).
- B. Second, he indulged in the lust of the flesh (cf. Gal. 5:16; Rom. 8:4), not exercising any restriction over his fleshly lust; this is indicated by Judges 8:30, which tells us that Gideon had seventy sons, “for he had many wives”; in addition, his concubine who was in Shechem also bore him a son (v. 31); by this Gideon broke the seventh commandment (Exo. 20:14).
- C. Third, although Gideon did a good thing in refusing to rule over the people (Judg. 8:22-23), he coveted the spoil of his people (their golden earrings), thereby breaking the tenth commandment, and they surrendered it to him; Gideon made an ephod with the gold he had taken from the people, and this ephod became an idol to the children of Israel (vv. 24-27; Exo. 32:1-4 and footnote 1 on v. 2); as a result, Gideon’s family and the entire society of Israel were corrupted.

Message Eight (continuation)

- D. Judges is a book concerning the enjoyment of the good land, which is a type of Christ; Gideon's success indicates the gaining of an excellent opportunity to enjoy Christ, but his failure indicates the losing of the opportunity to enjoy Christ.

**IV. Gideon's indulgence in sex and his greediness for gold led to idolatry; greediness is idolatry (Col. 3:5), and both fornication and greediness are linked to idol worship (Eph. 5:5); his failure shows us that we need to exercise strict control in dealing with the matters of sex and wealth:**

- A. Even King Solomon, who was glorified in the kingdom of Israel with the splendor of that kingdom at its highest peak (1 Kings 4:34; 8:10-11) and began as a God-fearing and God-loving person, eventually became an idol worshipper through his many foreign wives (11:1-13; see footnote 1 on v. 43).
- B. After Gideon died, Israel's degradation was initiated in their forsaking of Jehovah their God and their worshipping the idols of the Canaanites, which issued in their indulgence in fleshly lust; also, the son of Gideon's concubine, Abimelech, slew seventy of Gideon's other sons, whereas Jotham, another son, escaped—Judg. 8:33—9:57.
- C. Jotham boldly declared a parable of Abimelech's reign as the reign of the bramble versus those who are like olive trees, fig trees, and vine trees, who reject ambition and become a channel of supply to God's people (vv. 8-13); God repaid the evil of Abimelech (vv. 14-55), which he had done to his father by slaying his seventy brothers; and God brought all the evil of the men of Shechem back upon their own heads, and the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal (Gideon—6:32) came upon them (9:56-57).
- D. In Gideon's success he joined himself to God, but in his failure he joined himself to Satan; to forsake God and join with Satan is to enter into the intrinsic ambition within this evil one—Isa. 14:13-14.
- E. We have no right to divorce the Lord and no reason to forsake Him; we must take Him, love Him, honor Him, respect Him, regard Him, exalt Him, and cling to Him, rejecting Satan to the uttermost; then we will be blessed; blessed is everyone—nation, society, group, and individual—whose Lord, Head, King, and Husband is Jehovah—Psa. 33:12.

Message Nine

**The Children of Israel Not Having a King  
and Everyone Doing What Was Right in His Own Eyes**

Scripture Reading: Judg. 2:10-18; 3:7-15; 8:33-35; 10:6-7; 13:1;  
17:5-6; 18:1, 30-31; 19:1; 21:25

**I. In their degradation Israel became chaotic in government,  
worship, and morality—Judg. 3:7-15; 8:33-35; 13:1; 17:5-6;  
18:30-31:**

- A. After the children of Israel possessed the land as their inheritance, they did not obey God's command to utterly drive out and destroy the seven tribes inhabiting Canaan—1:27-36.
- B. As a result, the children of Israel served their gods, thus doing evil in the sight of the Lord—2:10-18.
- C. The children of Israel forsook the Lord God of their fathers, who brought them out of the land of Egypt, and they followed the gods of the people that were around them; they bowed themselves down to them and provoked Jehovah to anger—10:6-7.
- D. God delivered them into the hands of spoilers, and He sold them into the hands of their enemies so that they could no longer stand; whenever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil—2:11-15.
- E. The age of the judges may be considered the darkest period in the history of Israel; it was also a period of tragedy.
- F. At that time, among the children of Israel there were rebellions against God, idolatry (chs. 17—18), infighting (ch. 9), hostility and controversy among the tribes (chs. 20—21), fornication (ch. 19), filthiness, brutal killings, and all manner of evil doing.

**II. "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what  
was right in his own eyes"—21:25:**

- A. When the people of Israel said that there was no king among them, this meant that they had annulled God and His status and did not recognize God's kingship—17:6; 18:1; 19:1.
- B. Although God's tabernacle was at Shiloh and the high priest had the Urim and Thummim, there was no government, no administration, in Israel because Israel had annulled God and His status as their King, and thus, there was no expression of God in Judges—18:31; Exo. 28:30, footnote 1.
- C. Because there was no king in Israel during the time of the judges, the children of Israel did what was right in their own eyes, and as a result they became rotten and corrupted—Judg. 17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25:

## JUDGES

### Message Nine (continuation)

1. Moses told the people of Israel that when they entered the good land, they should not do things that were right in their own eyes but not right in the eyes of God—Deut. 12:8-14.
  2. Satan caused the people of Israel to do what was right in their own eyes, to be lawless and godless, and to cast off God's constraint; this is revealed in Judges 17—18; 19:1; and 21:25.
  3. Christians today often say that to them a certain thing is right or wrong; to live in this way is to do what is right in our own eyes.
  4. It is dreadful for us to do what is right in our own eyes; we must do what is right in the eyes of God—Deut. 12:8.
- D. When there was no king in Israel, there was no authority, and the people just did what they pleased; this is exactly the state of things in the present evil age, both in the world and in Christianity as a religious system—Eph. 2:2, 12.
- E. In the Lord's recovery we need to be delivered from the lawlessness portrayed in Judges and to live under the rule of God in the kingdom of God and do the will of God—Titus 2:14; Gal. 1:4; Matt. 6:10.

### **III. God is the King of the ages, the One with absolute authority for eternity, who never changes—1 Tim. 1:17:**

- A. The God in whom we believe and whom we serve and who is being dispensed into us is the King of the ages, the King of eternity—v. 17; 2 Cor. 13:14.
- B. Christ was born to be the King, a Ruler who will shepherd God's people, and He is now the King of kings and the Lord of lords—Matt. 2:2, 6; Rev. 19:16; 17:14:
1. As the King, Christ is Jehovah God, and He is also a man—Psa. 24:8, 10.
  2. We need to realize that Christ is our King reigning in our hearts and recognize the kingship of Christ in the local churches, where we live under His kingship—Eph. 3:17; 1 Tim. 3:15; 6:15.
  3. Christ will come as the King of glory—Jehovah of hosts, the consummated Triune God embodied in the victorious and coming Christ, who will reign in God's eternal kingdom—Psa. 24:7-10.

Message Nine (continuation)

4. Christ's ruling on the throne of David over His kingdom will be first in the millennium and then in the new heaven and new earth for eternity—Isa. 9:7; Luke 1:33, footnote 1.
5. "Then will a throne be established in lovingkindness, / And upon it One will sit in truth / In the tent of David"—Isa. 16:5:
  - a. Christ's reigning in the tent of David signifies consolation, encouragement, and restoration.
  - b. Christ's throne will be established in lovingkindness, tender affection, and He will sit on His throne in truth, that is, in truthfulness and faithfulness—v. 5.
  - c. If we allow Christ to reign in us, bringing in the kingdom with lovingkindness, truthfulness, faithfulness, justice, and righteousness, we will become the same as He is in these virtues—v. 5.

**IV. We need to be rescued from lawlessness and from being workers of lawlessness and to do what is right in the eyes of God by obeying the principle of serving God—Titus 2:14; Matt. 7:21-23:**

- A. Doing what is right in our own eyes is lawlessness—Judg. 21:25:
  1. "Sin is lawlessness"; hence, lawlessness is sin, or, reciprocally, sin is lawlessness—1 John 3:4:
    - a. In 1 John 3:4 "lawlessness," or being without law, denotes being without, or not under, the principle of God's ruling over man.
    - b. To sin is to be without law, to trespass against the law.
    - c. In God's eyes, a person sins when he acts according to his own nature and deliberation, walking according to self-will and rebelling against God's authority.
    - d. Lawlessness is not recognizing and submitting to God's authority.
    - e. To practice lawlessness is to live a life outside of and not under God's ruling principle over man; the present age is full of lawlessness and rebellion.
    - f. In lawlessness one not only rebels against authority but acts as if there were no law.
  2. In order to purify to Himself a particular people as His peculiar possession, Christ gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness—Titus 2:14.



## JUDGES

### Message Nine (continuation)

- B. “Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but he who does the will of My Father who is in the heavens”—Matt. 7:21:
    - 1. To call on the Lord suffices for us to be saved, but to enter into the kingdom of the heavens, we also need to do the will of the heavenly Father—Rom. 10:13; 12:2; Matt. 12:50; Eph. 5:17; Col. 1:9.
    - 2. Since entering into the kingdom of the heavens requires doing the will of the heavenly Father, it is clearly different from entering into the kingdom of God through regeneration—John 3:3, 5:
      - a. The entrance into the kingdom of God is gained through being born of the divine life—1:12-13; 3:5-6.
      - b. The entrance into the kingdom of the heavens is gained through the living of the divine life—Matt. 7:21; 12:50.
  - C. The Lord Jesus rebuked those who prophesied, cast out demons, and did works of power in His name because, as “workers of lawlessness,” they did these things out of themselves, not out of obedience to God’s will—7:23:
    - 1. There are two principles in the universe—the principle of God’s authority and the principle of Satan’s rebellion—Acts 1:7; Isa. 14:13-14:
      - a. We cannot serve God on the one hand and take the way of rebellion on the other hand; we must turn away from the principle of lawlessness and reject the way of rebellion—Matt. 28:18; Jude 11.
      - b. Serving God is directly linked to His authority; if we do not settle the matter of authority, we will have problems in all areas of our service.
    - 2. May the Lord preserve our service in the principle of submission to God’s authority and the Father’s will—Acts 1:7; Matt. 7:21; 12:50.
- V. The chaos in government, worship, and morality recorded in the book of Judges portrays the satanic chaos in the old creation—Gen. 3:1-5; Rev. 20:10—21:4:**
- A. The universe is in a state of chaos; this chaos is the source of suffering in the world today, and as long as there is chaos in creation, there will be sufferings in the world—Rom. 8:18-22.

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

Message Nine (continuation)

- B. The history of the universe is a history of God's economy and Satan's chaos—Gen. 1:1-2, 26; Rev. 20:10—21:4:
  - 1. Satan, the devil, is the source and element of the evil chaos—Matt. 16:23; Rev. 2:9-10; 2 Cor. 2:11; 1 Pet. 5:8.
  - 2. God Himself is the divine economy, and He has come into us as an administration, arrangement, and plan to put everything in order—Eph. 1:10; 3:10.
  - 3. In the Bible and in our experience, the satanic chaos always goes along with the divine economy and actually helps God's economy—v. 9.
- C. As those who are living in the midst of chaos, rebellion, and lawlessness, we need to have a clear vision of God's economy—Psa. 2:1-6; Prov. 29:18a; Eph. 3:9:
  - 1. We need to be governed, controlled, and directed by this vision—Acts 26:19.
  - 2. We must be strong and unshakable in the vision of God's economy, God's eternal will—Eph. 1:10; 3:9; Rev. 4:11; 1 Cor. 15:58; Heb. 12:28.
- D. The overcomers conquer the satanic chaos in the old creation and carry out the divine economy for the new creation—1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 1:10; 3:9-10; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15:
  - 1. The overcomers are not delivered out of the satanic chaos; instead, they conquer the destructive satanic chaos and triumph in the constructive divine economy—1 Tim. 1:3-4, 19-20; 4:1-2; Titus 3:10; 2 Tim. 1:15; 4:8.
  - 2. As the overcomers are suffering the chaos, they are "empowered in the grace which is in Christ Jesus" (2:1) and are able to stand for and live out the divine economy—1:10-15; 3:14-17; 4:2, 5, 7, 18.

RUTH

Message Ten

**Ruth's Choosing for Her Goal, Exercising Her Right,  
Seeking for Her Rest,  
and Receiving a Reward for God's Economy**

Scripture Reading: Ruth 1—4

- I. Judges is a book of Israel's miserable history, dark and foul; Ruth, as an appendix to the book of Judges, is the record of a couple's excellent story, bright and aromatic; the main character in this story, Ruth, is like a lily growing out of brambles and a bright star in the dark night—Ruth 1—4.**
- II. Chapter 1 of the book of Ruth speaks of Elimelech's swerving from the rest in God's economy (vv. 1-2), Naomi's returning to the rest in God's economy (vv. 3-7, 19-22), and Ruth's choosing for her goal (vv. 8-18):**
  - A. Ruth is a book of rest; the Sabbath rest is Christ as our rest, typified by the good land of Canaan—Deut. 12:9; Heb. 4:8-9:
    1. God rested on the seventh day because He had attained what He desired; the desire of God's heart is to have man on earth expressing Him in His image and representing Him with His dominion—Gen. 1:26-28; Rom. 8:28-29; 2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 5:17, 21; Rev. 5:9-10; 22:5.
    2. In the Old Testament the good land was a rest because the temple could be built there; the temple was the ultimate consummation of the entering into the good land by the children of Israel; with the temple God could have His expression and His representation for His kingdom, government, and administration—1 Kings 8:1-11.
    3. Christ is rest to the saints in three stages:
      - a. In the church age the heavenly Christ, the One who has expressed, represented, and satisfied God and who rests from His work and sits at the right hand of God in the heavens, is the rest to us in our spirit; as our rest, He is our perfect peace and full satisfaction—Matt. 11:28-29.
      - b. In the millennial kingdom, after Satan has been removed from the earth (Rev. 20:1-3), God will be expressed, represented, and satisfied by Christ and the overcoming saints; then Christ with the kingdom will be the rest in a fuller way to the overcoming saints, who will be co-kings with Him (vv. 4, 6) and share and enjoy His rest.

## Message Ten (continuation)

- c. In the new heaven and new earth, after all the enemies, including death, the last enemy, have been made subject to Him (1 Cor. 15:24-27), Christ, as the all-conquering One, will be the rest in the fullest way to all of God's redeemed for eternity.
  - B. For Elimelech to leave the good land meant that he was swerving from the rest in God's economy, thus cutting himself off from God's economy; he swerved from Bethlehem, the birthplace of the coming Christ (Micah 5:2; Luke 2:4-7), in Judah, the top part of the good land (Gen. 49:8-10; Exo. 3:8b; Deut. 8:7-10), to Moab, a country of idolatry (Judg. 10:6).
  - C. Naomi's returning to the Holy Land was her returning to the rest in God's economy from Moab, the country of idolatry, to Judah, the land of Immanuel (Isa. 8:8), to arrive at Bethlehem, the birthplace of Christ (Ruth 1:19a, 22b); she returned with Ruth, her daughter-in-law given to her by God for the accomplishing of His economy concerning Christ (v. 22a).
  - D. Ruth chose the goal of participating with God's elect in the enjoyment of Christ, and she became an important ancestor of Christ, one who helped bring forth Christ into mankind; this was her choosing God and His kingdom for the carrying out of God's economy concerning Christ—Matt. 1:5-6.
- III. Chapter 2 of the book of Ruth speaks of Ruth, as one who had returned to God from her heathen background, exercising her right to partake of the rich produce of the inheritance of God's elect:**
- A. According to her threefold status as a sojourner, a poor one, and a widow, Ruth exercised her right to glean the harvest; her gleaning was not her begging but her right.
  - B. God's ordinance concerning the reaping of the harvest was that Jehovah would bless the children of Israel if they left the corners of their fields and the gleanings for the poor, the sojourners, the orphans, and the widows—Lev. 23:22; 19:9-10; Deut. 24:19.
  - C. Boaz obeyed this ordinance, thereby testifying to his great faith in Jehovah; under God's sovereignty, this ordinance seems to have been written for one person—Ruth.
  - D. Just as Ruth had the right to enjoy the produce of the good land after coming into the land, so we have the right to enjoy Christ

## RUTH

### Message Ten (continuation)

as our good land after believing into Him; Ruth's exercising of her right to gain and possess the produce of the good land signifies that, after believing into Christ and being organically joined to Him in our "joined" spirit (Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17), we must begin to pursue Christ in order to gain, possess, experience, and enjoy Him (Phil. 3:7-16).

- E. The book of Ruth portrays the way, the position, the qualification, and the right of sinners to participate in Christ and to enjoy Christ; according to God's ordination, we who have believed into Christ have been qualified and positioned to claim our right to enjoy Christ (Col. 1:12; Rev. 2:7; 22:14).
- F. As a narration, the book of Ruth is lovely, touching, convincing, and subduing; in the aromatic story in chapter 2, four types are implied:
  1. Boaz, rich in wealth (v. 1), typifies Christ, who is rich in the divine grace (2 Cor. 12:7-9).
  2. The field of the God-promised good land (Ruth 2:2-3) typifies the all-inclusive Christ, who is the source of all the spiritual and divine products for the life supply of God's elect (Phil. 1:19-21a).
  3. Barley and wheat (Ruth 2:23) typify Christ as the material for making food for both God and His people (Lev. 2; John 6:9, 33, 35).
  4. Ruth, a Moabitess, a heathen sinner alienated from God's promises (Deut. 23:3; cf. Eph. 2:12), being given the right to partake of the gleanings of the harvest of God's elect typifies the Gentile "dogs" who are privileged to partake of Christ as the crumbs under the table of the portion of God's elect children (Matt. 15:21-28 and footnote 1 on v. 27).

#### **IV. Chapter 3 of the book of Ruth speaks of Ruth's seeking for her rest:**

- A. "Naomi, her [Ruth's] mother-in-law, said to her, My daughter, I must seek some resting place for you, that it may go well with you"—v. 1:
  1. Naomi realized that the proper person to be Ruth's husband was Boaz; hence, Naomi acted as a "middleman" in order to prod Ruth to get married.

Message Ten (continuation)

2. The genuine ministers of the New Testament are like Naomi in that they stir up the believers in Christ to love Him as their Bridegroom that they may take Him as their Husband—2 Cor. 11:2; Rev. 19:7; 21:9-10.
  3. The only way for us to have rest is to take Christ as our Husband; we must know Him as our Husband and take Him as our Husband, living in the closest and most intimate contact with Him—1 Cor. 2:9; cf. 16:22.
  4. If we marry Christ, taking Him as our Husband, our life will be changed; we will realize that we must have a wife's fidelity, and we will learn how to enjoy Christ as our life and our person, walking and behaving in oneness with Him—2 Cor. 2:10.
- B. After coming to the good land and exercising her right to enjoy its rich produce, Ruth still needed a home so that she could have rest; this kind of rest could come only through marriage:
1. Although we may be saved and love the Lord, in order to have a home for our rest we must marry the Lord Jesus, taking Him as our Husband, and live together with Him in the church as our home—Rom. 7:4; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-27.
  2. Christ as our Husband and the church as our home are a complete unit for us to have a proper and adequate rest (v. 32).
- C. Considered in the light of Matthew 1:5-6 and 16, Ruth's seeking for her rest was actually for the continuation of the genealogy to bring in Christ.
- D. Boaz told Ruth, "I am a kinsman, yet there is a kinsman closer than I"—Ruth 3:12:
1. In this verse the first kinsman of Ruth's husband, Ruth's closest kinsman, typifies our natural man, who cannot and will not redeem us from the indebtedness (sin) of our old man (4:1-6).
  2. Boaz, the second kinsman of Ruth's husband, typifies Christ, who partook of blood and flesh (Heb. 2:14) to be our Kinsman and who can redeem us from our sin, recover the lost right of our natural man in God's creation, be our new Husband in His divine organic union with us, and take us as His counterpart for His increase (Ruth 4:7-13).

**V. Chapter 4 of the book of Ruth speaks of Ruth's receiving a reward for God's economy:**

## RUTH

### Message Ten (continuation)

- A. As part of her reward for God's economy, Ruth gained a redeeming husband, who typifies Christ as the redeeming Husband of the believers; now as believers in Christ, we have a Husband who is our eternal, present, and daily Redeemer, rescuing us, saving us, delivering us, from all our troubles.
- B. In addition to gaining a redeeming husband, Ruth was redeemed from the indebtedness of her dead husband (vv. 1-9); this typifies the believers being redeemed from the sin of their old man:
  - 1. According to Romans 6:6 and 7:2-4, the dead husband, our old husband, is our old man; God created us to be His wife, but we rebelled against Him; we gave Him up and assumed the position of a husband for ourselves.
  - 2. Our sinful husband encumbered us with many debts, but on the day we married Christ, we received a Husband who is our almighty, omnipotent Redeemer; we all need Christ to be such a Husband to us, and we should habitually come to Him and simply say, "Lord Jesus, I need You."
- C. Another aspect of Ruth's reward is that she became a crucial ancestor in the genealogy to bring in the royal house of David for the producing of Christ (Ruth 4:13b-22; Matt. 1:5-16); this indicates that she had an all-inclusive and all-extensive gain with the position and capacity to bring Christ into the human race; she is thus a great link in the chain that is bringing Christ to every corner of the earth.
- D. Ruth not only became a crucial ancestor in the genealogy for the producing of Christ, but she also continued the line of the God-created humanity for the incarnation of Christ; the incarnation of Christ was a matter of His being brought out of eternity into time and with His divinity into humanity:
  - 1. Every day of our Christian life should be a continuation of Christ's incarnation, with Christ being brought forth in order to be born into others through our ministering Christ as the Spirit into them—2 Cor. 3:6.
  - 2. In order for this to happen, we all need to speak for Christ, to speak forth Christ, and to speak Christ into others; ministering Christ in this way will surely change us, and the ones for whom we care, in a metabolic way for our transformation into His image—v. 18; 4:1.

Message Eleven

**Boaz and Ruth Typifying Christ and the Church**

Scripture Reading: Ruth 1:16-17; 2:1-3, 13-16;  
3:9, 12, 15; 4:1-17, 21-22

- I. At the beginning and at the end of the portion of Israel's history from Joshua to Ruth are two prominent persons typifying Christ; these persons are Joshua and Boaz, who signify two aspects of one person—Josh. 1:1; Ruth 4:21-22:**
  - A. At the beginning Joshua typifies Christ in bringing God's chosen people into God's ordained blessings; as typified by Joshua, Christ has brought us into the good land, has taken possession of the land for us, and has allotted the land to us as our inheritance for our enjoyment; Christ has gained the good land for us, and eventually, He is the good land for us to enjoy.
  - B. At the end Boaz typifies Christ as our Husband for our satisfaction.
- II. In the book of Ruth, Boaz typifies Christ in the following aspects:**
  - A. As a man, rich in wealth and generous in giving (2:1, 14-16; 3:15), Boaz typifies Christ, whose divine riches are unsearchable and who takes care of God's needy people with His bountiful supply (Eph. 3:8; Luke 10:33-35; Phil. 1:19).
  - B. As the kinsman (Ruth 2:3; 3:9, 12) who redeemed the lost right to Mahlon's property and took Mahlon's widow, Ruth, as his wife for the producing of the needed heirs (4:9-10, 13), Boaz typifies Christ, who redeemed the church and made the church His counterpart for His increase (Eph. 5:23-32; John 3:29-30).
  - C. According to the book of Ruth, Boaz redeemed Ruth and redeemed her birthright; hence, he became a notable forefather of Christ—4:1-17, 21-22; Matt. 1:5-6:
    1. As a brother and a Boaz, you should take care of others' birthright of Christ, not only your own birthright; in other words, you should not only take care of your own enjoyment of Christ but also others' enjoyment of Christ—Eph. 3:2; 1 Pet. 4:10-11; Matt. 24:45-47.
    2. Suppose some dear ones in the church life become like Ruth, losing the enjoyment of their birthright, their enjoyment of Christ; we need to have a number of Boazes in the church life to bring these dear saints back into the enjoyment of Christ.



## RUTH

### Message Eleven (continuation)

3. The book of Ruth tells us that there was another kinsman who was even closer to Ruth than Boaz was, but that man was selfish; he only took care of his own birthright:
  - a. Some brothers should take care of ones who are like poor “Ruths” in the church life, but they are selfish in the spiritual enjoyment of Christ—Ezek. 34:2-23.
  - b. Someone who is a real Boaz and is rich in the enjoyment of Christ will pay the price to bring such saints into the full enjoyment of Christ; by shepherding others in this way, he will have even more enjoyment of Christ, the greatest enjoyment of Christ; day by day we should take care of others’ enjoyment of Christ—Prov. 11:25; Acts 20:35; 1 Pet. 5:1-4.
- D. Those who become like Boaz are pillars in the church life (one of the pillars in the temple was named “Boaz”—1 Kings 7:21); in the Scriptures the pillar is a sign, a testimony, of God’s building through transformation in practicing the Body life—Gen. 28:22a; 1 Kings 7:15-22; Gal. 2:9; 1 Tim. 3:15; Rev. 3:12; Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:11-12:
  1. Those who are pillars in the church life are constantly under God’s judgment (bronze), realizing that they are men in the flesh, worthy of nothing but death and burial—Psa. 51:5; Exo. 4:1-9; Rom. 7:18; Matt. 3:16-17:
    - a. We must judge ourselves as nothing and as being qualified only to be crucified; whatever we are, we are by the grace of God, and it is not we who labor but the grace of God—1 Cor. 15:10; Gal. 2:20; 1 Pet. 5:5-7.
    - b. The reason for both division and fruitlessness among believers is that there is no bronze, nothing of God’s judgment; instead, there is pride, self-boasting, self-vindication, self-justification, self-approval, self-excuse, self-righteousness, condemning others, and regulating others instead of shepherding and seeking them—Matt. 16:24; Luke 9:54-55.
    - c. When we love the Lord and experience Him as the man of bronze (Ezek. 40:3), He will become our extraordinary love, boundless forbearance, unparalleled faithfulness, absolute humility, utmost purity, supreme holiness and righteousness, and our brightness and uprightness—Phil. 4:5-8.
  2. On the capitals of the pillars in the temple, there were “nets of checker work [like a trellis] with wreaths of chain work”;

## Message Eleven (continuation)

these signify the complicated and intermixed situations in which those who are pillars in God's building live and bear responsibility—1 Kings 7:17; 2 Cor. 1:12; 4:7-8.

3. On the top of the capitals were lilies and pomegranates—1 Kings 7:18-20:
  - a. Lilies signify a life of faith in God, a life of living by what God is to us, not by what we are; the bronze means “not I,” and the lily means “but Christ”—S. S. 2:1-2; Matt. 6:28, 30; 2 Cor. 5:4; Gal. 2:20.
  - b. The pomegranates on the wreaths of the capitals signify the fullness, the abundance and beauty, and the expression of the riches of Christ as life—Phil. 1:19-21a; Eph. 1:22-23; 3:19.
  - c. Through the crossing out of the network and the restriction of the chain work, we can live a pure, simple life of trusting in God to express the riches of the divine life of Christ for God's building in life.

**III. In this bright and aromatic story, Ruth typifies the church in the following ways:**

- A. Ruth, being a woman in Adam in God's creation and a Moabitess (a sinner) in man's fall, thus becoming an old man with these two aspects, typifies the church, before her salvation, as men in God's creation and sinners in man's fall being “our old man”—Rom. 6:6.
- B. Ruth, being the widow of the dead husband, redeemed by Boaz, who cleared the indebtedness of her dead husband for the recovery of the lost right of her dead husband's property (Ruth 4:9-10), typifies the church with her old man as her crucified husband (Rom. 7:4a; 6:6) redeemed by Christ, who cleared away her old man's sin (John 1:29) for the recovery of the lost right of her fallen natural man created by God (Gen. 1:26; Isa. 54:5).
- C. Ruth, after being redeemed by Boaz, becoming a new wife to him (Ruth 4:13) typifies the church, after being saved, through the regeneration of the church's natural man (John 3:6b), becoming the counterpart of Christ (v. 29a; Rom. 7:4).
- D. Ruth, choosing to follow Naomi to the land of Israel (Ruth 1:16-17) and being united to Boaz, typifies the Gentile sinners being attached to Christ (2 Cor. 1:21) that they may partake of the inheritance of God's promise (Eph. 3:6).

## Message Eleven (continuation)

**IV. The picture of Boaz (typifying Christ as our new Husband) and Ruth (typifying the church with her old man as her crucified husband) is spoken of by Paul in Romans 7:1-6:**

- A. In God's creation man's original position was that of a wife; Isaiah 54:5 says that God our Maker is our Husband; as a wife to God, we must depend upon Him and take Him as our Head.
- B. When man fell, he took another position, the self-assuming position of the old man (our very being which was created by God but became fallen through sin); the man created by God was a wife, but the fallen man became independent of God and made himself the head as the husband.
- C. Since our old man, who was the old husband, has been crucified with Christ (Rom. 6:6), we are freed from his law (7:2-4) and are joined to the new Husband, Christ, as the ever-living One.
- D. As believers, we have two statuses:
  - 1. We have our old status as the fallen old man, who left the original position of a wife, dependent on God, and took the self-assuming position of a husband and head, independent of God.
  - 2. We have our new status as the regenerated new man, restored to our original and proper position as the genuine wife to God (Isa. 54:5; 2 Cor. 11:2-3), dependent on Him and taking Him as our Head.
- E. We no longer have the old status of the husband, for we have been crucified (Gal. 2:20; Rom. 6:6); we now have only the new status of the proper wife, in which we take Christ as our Husband, and should no longer live according to the old man (no longer taking the old man as our husband).
- F. In Romans 7:4 Paul puts together a funeral and a wedding; on the one hand, we were buried; on the other hand, we were married; we were made dead according to our old status that we might marry another according to our new status; according to our new status, we marry Him who has been raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit to God.
- G. Our old man, our old husband, has been crucified with Christ, so that we "might be joined to another, to Him who has been raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit to God" (v. 4); this joining indicates that in our new status as a wife, we have an organic union in person, name, life, and existence with Christ in His resurrection.

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

Message Eleven (continuation)

- H. As the regenerated new man and the wife to Christ, everything we are and do is now related to God, and God is brought forth by us as the fruit, the overflow, of our life; this is in contrast to the fruit born to death (v. 5), which was previously brought forth by us as the old man, the old husband.
- I. We are now joined to the resurrected Christ as the life-giving Spirit in our spirit; this is the joining of “the Spirit...with our spirit” (8:16) as “one spirit” (1 Cor. 6:17):
  - 1. We should have our whole being turned to and set on this joined spirit—Rom. 8:6b.
  - 2. We should also live and walk according to this joined spirit—v. 4.
  - 3. When we thus live in this joined spirit, we can live out the Body of Christ to become the corporate expression of Christ for the glory of the Triune God—Eph. 1:23; 3:21; 1 Cor. 10:31; 1 Pet. 4:11; Rev. 21:10-11.

RUTH

Message Twelve

**Taking the Way of Life in the Lord's Recovery**

Scripture Reading: Ruth 1:16-17, 20-21; 2:10-16;  
3:1, 7-13; 4:9-15; Matt. 7:13-14

**I. The three books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth present a clear picture of the two aspects of God's move: His move in His economical Spirit, the Spirit of power, and His move in His essential Spirit, the Spirit of life—Judg. 13:25; 14:6; John 20:22; Acts 1:8; Rom. 8:2:**

- A. With Joshua, Caleb, and all the judges we see the move of God in power, illustrated by Samson as one who moved in the Spirit of power but not in the Spirit of life—Judg. 14:6.
- B. In contrast, the book of Ruth is a book of life; the purpose of this book is not to tell us anything about power but to reveal the things of life to the uttermost, using Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz as examples—1:16-17, 20-21; 2:10-16; 3:1, 7-13; 4:9-15.
- C. In the Lord's recovery we should not take the way of the judges to be powerful and to do a great work; if we take the way of power instead of the way of life, whatever we accomplish will mean nothing.
- D. It is crucial for us to see that only life can bring forth Christ—Luke 1:35:
  - 1. Only life can bring God into humanity, produce Christ, minister Christ, and supply the entire human race with Christ—Matt. 1:18, 20-21.
  - 2. This was accomplished by Ruth and Boaz, persons of life, who took the way of life.

**II. According to the divine and eternal nature of the life of God, God's life is the unique life; only the life of God can be counted as life—John 1:4; 10:10b; 11:25; 14:6:**

- A. Life is mysterious, for life is God Himself—1:1, 14; 5:26; Eph. 4:18:
  - 1. The divine life may be considered the first and the basic attribute of God—v. 18; John 5:26; 1 John 5:11-12; Rom. 8:2.
  - 2. Life is the content of God and the flowing out of God; God's content is God's being, and God's flowing out is the impartation of Himself as life to us—Eph. 4:18; Rev. 22:1.
  - 3. Life is Christ, and life is Christ living in us and lived out from us—John 14:6; Col. 3:4; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:21a.
  - 4. Life is the Holy Spirit—John 14:16-17; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 8:2; 2 Cor. 3:6.

Message Twelve (continuation)

5. Life is the processed and consummated Triune God dispensed into us and living in us—John 1:14; 7:37-39; 20:22; Rom. 8:10, 6, 11.

B. God's purpose in the creation of man in His image and according to His likeness was that man would receive Him as life so that man might become a man of life, a God-man, expressing God in His attributes—Gen. 1:26; 2:9.

**III. We need to know the significance of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and turn absolutely from this tree to the tree of life—vv. 9, 16-17:**

A. The tree of life signifies the Triune God in Christ to dispense Himself into His chosen people as life in the form of food—v. 9.

B. The New Testament reveals that Christ is the fulfillment of the figure of the tree of life—John 1:1, 4, 14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1, 5:

1. Speaking of Christ, John 1:4 says, "In Him was life"; this refers to the life signified by the tree of life.

2. The life portrayed in Genesis 2 is the life incarnated in Christ—1 John 5:11-12; John 1:1, 4, 14.

3. If we put together John 1:4 and 15:5, we will realize that Christ, who Himself is life and also a vine tree, is the tree of life.

C. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil signifies Satan as the source of death to man—Heb. 2:14:

1. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil also signifies all things apart from God.

2. Anything that is not God Himself, including good things and even scriptural and religious things, can be utilized by Satan, the subtle one, to bring death into the church—Matt. 16:18; Prov. 16:25; 18:21.

D. In John 4, 8, 9, and 11 are four cases that illustrate the principle of life versus good and evil:

1. We should care not for good and evil but for life—4:10-14, 20-21, 23-24; 8:3-9; 9:1-3; 11:20-27.

2. The best way to discern a matter is to discern according to life or death, not according to right and wrong, good and evil—Rom. 8:6; 2 Cor. 11:3.

**IV. Christ is our life—Col. 3:4:**

## RUTH

### Message Twelve (continuation)

- A. The life of God is the life of Christ, and the life of Christ has become our life—v. 4; John 5:26:
    - 1. For Christ to be our life means that He is subjective to us to the uttermost—1:4; 14:6a; 10:10b; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 8:10, 6, 11.
    - 2. It is impossible to separate a person from the life of that person, for a person's life is the person himself; thus, to say that Christ is our life means that Christ has become us and that we have one life and living with Him—John 14:6a; Phil. 1:21a.
  - B. The truth that Christ is our life is a strong indication that we are to take Him as life and live Him in our daily life—Col. 3:4; John 6:57:
    - 1. Christ must be our life in a practical and experiential way; day by day we need to be saved in His life—Col. 3:4; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 5:10.
    - 2. The new man is the spontaneous issue of our taking Christ as our life and living Him—Col. 3:3-4, 10-11.
- V. There are two possible ways of our life and work before God—the way that leads to life and the way that leads to destruction—Matt. 7:13-14:**
- A. In order to take the way that leads to life, we need to enter in through the narrow gate and then walk on the constricted way—vv. 13-14:
    - 1. The narrow gate deals not only with outward conduct but also with inward motive.
    - 2. The old man, the self, the flesh, the human concept, and the world with its glory are all excluded; only that which corresponds with God's will can enter in—v. 21; 12:50.
    - 3. First, we need to enter in through the narrow gate and then walk on the constricted way, a way that is lifelong and leads to life—7:14.
    - 4. The word *life* in Matthew 7:14 refers to the ever-blessed condition of the kingdom, which is filled with the eternal life of God; this life is in the reality of the kingdom today and will be in the manifestation of the kingdom in the coming age—19:29; Luke 18:30.

Message Twelve (continuation)

- B. The broad way is according to the worldly systems, satisfying the natural tastes, to get the crowd, to maintain a career of man, and to achieve man's enterprise; the destruction to which the broad way leads refers not to the perishing of a person but to the destruction of a person's deeds and works—1 Cor. 3:15; Matt. 13:31-33; Rev. 2:13, 20; 17:4-5.
- C. The way of the Lord's recovery is the way of life that leads to a living reward in life in the manifestation of the kingdom of the heavens in the coming age—Psa. 16:11; Jer. 21:8; Matt. 19:29; Luke 18:30; 1 Cor. 3:13-15; 15:58.

**VI. We need to live by the sense of life—the feeling, the consciousness, of the divine life within us—Rom. 8:6; Eph. 4:18-19:**

- A. The source of the sense of life is the divine life, the law of life, the Holy Spirit, Christ abiding in us, and God operating in us—Rom. 8:2, 10-11; Phil. 2:13.
- B. The divine life is the highest life, with the richest, strongest, and keenest feeling; this feeling is the sense of life—Eph. 4:18.
- C. The sense of life guides us, governs us, controls us, and directs us, causing us to know whether we are living in the divine life or in the natural life and whether we are living in the flesh or in the spirit—Rom. 8:6.

**VII. We need to be victorious over the attack of death upon the church and build up the Body of Christ in the resurrection life of Christ—Matt. 16:18; John 11:25; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:16:**

- A. By the resurrection life of Christ in our spirit, we can be victorious over the attack of death upon the church—Matt. 16:18; Acts 2:24; 2 Tim. 1:10:
  - 1. From Eden onward, God's controversy with Satan has been on the issue of death and life—Rom. 8:6, 10-11; Heb. 2:15.
  - 2. Matthew 16:18 shows us from what source the attack upon the church will come—"the gates of Hades," that is, death; Satan's special object is to spread death within the church, and his greatest fear with regard to the church is her resistance to his power of death—Rev. 2:8, 10-11.
- B. We should be exercised in spirit to build up the Body of Christ in the resurrection life of Christ—Eph. 2:6, 21-22; 4:16; Rev. 1:18; 2:8; Phil. 3:10:



RUTH

Message Twelve (continuation)

1. The nature of the church as the Body of Christ is resurrection, and the reality of resurrection is Christ as the life-giving Spirit—John 11:25; Acts 2:24; Eph. 1:19-23; 1 Cor. 15:45b.
2. When we live by the divine life within us, we are living a life in resurrection for the building up of the Body of Christ—Phil. 3:10-11; Eph. 4:15-16; Col. 2:19; 3:15.

**VIII. “We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brothers”—1 John 3:14a:**

- A. Death is of the devil, God’s enemy, Satan, signified by the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which brings death—Gen. 2:9, 17.
- B. Life is of God, the source of life, signified by the tree of life, which issues in life—vv. 9, 16-17.
- C. Death and life are not only of two sources, Satan and God; they are also two essences, two elements, and two spheres—John 5:24.
- D. To pass out of death into life is to pass out of the source, the essence, the element, and the sphere of death into the source, the essence, the element, and the sphere of life; this took place at the time of our regeneration—1 John 3:14a; John 3:3, 5, 15.
- E. We know—have the inner consciousness—that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brothers; love (the love of God) toward the brothers is strong evidence of this—1 John 3:14a:
  1. Faith in the Lord is the way for us to pass out of death into life; love toward the brothers is the evidence that we have passed out of death into life—John 5:24; 1 John 3:14a.
  2. To have faith is to receive the eternal life; to love is to live by the eternal life and express it—John 3:15, 36; 1 John 3:11, 14-18; 4:7-12, 16, 19-21.