

## CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OF LEVITICUS (1)

### Taking Christ as Our Trespass Offering for God's Purpose (Message 8)

Scripture Reading: Lev. 5:1-4, 6-8, 11, 15-16; 1 John 1:7-9; Acts 24:16; Psa. 51:2

- I. The trespass offering signifies Christ as our offering resolving the problem of sins in our conduct—1 Pet. 2:24; Isa. 53:5-6, 10-11; cf. Matt. 27:38; Luke 23:42-43:
  - A. Taking Christ as our trespass offering with the confession of our sins in the divine light is the way to drink Christ as the living water for us to become the New Jerusalem—John 4:14-18.
  - B. Taking Christ as our trespass offering with the confession of our sins is the way to keep ourselves in the fellowship of life for our growth in life unto the maturity in life—1 John 1:2-3, 5-9; Acts 24:16.
  - C. Taking Christ as our trespass offering to receive the forgiveness of sins issues in our fearing God and loving God—Psa. 130:4; Luke 7:47-50.
  - D. Ministering Christ as the sin-dealing life to the saints kills the germs, destroys the problems, and maintains the oneness of the Spirit—John 8:1-11; 1 John 5:16; Rom. 2:4b; Lev. 10:17; Gal. 6:1.
- II. In taking Christ as our trespass offering, we need to make a thorough confession of all our shortcomings, weaknesses, wrongdoings, and sinfulness in order to have a conscience without offense toward God and men—Acts 24:16; Psa. 51:2:
  - A. Since God knows the record of our sinful doings, it is best for us to ask Him to rid us of that record by confessing—1 John 1:7, 9.
  - B. After such a thorough and fine confession, we will be filled with the Spirit essentially and economically to make us buoyant and bold in our God to speak the gospel of God—cf. Num. 21:16-18; 1 Thes. 2:2, 4. [212]
- III. The trespass offering eventually becomes the sin offering, signifying that Christ's redemption for our sin resolves the problem of sin in its two aspects: sin in our inward nature and sins in our outward

conduct—[Lev. 5:6-8, 11-12](#); [John 1:29](#).

- IV. Two turtledoves or two young pigeons, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering, form a trespass offering, signifying that the source of every trespass is the sin that is in our flesh, and the reason for every trespass is our not living absolutely for God—[Lev. 5:7](#).
- V. [Leviticus 5](#) speaks of four particular items that need the trespass offering so that God's people can live a holy, clean, and rejoicing life for them to be incorporated with the Triune God for His glory—[vv. 1-4](#):
  - A. To fail to testify to the truth concerning what we know is to be dishonest and unfaithful, unlike our God, who is faithful and honest; this actually deals with lying, which involves Satan, the father of lies—[v. 1](#); [John 8:44](#).
  - B. To touch the uncleanness of spiritual death is the most serious thing in the eyes of God—[Lev. 5:2](#):
    1. If we are to live a holy life separated from death, we need to exercise care concerning our contact with people—[ch. 11](#); [Acts 10:9b-15, 27-29](#):
      - a. Animals that divide the hoof and chew the cud signify persons who have discernment in their activities and who receive the word of God with much reconsideration—[Lev. 11:2-3](#).
      - b. Aquatic animals that have fins and scales signify persons who can move and act freely in the world, simultaneously resisting its influence—[v. 9](#).
      - c. Birds that have wings for flying and that eat seeds of life as their food supply signify persons who can live and move in a life that is away from and above the world and who take the things of life as their supply of life—[cf. vv. 13-19](#).
      - d. Insects that have wings and jointed legs above their feet for leaping on the ground signify persons who can live and move in a life that is above the world and who can keep themselves from the world—[vv. 21-22](#).
    2. The carcasses of the animals in [Leviticus 5:2](#) refer to three [\[213\]](#) different kinds of spiritual death that may spread among God's people in the church life: beasts signify wild death, cattle signify mild death, and creeping things signify subtle death—[Rom. 14:15, 20](#); [16:17](#):
      - a. Regardless of its kind, death is unclean, filthy, and defiling; death is the most hateful thing in the eyes of

God—cf. 1 Cor. 15:26.

- b. According to the typology in the Old Testament, death is more defiling than sin (see footnote 2 on Lev. 11:31).
  3. We need to be Nazarites who are separated from death and filled with life, “anti-death”—Num. 6:6-8; Rom. 8:6.
  - C. The uncleanness of man signifies that everything that is discharged from the natural man and the natural life, whether good or bad, is unclean—Lev. 5:3; cf. Matt. 15:17-20; 16:21-25.
  - D. To speak rashly before God, expressing our opinion in a hasty, careless, and reckless way, indicates that we do not live for God and do not fear God—Lev. 5:4; cf. Matt. 17:24-27; John 7:3-8.
- VI. In Leviticus 5:11 fine flour, signifying the humanity of Jesus, is used for a sin offering, signifying that we commit sins because we are short of the humanity of Jesus:
- A. This indicates that we commit sins not only because we have sin in our nature and not only because we are not absolute for God but also because we do not have the humanity of Jesus; in His humanity Jesus has no sin in Him and is absolute for God.
  - B. The tenth part of an ephah of fine flour offered for a sin offering signifies that only a small portion of the humanity of Jesus is needed to kill the negative things within us and to supply our need.
- VII. Making restitution and adding to it one-fifth more signifies that the one who offers the trespass offering should be righteous in material things according to the divine scale, standard, and measurement—vv. 15-16; cf. Luke 19:8.
- VIII. “David begot Solomon of her who had been the wife of Uriah”—Matt. 1:6:
- A. Psalm 51 was composed after David’s great sin in murdering Uriah and robbing him of his wife and then being rebuked by Nathan:
    1. “Against You and You alone have I sinned, / And I have done what is evil in Your sight”—v. 4. [214]
    2. “Hide Your face from my sins, / And blot out all my iniquities”—v. 9.
    3. “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; / A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise”—v. 17.
    4. “Do good in Your good pleasure unto Zion; / Build the walls of Jerusalem”—v. 18.
  - B. The issue of the “marriage” of David’s transgression and repentance with God’s forgiveness was Solomon (“peaceful”),

the one who built the temple of God—2 Sam. 7:12-14a; 2 Chron. 3:1:

1. The church is always built up by this kind of person—a Solomon—one who is the issue of man's transgression and repentance plus God's forgiveness.
2. When we experience the marriage of our transgression and repentance with God's forgiveness, we become very useful in the building up of the church.

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## MESSAGE EIGHT

### TAKING CHRIST AS OUR TRESPASS OFFERING FOR GOD'S PURPOSE

The subject of this message is taking Christ as our trespass offering for God's purpose. We need to give particular attention to the words *for God's purpose*. We do not take the trespass offering in a meaningless way. We take the trespass offering for God's purpose.

#### THE TRESPASS OFFERING SIGNIFYING CHRIST AS OUR OFFERING RESOLVING THE PROBLEM OF SINS IN OUR CONDUCT

The trespass offering signifies Christ as our offering resolving the problem of sins in our conduct (1 Pet. 2:24; Isa. 53:5-6, 10-11; cf. Matt. 27:38; Luke 23:42-43). First Peter 2:24 says, "[Christ] Himself bore up our sins in His body on the tree, in order that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose bruise you were healed." The Greek word for *forgiveness* means "causing it to leave or sending away." When the Lord died on the cross, He caused all our sins to leave; He sent all our sins away. This is really wonderful. John 1:29 says, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" The word *sin* in this verse refers to both the indwelling sin in our nature and the sins in our conduct. Hence, this verse refers to Christ as both the sin offering and the trespass offering.

Leviticus 16:7-10, which refers to the Day of Expiation, or the Day of Atonement, says, "He shall take the two goats and set them before Jehovah

at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. And Aaron shall cast lots on the two goats: one lot for Jehovah and the other lot for Azazel. And Aaron shall present the goat on which the lot for Jehovah fell, and offer it as a sin offering. But the goat on which the lot for Azazel fell shall be made to stand alive before Jehovah to make expiation over it, that it may be sent away for Azazel into the wilderness.” The footnote on [verse 8](#) says the following regarding Azazel: [216]

Azazel signifies Satan, the devil, the sinful one, the one who is the source, the origin, of sin ([John 8:44](#)). The goat that was for Jehovah was to be killed ([Lev. 16:9](#)), but the goat that was for Azazel was to be sent away into the wilderness to bear away all the iniquities of the children of Israel on itself ([vv. 10, 20-22](#)). This signifies that Christ as the sin offering for God’s people, on the one hand, deals with our sin before God and, on the other hand, sends sin, through the efficacy of the cross, back to Satan, from whom sin came into man. Through the cross the Lord Jesus has the position and qualification with the power, strength, and authority to take sin away from the redeemed ones ([John 1:29](#); [Heb. 9:26](#)) and send it back to its source, Satan, who will bear it in the lake of fire forever ([Rev. 20:10](#)).

These are wonderful verses and a wonderful footnote.

[Isaiah 53:5-6](#) continues the thought of Christ as our trespass offering: “He was wounded because of our transgressions; / He was crushed because of our iniquities; / The chastening for our peace was upon Him, / And by His stripes we have been healed. / We all like sheep have gone astray; / Each of us has turned to his own way, / And Jehovah has caused the iniquity of us all / To fall on Him.” We should love these verses. It is amazing that there is such a chapter in the Holy Bible, which was written hundreds of years before Christ was born. He is our trespass offering. As He was dying on the cross, Jehovah caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.

According to [John 19:19](#), Pilate wrote a notice and “put it on the cross.” This notice said, “JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF THE JEWS.” When the opposing ones, the chief priests and the leaders of the Jews, saw this, they became upset. They told Pilate, “Do not write, The King of the Jews, but that He said, I am the King of the Jews” ([v. 21](#)). Pilate, however, answered, “What I have written, I have written” ([v. 22](#)). What Pilate wrote was not of himself but of God’s sovereignty. This was under the Lord’s sovereignty, for that sign—Jesus the Nazarene, the King

of the Jews—was written in three languages, Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. The footnote on [verse 20](#) says, “ Hebrew here represents the Hebrew religion, Latin represents Roman politics, and Greek represents Greek culture. These three together represent the entire world, all mankind. This signifies that the Lord Jesus as the Lamb of God was killed by and for all mankind.” [217]

[Isaiah 53:10-11](#) also speaks of Christ as the sin offering and trespass offering: “Jehovah was pleased to crush Him, to afflict Him with grief. / When He makes Himself an offering for sin, / He will see a seed, He will extend His days, / And the pleasure of Jehovah will prosper in His hand. / He will see the fruit of the travail of His soul, / And He will be satisfied; / By the knowledge of Him, the righteous One, My Servant, will make the many righteous, / And He will bear their iniquities.”

[Luke 23:42-43](#) presents a marvelous picture of the Lord dying on the cross. In these verses we see that two robbers were crucified with the Lord. These robbers did not just rob people; they also killed the people whom they robbed. They were great sinners. The first one saved through Christ’s crucifixion on the cross was a robber. This shows that we should love all men without discrimination. [Verse 39](#) says, “One of the criminals who were hanged there blasphemed Him, saying, Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!” The other robber then rebuked him and said, “Do you not even fear God, since you are in the same judgment? And we justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for what we did, but this man has done nothing amiss” ([vv. 40b-41](#)). Then the robber said to Jesus, “Remember me when You come into Your kingdom” ([v. 42](#)). In other words, the one robber said to the other robber, “How can you say that to this man when He has not done anything? He is innocent, and we are guilty. We deserve our punishment, but He does not deserve this. How can you speak like that to Him?” Can you imagine this scene? In [verse 43](#) the Lord responded to the robber, saying, “Truly I say to you, Today you shall be with Me in Paradise.” This is precious and priceless. That very day this robber was with the Lord in Paradise. A centurion who was watching all of this stated, “Certainly this man was righteous” ([v. 47](#)).

**Taking Christ as Our Trespass Offering  
with the Confession of Our Sins in the Divine Light  
Being the Way to Drink Christ as the Living Water  
for Us to Become the New Jerusalem**

Taking Christ as our trespass offering with the confession of our sins in the divine light is the way to drink Christ as the living water for us to become the New Jerusalem ([John 4:14-18](#)). In the previous sentence we should stress the phrase *in the divine light*. Light is the presence of God. We take Christ as our trespass offering with the confession of our sins in the presence of God as the divine light. This is the way to drink [\[218\]](#) Christ as the living water for us to become the New Jerusalem. How do we become the New Jerusalem? It is by taking Christ as our trespass offering with the confession of our sins, which causes us to drink Christ as the living water for us to become the New Jerusalem.

In [John 4:13](#) the Lord said to the Samaritan woman, “Everyone who drinks of this water shall thirst again.” *This water* signifies “the enjoyment of material things and the amusement obtained from worldly entertainment” ([v. 13](#), footnote 1). *This water* also refers to anything that we use to try to satisfy us other than Christ. Whoever drinks of this water shall thirst again. Then the Lord said to the woman, “Whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall by no means thirst forever; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into eternal life” ([v. 14](#)). When we drink of Him as the living water, God the Father is installed into us as a fountain of living water. God the Father is the fountain of living water; God the Son is the spring, the emergence and manifestation of the fountain; and God the Spirit is the river as the flowing out of the spring. This fountain, spring, and flowing-out river are *into* eternal life. In Greek the word *into* in [verse 14](#) means “to become.” He is the flowing Triune God—the Father is the fountain, the Son is the spring, and the Spirit is the river. He flows into us, in us, through us, out of us, and into others to cause us corporately to become the totality of eternal life, which is the New Jerusalem.

Where do we have the confession of sins in [John 4](#)? Right after the Lord spoke these words in [verses 13 and 14](#), we see that confession is the way to take the living water. The outline heading in the Recovery Version for [verses 15 through 26](#) is “The Way to Take the Living Water,” and the first outline point under this is “To Make Confession of Sins.” The first way to take the living water is by the confession of our sins, by taking Christ as our trespass offering. [Verses 15 through 18](#) show the Lord helping the woman to make confession: “The woman said to Him, Sir, give me this water so that I will not thirst nor come here to draw. He said to her, Go, call your husband and come here. The woman answered and said, I do not have a husband. Jesus said to her, You have well said, I do not have a husband, for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not

your husband; this you have said truly.” In [verses 17 and 18](#) the Lord was confessing her sins for her. This is wonderful. When we enter into the light of the Lord’s presence and take Him as our trespass offering, He will confess our sins for us. He will [\[219\]](#) point out our sins and shortcomings; perhaps it was a word that we should not have said or a mistake that we made. Then we need to receive the forgiveness of our sins as we confess. We need to confess our sins to the Lord.

A good prayer for us to pray is [Psalm 139:23-24](#), which says, “Search me, O God, and know my heart; / Try me, and know my anxious thoughts; / And see if there is some harmful way in me, / And lead me on the eternal way.” We should pray these verses every morning for a period of time. This will give the Lord a way to search us. The word *harmful* in [verse 24](#) can also be translated “idolatrous,” and the phrase *see if there is some harmful way in me* can also be translated “see if there is any way of pain in me.” In other words, any way that we take other than the way of God’s economy is a way of pain. The eternal way is the way that leads to life, the way of life.

**Taking Christ as Our Trespass Offering  
with the Confession of Our Sins  
Being the Way  
to Keep Ourselves in the Fellowship of Life  
for Our Growth in Life  
unto the Maturity in Life**

Taking Christ as our trespass offering with the confession of our sins is the way to keep ourselves in the fellowship of life for our growth in life unto the maturity in life ([1 John 1:2-3, 5-9; Acts 24:16](#)). In [1 John 1:2 through 3](#) and [5 through 9](#) there is a cycle of life, fellowship, light, and the blood. Footnote 3 on [verse 7](#) says,

In this section of the Word there is a cycle in our spiritual life, a cycle formed of four crucial things—the eternal life, the fellowship of the eternal life, the divine light, and the blood of Jesus the Son of God. Eternal life issues in its fellowship, the fellowship of eternal life brings in the divine light, and the divine light increases the need for the blood of Jesus the Son of God that we may have more eternal life. The more we have of eternal life, the more of its fellowship it brings to us. The more fellowship of the divine life we enjoy, the more divine light we receive. The



more divine light we receive, the more we participate in the cleansing of the blood of Jesus. Such a cycle brings us onward in the growth of the divine life until we reach the maturity of life.

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This cycle continues until we mature in the divine life and become mature sons of God conformed to the image of the firstborn Son of God (Rom. 8:29).

### **Taking Christ as Our Trespass Offering to Receive the Forgiveness of Sins Issuing In Our Fearing God and Loving God**

Taking Christ as our trespass offering to receive the forgiveness of sins issues in our fearing God and loving God (Psa. 130:4; Luke 7:47-50). Receiving the forgiveness of sins does not make us audacious. To be audacious means that we become bold to say, “Since I will be forgiven of my sins, I will sin again.” Taking God as our trespass offering to receive forgiveness of sins does not have this issue. When we genuinely receive the forgiveness of sins, the first issue is that we fear God. Psalm 130:3-4 says, “If You, O Jehovah, marked iniquities, / Who, O Lord, would stand? / But with You there is forgiveness, / That You would be feared.” What does it mean for the Lord to be feared? It does not mean that we are afraid of Him. It means that we honor Him, that we are in awe of Him, and that we revere, respect, and regard Him. It also means that we give Him the first place in all things. We fear the Lord by honoring Him, standing in awe of Him, revering Him, respecting Him, regarding Him, and giving Him the first place in all things.

Taking Christ as our trespass offering to receive the forgiveness of sins also issues in our loving God. The more we take Christ as our trespass offering for the forgiveness of our sins, the more we love God. Luke 7:36-50 shows the case of a Pharisee named Simon who invited the Lord to his home for dinner (vv. 36, 40) and of a sinful woman who wept and washed the Lord’s feet with her tears. When the Pharisee saw that the Lord allowed such a woman to touch Him, he criticized the Lord in his heart. The omniscient Lord, realizing this, answered Simon with a parable of two debtors and then said to Simon, “I say to you, Her sins which are many are forgiven, because she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, he loves little” (v. 47). Then the Lord said to the woman, “Your sins are forgiven” (v. 48). When those who were reclining at table heard this, they began to say within themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?” (v. 49). Then

He said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you. Go in peace” (v. 50). The literal translation of *go in peace* is “go into peace.” This account shows us that he who is forgiven much will love much. If we see how much we have been forgiven, [221] we will love the Lord to the uttermost. This is why we need to see more and more of Christ as our sin offering and trespass offering. If we see this more and more, we will love Him more and more.

**Ministering Christ  
as the Sin-dealing Life to the Saints  
Killing the Germs,  
Destroying the Problems,  
and Maintaining the Oneness of the Spirit**

Ministering Christ as the sin-dealing life to the saints kills the germs, destroys the problems, and maintains the oneness of the Spirit ([John 8:1-11](#); [1 John 5:16](#); [Rom. 2:4b](#); [Lev. 10:17](#); [Gal. 6:1](#)). This is quite a precious point. When we minister Christ as life to the saints, that life is a sin-dealing life. This life causes the person to whom we minister Christ as life to deal with his sins. This matches my experience. Sometimes when I worked with Brother Lee, I would go into his study, and as soon as I was in his presence, I would inwardly start confessing my sins. This was because he was so full of light and life. He did not say, “Ed, you are a sinner. You are not absolute.” He did not say anything, but in my being I said, “Lord Jesus, forgive me. I take You as my absoluteness.” Brother Lee ministered Christ to me as the sin-dealing life. We need to minister such a Christ to people.

In *A Timely Word*, under the subtitle “Ministering Christ as the Sin-dealing Life,” Brother Lee says,

If you know that someone has committed some sins, you have to pray for him and learn to minister Christ as the sin-dealing life to him that he may deal with his sins. The life of Christ is a life that deals with sin, a sin-dealing life. First, you yourself must be dealt with by enjoying Christ’s sin-dealing life. Then you must minister such a Christ as the sin-dealing life to others. The book of Leviticus tells us that the priests were to eat the sin offering in the holy place that they might “bear the iniquity of the assembly, to make expiation for them before Jehovah” ([10:17](#)). As you are enjoying Christ as the sin-dealing life, you must have the capacity

to bear the iniquity of God's people. You must learn to minister Christ to the dear ones who are in sin.

To minister Christ as the sin-dealing life to someone is not to go to him to point out his fault and condemn him. [222] This will only cause damage. You have to go first to soften his hardened heart. A person who sins usually has his heart hardened ([Heb. 3:13](#)). If you are going to minister Christ to him, you have to trust in the Lord that you may have the grace with the Spirit to soften his hardened heart. You have to soften his heart and warm up his heart. Then the very Christ as life will be actually, really, and richly ministered to him, and this life, which is the Spirit, will work within him. You do not need to mention his fault, because the life that gets into him as the life supply will do a lot. If a person has a certain physical sickness, you do not need to mention his disease. If you minister the proper medication to this sick man, he will get well. I have experienced this in caring for the saints. I did not talk with the saint about his weakness, fault, or sin, but he was healed. He did not get healed by my word but by the very Spirit, the life of Christ, ministered into him through me. This is what it means, according to Leviticus, to bear the iniquity of the people of God. This is the way to get rid of the sins among some saints.

The work to recover the sinful saints takes time. It cannot be quick. You have to be patient. Even if it took eight months or a year to get one or two sinful saints recovered, that would be a great thing. (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1988, vol. 3, pp. 54-55*)

This wonderful passage shows what it means to minister Christ as the sin-dealing life.

[First John 5:16](#) says, "If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask and he will give life to him." When we see someone who is down, out of it, and on the periphery of the church life, we should not see, criticize, and spread death. Rather, we should see, ask, and give life. We can at least simply mention that brother or sister's name before the Lord. Paul frequently says that he made mention of the saints in his prayers ([Rom. 1:9](#); [Eph. 1:16](#); [1 Thes. 1:2](#); [Philem. 4](#)). We do not always have to pray long prayers. We can simply make mention of the saints. If we make mention of their names, the Lord will come in. If you pray in this way, rather than being a criticizer, you will become an asker, and when you go

to that saint, you will become a channel of life to give life to him. This matches our experience. Sometimes when someone calls us on the phone, we get life. Before the call, we are not in [223] life, but then a saint calls us, and we get life. We get life because that saint asked the Lord to give us life.

**IN TAKING CHRIST AS OUR TRESPASS OFFERING,  
OUR NEEDING TO MAKE A THOROUGH CONFESSION  
OF ALL OUR SHORTCOMINGS, WEAKNESSES,  
WRONGDOINGS, AND SINFULNESS  
IN ORDER TO HAVE A CONSCIENCE WITHOUT OFFENSE  
TOWARD GOD AND MEN**

In taking Christ as our trespass offering, we need to make a thorough confession of all our shortcomings, weaknesses, wrongdoings, and sinfulness in order to have a conscience without offense toward God and men ([Acts 24:16](#); [Psa. 51:2](#)). Many of us experienced this when we first were saved. We may have made a thorough confession at one time of all our shortcomings, weaknesses, wrongdoings, and sinfulness in order to have a conscience without offense toward God and men. This is good, but we need to experience Christ as our trespass offering every day. We cannot say, “I experienced Christ as my trespass offering when I got saved or when I turned and came back into the church life.” I still remember the first time that I experienced Christ as my trespass offering. It might have been the first week after I had received the Lord through reading a gospel tract. I had not read all the Old Testament, but I was reading the New Testament. While I was reading the Bible, I was suddenly very convicted. I do not remember what passage of the Bible I was reading, but I remember seeing that the Lord had died for me on the cross and that I was a sinner. I began to weep and confess my sins, and the more I confessed, the more I had to confess. My roommate at the time was an unbeliever. I was an unbeliever when I started rooming with him, but I had become a believer. I did not want him to hear me, so I went into the bathroom and turned on the faucets so that the noise of the running water would cover up the sound of my confessing. Eventually, I realized that I had to turn the faucets off, or else the running water would lead to a high water bill. I turned the faucets off, ran outside, continued to confess my sins, and consecrated my whole life to the Lord. My confession and consecration were part of the same package. This is what happens when we enjoy Christ as our trespass offering. We confess our sins, wrongdoings, and weaknesses in order to have a

conscience without offense toward God and man. The result of this is that we love the Lord to the uttermost, and we want to give our whole being to Him. [224]

**Since God Knows the Record of Our Sinful Doings,  
It Being Best for Us to Ask Him  
to Rid Us of That Record by Confessing**

Since God knows the record of our sinful doings, it is best for us to ask Him to rid us of that record by confessing (1 John 1:7, 9). It is wonderful that we can get rid of the record of our sinful doings by confessing. **First John 1:7** says that “the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from every sin.” *Every sin* includes the sins that you may feel cannot be forgiven. There is no such thing as a sin that cannot be forgiven. *Every sin* means every sin. Two verses later John says, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (v. 9). If we confess our sins, the Lord is faithful in His word and righteous according to His shed blood to forgive all our sins and cleanse us from all our unrighteousness. To confess our sins means that we agree with Him that we have sinned. We say, “Yes, Lord, that was a sin, that was a wrongdoing, and that was a defect.”

**After Such a Thorough and Fine Confession,  
Our Being Filled with the Spirit  
Essentially and Economically  
to Make Us Buoyant and Bold in Our God  
to Speak the Gospel of God**

After such a thorough and fine confession, we will be filled with the Spirit essentially and economically to make us buoyant and bold in our God to speak the gospel of God (cf. **Num. 21:16-18; 1 Thes. 2:2, 4**). The more we confess, the more we are filled with the Spirit. Chapter 2 of *The Way to Practice the Lord's Present Move* is entitled “Go! by Rising Up! and Being Filled with the Consummated Spirit Essentially and Economically” (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1985, vol. 5, p. 431*). The way we do this is by making a thorough and fine confession of our sins to the Lord in the light of His wonderful presence. When we confess our sins and are cleansed, we become buoyant. No one has to tell us to speak the gospel, because we want to speak the gospel. The first time that I

preached the gospel, no one told me to do so. After I had confessed my sins, I went to work and went up to one of my colleagues and said, “I met the Lord Jesus.” He said, “You met who?” I answered, “I met the Lord Jesus. He is real and living, and now He lives inside of me.” He said, “Ed, something is wrong with you. What has happened to you?” [225]  
Eventually, he was saved; he was the first person whom I led to the Lord. I did not really know what I was doing, but he still got saved.

**THE TRESPASS OFFERING  
EVENTUALLY BECOMING THE SIN OFFERING,  
SIGNIFYING THAT CHRIST’S REDEMPTION FOR OUR SIN  
RESOLVES THE PROBLEM OF SIN IN ITS TWO ASPECTS:  
SIN IN OUR INWARD NATURE  
AND SINS IN OUR OUTWARD CONDUCT**

The trespass offering eventually becomes the sin offering, signifying that Christ’s redemption for our sin resolves the problem of sin in its two aspects: sin in our inward nature and sins in our outward conduct ([Lev. 5:6-8, 11-12; John 1:29](#)).

**TWO TURTLEDOVES OR TWO YOUNG PIGEONS,  
ONE FOR A SIN OFFERING  
AND THE OTHER FOR A BURNT OFFERING,  
FORMING A TRESPASS OFFERING,  
SIGNIFYING THAT THE SOURCE OF EVERY TRESPASS  
IS THE SIN THAT IS IN OUR FLESH,  
AND THE REASON FOR EVERY TRESPASS  
IS OUR NOT LIVING ABSOLUTELY FOR GOD**

Two turtledoves or two young pigeons, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering, form a trespass offering, signifying that the source of every trespass is the sin that is in our flesh, and the reason for every trespass is our not living absolutely for God ([Lev. 5:7](#)).

**LEVITICUS 5 SPEAKING OF FOUR PARTICULAR ITEMS  
THAT NEED THE TRESPASS OFFERING  
SO THAT GOD’S PEOPLE CAN LIVE  
A HOLY, CLEAN, AND REJOICING LIFE  
FOR THEM TO BE INCORPORATED**

## **WITH THE TRIUNE GOD FOR HIS GLORY**

### **To Fail to Testify to the Truth concerning What We Know Being to Be Dishonest and Unfaithful, unlike Our God, Who Is Faithful and Honest; This Actually Dealing with Lying, Which Involves Satan, the Father of Lies**

**Leviticus 5** speaks of four particular items that need the trespass offering so that God's people can live a holy, clean, and rejoicing life for them to be incorporated with the Triune God for His glory (**vv. 1-4**). [226] To fail to testify to the truth concerning what we know is to be dishonest and unfaithful, unlike our God, who is faithful and honest; this actually deals with lying, which involves Satan, the father of lies (**v. 1; John 8:44**). We sometimes lie unintentionally. Recently, I said something to my wife, and then I had to ask the Lord to forgive me. I realized after she left that I had not told her the truth. It is easy to not tell your wife the truth sometimes. It happens unconsciously. Little children also are like this. They do not have to go to school and take a class to learn how to lie. They lie automatically. Lying is something that happens spontaneously. It is the result of the law of sin and death. We need to confess this sin.

### **To Touch the Uncleaness of Spiritual Death Being the Most Serious Thing in the Eyes of God**

#### ***If We Are to Live a Holy Life Separated from Death, Our Needing to Exercise Care concerning Our Contact with People***

To touch the uncleanness of spiritual death is the most serious thing in the eyes of God (**Lev. 5:2**). If we are to live a holy life separated from death, we need to exercise care concerning our contact with people (**ch. 11; Acts 10:9b-15, 27-29**). **Acts 10:9-15** says,

On the next day as they were journeying and drawing near to the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray around the sixth hour. And he became very hungry and wanted to eat. And while they were preparing, a trance came upon him; and he beheld heaven opened, and a certain vessel like a great sheet descending, being

let down by four corners onto the earth, in which were all the four-footed animals and reptiles of the earth and birds of heaven. And a voice came to him: Rise up, Peter; slay and eat! But Peter said, By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything common and unclean. And a voice came to him again a second time: The things that God has cleansed, do not make common.

Right after this happened, there was a knock on the door. Some men from the house of Cornelius had come to where Peter was staying. They wanted Peter to come to them to share the gospel with them (cf. v. 22). They wanted Peter to tell them about Christ. Peter went with them and found many who had come together. He said to them, “You understand [227] that it is unlawful for a man who is a Jew to join himself to or come near one of another race; yet God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean” (v. 28). God showed him this while he was on the housetop. All the animals that Peter saw in the sheet represent men who have been cleansed with the blood. This indicates that we need to have discernment in our diet. Message 36 of the *Life-study of Leviticus* develops this thought further. It is entitled “Discernment in Diet.”

*Animals That Divide the Hoof and Chew the Cud  
Signifying Persons Who Have Discernment in Their Activities  
and Who Receive the Word of God  
with Much Reconsideration*

Animals that divide the hoof and chew the cud signify persons who have discernment in their activities and who receive the word of God with much reconsideration ([Lev. 11:2-3](#)). We need to be the kind of animal that chews the cud, and we need to be around such animals. *Divides the hoof* means that we discern what is of God and what is of Satan, what is heavenly and what is earthly, what is spiritual and what is fleshly, what is of the new man and what is of the old man, and what is of the world and what is in the divine and mystical realm. We need to have this kind of discernment. In addition, we need to be those who receive the word of God. In addition to pray-reading the Word of God, we must muse upon it and receive it with much reconsideration. This is to “chew the cud.” The dictionary defines the word *cud* as “food regurgitated from the first stomach to the mouth of a ruminant and chewed again.” A ruminant is an animal like a cow, which has more than one stomach. A cow has four stomachs. A cow uses these stomachs to digest its food stage by stage. We need to be like this. We need to chew, digest, and assimilate the word of God. Then during the day we



need to “regurgitate” the word of God and again chew the word that we enjoyed in the morning until we get all the Spirit out of that word. This is the kind of animal that we should be.

*Aquatic Animals That Have Fins and Scales Signifying Persons  
Who Can Move and Act Freely in the World,  
Simultaneously Resisting Its Influence*

Aquatic animals that have fins and scales signify persons who can move and act freely in the world, simultaneously resisting its influence [228] (v. 9). Fins allow us to move and act freely in the sea of this world, and scales protect us from the salt, the influence, of the world.

*Birds That Have Wings for Flying  
and That Eat Seeds of Life as Their Food Supply  
Signifying Persons Who Can Live and Move  
in a Life That Is Away from and above the World  
and Who Take the Things of Life as Their Supply of Life*

Birds that have wings for flying and that eat seeds of life as their food supply signify persons who can live and move in a life that is away from and above the world and who take the things of life as their supply of life (cf. vv. 13-19). It is wonderful to be a person like this and to be around people like this. We need to pray, “Lord, make me a person like this.”

*Insects That Have Wings and Jointed Legs above Their Feet  
for Leaping on the Ground  
Signifying Persons Who Can Live and Move  
in a Life That Is above the World  
and Who Can Keep Themselves from the World*

Insects that have wings and jointed legs above their feet for leaping on the ground signify persons who can live and move in a life that is above the world and who can keep themselves from the world (vv. 21-22). This is the kind of person that we need to be and the kind of persons that we need to stay in contact with. Then we will become what we eat. We will become persons like this.

*The Carcasses of the Animals in Leviticus 5:2  
Referring to Three Different Kinds of Spiritual Death  
That May Spread among God's People in the Church Life:  
Beasts Signifying Wild Death,  
Cattle Signifying Mild Death,  
and Creeping Things Signifying Subtle Death*

The carcasses of the animals in [Leviticus 5:2](#) refer to three different kinds of spiritual death that may spread among God's people in the church life: beasts signify wild death, cattle signify mild death, and creeping things signify subtle death ([Rom. 14:15, 20; 16:17](#)). The beasts signify wild death. We experienced wild death during the turmoil in 1977. Cattle signify mild death, and creeping things signify subtle death. In [229] the turmoil in 1988 we experienced mild death and subtle death. Those who have been in the church life for many years may have experienced the different kinds of death typified by these carcasses. We should not touch any carcass; that is, we should not contact anyone who spreads death. Rather, we should stay with the clean animals; that is, we should stay in contact with the right persons.

*Regardless of Its Kind, Death Being Unclean, Filthy, and Defiling;  
Death Being the Most Hateful Thing in the Eyes of God*

Regardless of its kind, death is unclean, filthy, and defiling; death is the most hateful thing in the eyes of God (cf. [1 Cor. 15:26](#)). [First Corinthians 15:26](#) says, "Death, the last enemy, is being abolished." Death is God's last enemy.

*According to the Typology in the Old Testament,  
Death Being More Defiling Than Sin*

According to the typology in the Old Testament, death is more defiling than sin (see footnote 2 on [Lev. 11:31](#)). [Leviticus 11:31](#) says, "These are unclean to you among all the swarming things; whoever touches them when they are dead shall be unclean until the evening." Footnote 2 says,

According to the Bible, death is more defiling and abominable than sin. Through the trespass offering any sin could be forgiven immediately ([ch. 5](#)), but a person who touched the carcass of any

animal was unclean until the evening (vv. 24-25, 27b-28a, 31b-32, 39-40). Our sins are forgiven by the Lord immediately after we confess them to Him (1 John 1:9), but a certain period of time must pass before we can be cleansed from the defilement of spiritual death. A person who touched the carcass of a man was unclean for seven days (Num. 19:11, 13), indicating that in the eyes of God, fallen human beings are the most defiling element (cf. Matt. 15:17-20).

We need to stay away from spiritual death.

### ***Our Needing to Be Nazarites Who Are Separated from Death and Filled with Life, “Anti-death”***

We need to be Nazarites who are separated from death and filled with life, “anti-death” (Num. 6:6-8; Rom. 8:6). Life is anti-death. To be [230] a Nazarite, we must be separated from four things—natural affection, earthly pleasure, rebellion, and death. We need to pray, “Lord, I do not want to live in my natural affection. I want to live by the spirit and walk by the spirit. Lord, I do not want to be a person who is enjoying the pleasures of this earth. I want You to be my pleasure. I want You to be my entertainment. I want You to be my joy and my enjoyment.” To be separated from rebellion, we can pray, “Lord, head me up today. Head up this day. Head up my spirit. Head up my soul. Head up my body. Head up all my circumstances. I would like to fully live under Your headship.” To be separated from death, we need to be filled with life, which is anti-death. We need to be filled with anti-death by being filled with the sevenfold intensified life-giving Spirit. We can also pray, “Lord, save me from touching death, save me from spreading death, and save me from being affected by death in any way.”

### **The Uncleaness of Man Signifying That Everything That Is Discharged from the Natural Man and the Natural Life, Whether Good or Bad, Is Unclean**

The uncleaness of man signifies that everything that is discharged from the natural man and the natural life, whether good or bad, is unclean (Lev. 5:3; cf. Matt. 15:17-20; 16:21-25).

**To Speak Rashly before God,**

**Expressing Our Opinion  
in a Hasty, Careless, and Reckless Way,  
Indicating That We Do Not Live for God  
and Do Not Fear God**

To speak rashly before God, expressing our opinion in a hasty, careless, and reckless way, indicates that we do not live for God and do not fear God (Lev. 5:4; cf. Matt. 17:24-27; John 7:3-8).

**IN LEVITICUS 5:11  
FINE FLOUR, SIGNIFYING THE HUMANITY OF JESUS,  
BEING USED FOR A SIN OFFERING,  
SIGNIFYING THAT WE COMMIT SINS  
BECAUSE WE ARE SHORT  
OF THE HUMANITY OF JESUS**

In [Leviticus 5:11](#) fine flour, signifying the humanity of Jesus, is used for a sin offering, signifying that we commit sins because we are short of the humanity of Jesus. This is why we commit sins. [231]

**This Indicating That We Commit Sins  
Not Only Because We Have Sin in Our Nature  
and Not Only Because We Are Not Absolute for God  
but Also Because We Do Not Have the Humanity of Jesus;  
in His Humanity Jesus Having No Sin in Him  
and Being Absolute for God**

This indicates that we commit sins not only because we have sin in our nature and not only because we are not absolute for God but also because we do not have the humanity of Jesus; in His humanity Jesus has no sin in Him and is absolute for God.

**The Tenth Part of an Ephah of Fine Flour  
Offered for a Sin Offering  
Signifying That Only a Small Portion  
of the Humanity of Jesus Is Needed to Kill  
the Negative Things within Us and to Supply Our Need**

The tenth part of an ephah of fine flour offered for a sin offering signifies that only a small portion of the humanity of Jesus is needed to kill the negative things within us and to supply our need.

**MAKING RESTITUTION AND ADDING TO IT ONE-FIFTH MORE  
SIGNIFYING THAT THE ONE WHO OFFERS THE TRESPASS  
OFFERING  
SHOULD BE RIGHTEOUS IN MATERIAL THINGS  
ACCORDING TO THE DIVINE SCALE, STANDARD,  
AND MEASUREMENT**

Making restitution and adding to it one-fifth more signifies that the one who offers the trespass offering should be righteous in material things according to the divine scale, standard, and measurement ([vv. 15-16](#); cf. [Luke 19:8](#)).

**“DAVID BEGOT SOLOMON  
OF HER WHO HAD BEEN THE WIFE OF URIAH”**

**Psalm 51 Being Composed after David’s Great Sin  
in Murdering Uriah and Robbing Him of His Wife  
and Then Being Rebuked by Nathan**

*“Against You and You Alone Have I Sinned,  
and I Have Done What Is Evil in Your Sight”*

[Matthew 1:6](#) says, “David begot Solomon of her who had been the wife of Uriah.” [Psalm 51](#) was composed after David’s great sin in [\[232\]](#) murdering Uriah and robbing him of his wife and then being rebuked by Nathan. [Psalm 51:4](#) says, “Against You and You alone have I sinned, / And I have done what is evil in Your sight.”

*“Hide Your Face from My Sins,  
and Blot Out All My Iniquities”*

[Psalm 51:9](#) says, “Hide Your face from my sins, / And blot out all my iniquities.” It would be very good to read and pray [Psalm 51](#).

***“The Sacrifices of God Are a Broken Spirit;  
a Broken and a Contrite Heart, O God,  
You Will Not Despise”***

Psalm 51:17 says, “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; / A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.”

***“Do Good in Your Good Pleasure unto Zion;  
Build the Walls of Jerusalem”***

Psalm 51:18 says, “Do good in Your good pleasure unto Zion; / Build the walls of Jerusalem.” This is the way that this psalm ends. After David had taken the trespass offering and had been forgiven of his sins, he says, “Do good in Your good pleasure unto Zion.” *Zion* signifies the overcomers. *The walls of Jerusalem* refers to the church as the kingdom of God. We need to build the walls of Jerusalem. This shows that we are brought into God’s eternal purpose by taking Christ as our trespass offering.

**The Issue of the “Marriage” of David’s Transgression  
and Repentance with God’s Forgiveness  
Being Solomon (“Peaceful”),  
the One Who Built the Temple of God**

The issue of the “marriage” of David’s transgression and repentance with God’s forgiveness was Solomon (“peaceful”), the one who built the temple of God (2 Sam. 7:12-14a; 2 Chron. 3:1). David transgressed and then repented. That transgression and repentance was “married” to God’s forgiveness, producing a person named Solomon. According to 2 Samuel 12:24-25, David named his son Solomon, which means “peaceful,” but God called his name Jedidiah, which means “beloved of Jehovah.” When we repent of our transgression and take Christ as our trespass offering, we receive God’s forgiveness, and we become persons [233] who are full of Christ as peace and as love and who are building members of the Body of Christ.

***The Church Being Always Built Up  
by This Kind of Person—a Solomon—  
One Who Is the Issue of Man’s Transgression***

## *and Repentance Plus God's Forgiveness*

The church is always built up by this kind of person—a Solomon—one who is the issue of man's transgression and repentance plus God's forgiveness.

### *When We Experience the Marriage of Our Transgression and Repentance with God's Forgiveness, Our Becoming Very Useful in the Building Up of the Church*

When we experience the marriage of our transgression and repentance with God's forgiveness, we become very useful in the building up of the church.

## **FIVE KINDS OF FORGIVENESS**

As a concluding word to this message, we will consider five kinds of forgiveness. We may have thought that forgiveness is just forgiveness, but there are five kinds of forgiveness.

### **THERE BEING ETERNAL FORGIVENESS— THIS RELATING TO LIFE**

#### **The Forgiveness That Comes with Our Salvation Being Eternal Forgiveness**

There is eternal forgiveness—this relates to life. The forgiveness that comes with our salvation is eternal forgiveness.

#### **Once We Are Forgiven, Our Being Forgiven Forever; Our Receiving Eternal Life Forever, and Our Being Justified Forever**

Once we are forgiven, we are forgiven forever; we receive eternal life forever, and we are justified forever ([Luke 24:47](#); [Rom. 4:7-8](#); [Psa. 103:12](#)). In [Luke 24:47](#) the Lord reminded the disciples of His word “that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.” [Psalm 103:1-2](#) says, “Bless Jehovah, O my soul; / And all that is within me, bless His holy [234] name. /

Bless Jehovah, O my soul; / And do not forget all His benefits.” This psalm shows God’s “benefits package,” which is revealed in the following verses of the psalm. For example, [verses 3 and 4](#) say, “He pardons all your iniquities; / He heals all your diseases; / He redeems your life from the pit; / He crowns you with lovingkindness and compassions.” Then [verse 12](#) says, “As far as the east is from the west, / So far has He removed our transgressions from us.” How far is the east from the west? This is how far God has removed our sins from us.

**The Moment We Believe into the Lord Jesus,  
Our Being Forgiven of All Our Sins;  
the Lord Removing All Our Sins, and  
Our Being Left with No Trace of Sin before God**

The moment we believe into the Lord Jesus, we are forgiven of all our sins; the Lord removes all our sins, and we are left with no trace of sin before God ([Heb. 8:12](#); [Acts 10:43](#)). [Hebrews 8:12](#) says, “I will be propitious to their unrighteousnesses, and their sins I shall by no means remember anymore.” This verse indicates that God has “amnesia” when He forgives us of our sins. He not only forgives us of our sins; He does not remember them anymore. When we confess our sins, we should not remind Him of the sins that we have previously confessed, because He has already forgiven and forgotten them. He forgives and He forgets. Unlike Him, we may claim to have forgiven someone, but we may not forget. For example, after that person commits the same offense the third time, we may say, “This is the third time you have done that.” Saying this indicates that we did not really forgive him the first two times according to the way that God forgives.

**THERE BEING INSTRUMENTAL FORGIVENESS—  
THIS RELATING TO THE CHURCH**

**In Sending the Holy Spirit to His Church,  
the Lord Charging the Church  
to Be His Representative on the Earth;  
Forgiveness Being Now Granted through the Church**

There is instrumental forgiveness—this relates to the church. In sending the Holy Spirit to His church, the Lord charged the church to be His



representative on the earth; forgiveness is now granted through the church ([John 20:22-23](#)). [John 20:22-23](#) says, “When He had said this, He breathed into them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose [235] sins you forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you retain, they are retained.”

**Instrumental Forgiveness**  
**Being God’s Proclamation of Forgiveness through Man;**  
**If a Person Is Newly Saved**  
**but Does Not Know the Meaning of Forgiveness,**  
**Its Being Good for a Representative of the Church to Stand Up**  
**and Say to Him, “You Have Accepted the Lord Today;**  
**You Can Thank Him**  
**Because He Has Forgiven You of Your Sins!”**

Instrumental forgiveness is God’s proclamation of forgiveness through man; if a person is newly saved but does not know the meaning of forgiveness, it is good for a representative of the church to stand up and say to him, “You have accepted the Lord today; you can thank Him because He has forgiven you of your sins!”

**THERE BEING RESTORATIVE FORGIVENESS—**  
**THIS RELATING TO FELLOWSHIP**

**When We Sin in Our Daily Life,**  
**Our Conscience Condemning Us, and**  
**Our Fellowship with God Being Interrupted**

There is restorative forgiveness—this relates to fellowship. When we sin in our daily life, our conscience condemns us, and our fellowship with God is interrupted ([Acts 24:16](#); [1 Tim. 1:5](#); [3:9](#); [2 Tim. 1:3](#)). Paul could have said many things in giving his testimony before the Roman ruler, but he said, “I also exercise myself to always have a conscience without offense toward God and men” ([Acts 24:16](#)). Our conscience is a part of our spirit. This means that a way to exercise our spirit is to take Christ as our trespass offering to have a conscience without offense.

[First Timothy 1:5](#) says, “The end of the charge is love out of a pure heart and out of a good conscience and out of unfeigned faith.” The charge in

this verse refers to Paul's exhortation to Timothy to charge certain ones not to teach things that are different from God's economy, which is in faith (vv. 3-4). When we are under the teaching of God's economy, the end, the result, and the issue of the charge is love. We surely love the Lord more right now than we did before reading these messages. This is because the end of the charge to be in the teaching of [236] God's economy is love out of a pure heart and out of a good conscience and out of unfeigned faith. We love the Lord out of a good conscience.

[Second Timothy 1:3](#) says, "I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers in a pure conscience, while unceasingly I have remembrance concerning you in my petitions night and day." A pure conscience is a conscience purified from any mixture; it is a conscience that is governed by Christ and by the goal of Christ, which is the built-up church consummating in the New Jerusalem.

[First Timothy 3:9](#) says that the deacons in the church should hold "the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience." The mystery of the faith is Christ as the mystery of God and the church as the mystery of Christ. We need to hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

**Our Father-son Relationship with God in Life  
Never Being Changed,  
but Sin Being Able to Damage Our Fellowship with God;  
Our Having to Confess Our Sins and Offenses to God  
before We Can Secure Our Forgiveness in Fellowship**

Our Father-son relationship with God in life can never be changed, but sin can damage our fellowship with God; we have to confess our sins and offenses to God before we can secure our forgiveness in fellowship ([1 John 1:7, 9](#); [2:1-2](#)). Even in the physical realm, if a son does something wrong, he will try to hide. For example, a child may hide somewhere and eat something that he should not eat. He hides because his conscience bothers him. Our Father-son relationship with God in life can never be changed, but sin can damage our fellowship with God. We have to confess our sins and offenses to God before we can secure our forgiveness in fellowship. [First John 1:9](#) says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." [First John 2:1-2](#) says, "My little children, these things I write to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for

ours only but also for those of the whole world.” We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. The Greek word for *advocate* in [verse 1](#) refers to “one who is called to another’s side to aid him.” Christ comes to aid us when we take Him as our trespass offering. *Advocate* also means “one who is a helper, counsel, intercessor, and comforter.” All these things are synonymous with *advocate*. Christ being our Advocate [\[237\]](#) means that He is our Helper, our Counsel, our Intercessor, and our Comforter.

### **If We Have Offended Our Brothers, Our Having to Confess to Them as Well**

If we have offended our brothers, we must confess to them as well ([Matt. 5:23-24](#)). If we offend a brother, we need to confess to him, especially before the Lord’s table meeting. We should not partake of the Lord’s table if we have offended someone. Suppose that we have lost our temper at someone; we should not take the Lord’s table. That could have very serious consequences. I have seen serious things happen when someone lost their temper, did not clear that matter up, yet took the Lord’s table. We must make sure that we take the Lord’s table with a clear and pure conscience. It is always precious at a Lord’s table meeting to see a brother going across the room to ask another brother for forgiveness. The first brother would not take the elements before he asked for the other brother’s forgiveness. That is very precious to me. That is how our conscience should operate.

### **Our Having to Maintain Ourselves in Constant Fellowship with God; When We Come to God, Our Having to Acknowledge Our Sinful Acts Honestly and Ask Him for Forgiveness; If We Do This, Our Fellowship with God Being Restored, and Our Heart Being Filled with the Joy of Salvation**

We have to maintain ourselves in constant fellowship with God; when we come to God, we have to acknowledge our sinful acts honestly and ask Him for forgiveness; if we do this, our fellowship with God will be restored, and our heart will be filled with the joy of salvation ([Psa. 51:12](#); [Prov. 15:13a](#); [17:22a](#); [15:15b](#)). After David confesses his sins in [Psalm 51](#), he says, “Restore to me the gladness of Your salvation, / And sustain me

with a willing spirit” (v. 12). We need a willing spirit for the things of Christ and for the things of the church. When we take Christ as the trespass offering, we need to ask Him to restore to us the gladness of His salvation.

Three verses in Proverbs speak about a joyful heart. [Proverbs 15:13a](#) says, “A joyful heart makes a cheerful countenance.” If we have a cheerful countenance, this means that we have a joyful heart. If we have a sorrowful countenance, this means that our heart is not joyful. Recently, [238] a brother recounted how Brother Lee had come to one of their meetings and said, “Brothers, your long faces scare me.” We should not have a long, uncheerful, sad face. We should have a joyful heart. [Proverbs 17:22a](#) says, “A joyful heart is good medicine.” We do not need to pretend to have a joyful heart. We have the law of rejoicing in our spirit.

**The Secret of the Christian Life  
Being to Maintain Ourselves  
in Constant Fellowship with God;  
If We Fail, Our Having to Ask God for Forgiveness,  
and Our Having to Recover the Sweet Fellowship  
That We Had with God**

The secret of the Christian life is maintaining ourselves in constant fellowship with God; if we fail, we must ask God for forgiveness, and we must recover the sweet fellowship that we had with God ([1 John 1:9](#)). Nothing is greater than having sweet fellowship with God.

**THERE BEING GOVERNMENTAL FORGIVENESS—  
THIS RELATING TO DISCIPLINE**

**This Kind of Forgiveness Involving God’s Arrangement,  
Sovereignty, Discipline, and Hand;  
God’s Government Being His Way of Doing Things;  
Its Being His Administration**

There is governmental forgiveness—this relates to discipline. This kind of forgiveness involves God’s arrangement, sovereignty, discipline, and hand; God’s government is His way of doing things; it is His administration.

**God's Governmental Forgiveness  
Being Related to the Way That God  
Manages, Rules over, and Deals with Us**

God's governmental forgiveness is related to the way that God manages, rules over, and deals with us (*Gal. 6:7*). *Galatians 6:7-8* says, "Do not be deceived: God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For he who sows unto his own flesh will reap corruption of the flesh, but he who sows unto the Spirit will of the Spirit reap eternal life." If we sow unto the Spirit, we will reap eternal life. If we sow unto the flesh, we will reap corruption. We need to be those who sow unto the Spirit. [239]

**When We Sin against God, His Forgiving Us  
When We Confess Our Sins to Him;  
Our Fellowship with Him Being Able to Be Restored,  
but His Possibly Changing His Way with Us**

When we sin against God, He will forgive us when we confess our sins to Him; our fellowship with Him can be restored, but He may change His way with us. Let me just share with you an illustration that Brother Lee used to explain this principle. Suppose our housekeeper breaks all the windows in our house. If she then asks us for forgiveness, we would forgive her. However, we would no longer employ her as our housekeeper. We would have to change our way with her. We have seen situations where brothers have been in the work or in the eldership, and because they conducted themselves in a certain negative way, God changed His way with them. It is very serious to be under God's governmental hand. We do not want to fall under God's governmental hand. We need to pray, "Lord, do not let me fall under Your governmental discipline. I want to remain in the sweet fellowship with You all the time."

In *Elders' Training, Book 3: The Way to Carry Out the Vision*, Brother Lee points out that the taste for the ministry is the controlling factor in the Lord's recovery. He says, "This taste is the controlling factor in the Lord's recovery. No one can overthrow this controlling factor. If you try to overthrow it, you yourself will be overthrown" (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1984*, vol. 2, p. 346). We have seen brothers try to introduce their own taste instead of the taste of the ministry, but our taste for the New Testament ministry is what controls us.

We need to pray that the Lord would deal with our disposition, transform us, and sanctify us dispositionally. We have seen situations where problems in the church came from people with dominating attitudes, who like to suppress the fellowship and to criticize others. Being critical can be a part of one's disposition. We may be a critical person. Others have a disposition of not being easily bothered; such persons need to be transformed just as much as those who are critical. However, to have a disposition of constantly criticizing other people can be a destructive factor. We should not criticize.

The elders need to be very careful when they are talking about the saints or fellowshiping about the saints' needs. They need to avoid having a critical spirit and avoid criticizing a particular brother or [240] sister. While a fellow elder and I were fellowshiping about a brother for whom we were concerned, this elder asked a simple question: "How can we help this brother?" Whenever we fellowship about the saints, we should have this attitude. Our attitude should be one of seeking how to help that brother or sister. We should not be critical, and we should not have a criticizing disposition toward people. That damages the church life.

**David Confessing His Sins and Admitting His Guilt  
in Order to Be Forgiven by God,  
but God Causing the Son Born to Uriah's Wife to Die  
and the Sword to Not Depart from David's House**

David confessed his sins and admitted his guilt in order to be forgiven by God (2 Sam. 12:13; Psa. 51), but God would cause the son born to Uriah's wife to die and the sword to not depart from David's house (2 Sam. 12:7-15). Even though David confessed his sin and was forgiven by God, God changed His way with David. The sword did not depart from David's house, and the firstborn son of Uriah's wife died. That was governmental forgiveness related to David.

**When We Are under God's Governmental Discipline,  
the Only Thing That We Can Do  
Being to Learn to Humble Ourselves  
under His Mighty Hand;  
the More We Reject God's Governmental Hand,**

## **the More Problems Our Encountering**

When we are under God's governmental discipline, the only thing that we can do is to learn to humble ourselves under His mighty hand (1 Pet. 5:5-7); the more we reject God's governmental hand, the more problems we will encounter. It is very sad to me when I see people become harder instead of softer under God's governmental hand. The Lord wants to make us soft toward Him. I know a brother who encountered some problems. He was out of the church life for a while, and one day his situation woke him up. He realized that he needed to come back to the Lord and back into the church life. His being under God's governmental discipline did not make him harder; instead, it softened him toward the Lord. It made him turn to the Lord, it made him repent, and it made him love the Lord more. He humbled himself under God's hand. That is how we should be. [241]

### **After Moses Struck the Rock in Meribah, His Falling under God's Governmental Hand**

After Moses struck the rock in Meribah (Num. 20:10-12, 24; 27:14), he fell under God's governmental hand. In Numbers 20:8 God told Moses, "Take the rod, and gather the assembly, you and Aaron your brother, and speak to the rock before their eyes, so that it yields its water. Thus you shall bring forth water for them out of the rock and give the assembly and their livestock something to drink." The people were complaining, and "Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said to them, Listen now, you rebels: Shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?" (v. 10). We should not say to the young people, "Listen now, you rebels!" The real rebel here was Moses. He did not speak to the rock as God had instructed him; instead, he struck the rock twice with his rod. God was merciful, and abundant water came out for the people (v. 11). Nevertheless, God would discipline Moses.

The point is that we must be very careful in how we speak about and how we treat God's children. The saints are God's children. Their complaining is not because they are against God but because they need more of the Spirit. They are thirsty, and they need us to minister the Spirit to them.

***In Being Angry When God Was Not Angry,  
Moses Not Representing God Rightly in His Holy Nature,***

*and in Striking the Rock Twice,  
His Not Keeping God's Word in His Economy;  
Thus, Moses Offending Both God's Holy Nature  
and His Divine Economy*

In being angry when God was not angry, Moses did not represent God rightly in His holy nature, and in striking the rock twice, he did not keep God's word in His economy; thus, Moses offended both God's holy nature and His divine economy.

*Because of This, Even Though He Was Intimate with God  
and May Be Considered a Companion of God,  
Moses Losing the Right to Enter into the Good Land*

Because of this, even though he was intimate with God and may be considered a companion of God (Exo. 33:11), Moses lost the right to [242] enter into the good land. God changed His way with Moses. We know that Moses will be in the kingdom, because he was there on the Mount of Transfiguration; however, he was not allowed to bring the children of Israel into the good land (Num. 20:12).

*In All That We Say and Do concerning God's People,  
Our Attitude Having to Be according to God's Holy Nature,  
and Our Actions Having to Be  
according to His Divine Economy;  
This Being to Sanctify Him*

In all that we say and do concerning God's people, our attitude must be according to God's holy nature, and our actions must be according to His divine economy; this is to sanctify Him.

**Having to Learn to Be Generous to Others  
and Learn Always to Forgive;  
If We Criticize Others Lightly, Condemn Others Easily,  
Keep Complaining about the Conduct of Others, and  
Continue to Count the Ill-treatment We Receive from Them,  
This Bringing Us under God's Governmental Hand;  
If We Are Severe toward Others,**



## God Also Being Severe toward Us

We must learn to be generous to others and learn always to forgive; if we criticize others lightly, condemn others easily, keep complaining about the conduct of others, and continue to count the ill-treatment we receive from them, this will bring us under God's governmental hand; if we are severe toward others, God will also be severe toward us ([Matt. 6:15; 18:23-35](#)). We should not be severe toward others. In [Matthew 6:15](#) the Lord said, "If you do not forgive men their offenses, neither will your Father forgive your offenses."

In [Matthew 18](#) the Lord Jesus told a long story about two slaves. One slave owed his master a large sum of money, but the master forgave him. But this slave went to his fellow slave who owed him a very small sum of money and began to choke him, demanding to be repaid. The other slaves were bothered by this and told their master. The master said, "Evil slave, all that debt I forgave you, because you begged me. Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave even as I had mercy on you?" ([vv. 32-33](#)). [Verses 34 and 35](#) say, "His master became angry and delivered him to the torturers until he would repay all that [243] was owed. So also will My heavenly Father do to you if each of you does not forgive his brother from your hearts." We have to forgive one another from our hearts. If we feel that we cannot do that, we need to be honest with the Lord and say, "Lord, I take You as my forgiving life and as my forgiving person. Right now by faith and by the Spirit I forgive my brother from my heart." The Lord will honor this.

### *Our Needing to Learn to Fear God, to Revere God, to Respect God, to Honor God, to Be in Awe of God*

We have to learn to fear God, to revere God, to respect God, to honor God, to be in awe of God ([Psa. 2:11-12; 86:11; 2 Cor. 5:10-11; Isa. 11:2](#)). [Psalm 2:11-12](#) says, "Serve Jehovah with fear, / And rejoice with trembling. / Kiss the Son / Lest He be angry and you perish from the way; / For His anger may suddenly be kindled. / Blessed are all those who take refuge in Him." These verses indicate that we need to serve Jehovah with reverence, respect, honor, and awe. This means that we love Him intimately, and we are under His protection. He becomes our hiding place. [Isaiah 11:2](#) says, "The Spirit of Jehovah will rest upon Him, / The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, / The Spirit of counsel and might, / The Spirit of the knowledge and fear of Jehovah." This refers to the human living of

Jesus. The Lord Jesus was filled with the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of the knowledge and the fear of Jehovah. One time when Brother Lee was talking about the humanity of Jesus, he said, “No human being has ever feared God as much as Jesus did” (*Crystallization-study of the Humanity of Christ*, p. 13). We have this person in our spirit.

***When Others Are in Trouble,  
Its Being the Time for Us to Help Them,  
Not the Time for Us to Criticize Them***

When others are in trouble, it is the time for us to help them, not the time for us to criticize them (cf. [Gen. 14:14-16](#)). Abraham did this with Lot. Lot separated from Abraham and headed toward Sodom, and then the people in Sodom, including Lot, were captured. If we had been Abraham, we would have said, “Lot got what he deserved. He never should have left us and gone down to Sodom.” However, [Genesis 14:14-16](#) says,

When Abram heard that his brother had been taken captive, he led out his trained men, born in his house, three hundred eighteen of them, and pursued as far as Dan. And he [244] divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and struck them and pursued them to Hobah, which is north of Damascus. And he brought back all the possessions and also brought back Lot his brother and his possessions as well as the women and the people.

Abraham recovered Lot and recovered Lot’s household.

***There Being Many Brothers  
Who Have Fallen Miserably Today for One Reason Only—  
Their Having Criticized Others Too Severely in the Past;  
Many of Their Weaknesses Today  
Being the Very Weaknesses That They Criticized in the Past***

There are many brothers who have fallen miserably today for one reason only—they have criticized others too severely in the past; many of their weaknesses today are the very weaknesses that they criticized in the past.

***Having to Be Generous toward Others  
If We Want to Avoid God’s Governmental Hand;***

## *Needing to Learn to Love and Forbear One Another*

We must be generous toward others if we want to avoid God's governmental hand; may we learn to love and forbear one another ([Eph. 4:32](#)). [Ephesians 4:32](#) says, "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ also forgave you."

### **THERE BEING KINGDOM FORGIVENESS— THIS RELATING TO ADMINISTRATION**

#### **If We Treat People Too Harshly or Have an Unforgiving Spirit in This Age, Our Being Disciplined in the Kingdom Age**

There is kingdom forgiveness—this relates to administration. If we treat people too harshly or have an unforgiving spirit in this age, we will be disciplined in the kingdom age ([Luke 6:37-38](#); [Matt. 18:33-35](#)). [Luke 6:37](#) says, "Do not judge, and you shall by no means be judged; and do not condemn, and you shall by no means be condemned; release, and you will be released." We may not be released because we have not released a certain person from his offense. But if we release that person, if we let go of the offense, we will be released, and our spirit will be released. [245]

#### **If We Treat Others in a Mean Way and Criticize Others Mercilessly, God Dealing with Us in the Same Way in the Future**

If we treat others in a mean way and criticize others mercilessly, God will deal with us in the same way in the future ([Matt. 7:1-2](#)).

#### **Needing the Lord to Grant Us the Grace to Be Those Who Show Mercy to Others and Who Do Not Deal with Others in Meanness, Sharpness, or Severity, So That We Can Obtain Mercy from God in That Day**

May the Lord grant us the grace to be those who show mercy to others and who do not deal with others in meanness, sharpness, or severity, so that we can obtain mercy from God in that day ([5:7](#); cf. [2 Tim. 1:16, 18](#)).

The word on governmental forgiveness is not an easy word, but it is a necessary word, even a healthy word. I believe it can preserve us all our days in the Lord's recovery. The five kinds of forgiveness are eternal forgiveness, which relates to life; instrumental forgiveness, which relates to the church; restorative forgiveness, which relates to our fellowship with God; governmental forgiveness, which relates to discipline; and kingdom forgiveness, which relates to administration. We have five kinds of forgiveness that we can enjoy by taking Christ as our trespass offering. May we appreciate this word. This is a very healthy word for us. We need to take Christ as our trespass offering for God's purpose so that we can become the New Jerusalem.—E. M.