

Week Ten

Christ as the Star out of Jacob

MC Hymns: 1198, 250

Scripture Reading: Num. 24:17; Gen. 1:14-19; Dan. 12:3; Matt. 2:1-12; Rev. 1:16, 20; 2:1, 28; 3:1; 22:16; 2 Pet. 1:19; Gen. 22:17; Jude 12-13

Outline

Day 1

- I. **Numbers 24:17 says, "There shall come forth a Star out of Jacob"; this Star refers to Christ:**
 - A. **The fulfillment of this type of Christ is found in the word of the magi, learned men from the east, recorded in Matthew 2:2: "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star at its rising and have come to worship Him":**
 1. The magi did not say, "We saw a star," or "We saw the star," but "We saw His star."
 2. This is certainly the fulfillment of Numbers 24:17; the star spoken of in this verse was shown to these learned men; it did not appear to any of the people of Israel.
 3. Whereas the Jews had the Scriptures concerning Christ and knew where He would be born (Matt. 2:4-6), the magi saw the star of Christ.
 4. The Jews had the knowledge in letters concerning where Christ was to be born (Micah 5:2), but these learned men from the east received a living vision of Him; eventually, the star led them to the place where Christ was (Matt. 2:9-10).
 5. Christ is the real Sun (Mal. 4:2), but strictly speaking, He does not appear as the Sun during the age of night; rather, He shines as a star; a star shines

at night, but it indicates that day is coming.

6. When Christ came the first time, He appeared openly as a star, but when He comes the second time, He will be the morning star (Rev. 2:28; 22:16) to His overcomers, who watch for His coming; to all others Christ will later appear as the sun.

B. Matthew 2:1-12 reveals that to find Christ is a living matter; it is not a matter of mere doctrinal knowledge of the Bible:

1. The star appeared far away from the genuine religion, far away from the temple in the Holy Land, far away from the Jewish religious center, far away from the priests, the scribes, the Pharisees, and all the religious people; instead, there was a star showing something of Christ in a heathen land.
2. Merely to hold the Bible in our hand and read Micah 5:2, saying that Christ will be born in Bethlehem, does not work; we may have the Bible, but we may miss the heavenly star.
3. The star is the living revelation, the living vision, not the old and dead doctrinal knowledge of the Scriptures, not the dead knowledge of Micah 5:2; what we need today is not merely Bible knowledge but the heavenly vision, the up-to-date, instant vision, the living vision, the vision that human concepts can never teach.
4. Even if we have the knowledge of the Scriptures, we still need the instant, up-to-date, living star to lead us to the very street and the very house where Jesus is.

Day 2

5. After receiving the living vision, the magi were misled by their human concept and went to Jerusalem, the capital of the Jewish nation, where its king was presumed to be; their being misled caused many young boys to be killed (Matt. 2:16).
6. When they arrived in Jerusalem and inquired concerning where the King of the Jews was to be born, we read that "when Herod the king heard this, he was troubled and all Jerusalem with him"—v. 3:
 - a. When they heard this news, they should have rejoiced; instead, they were

troubled.

- b. A Christian who expects the Lord to come or who expects to be raptured should take this as a warning—2 Tim. 4:8; cf. Acts 26:16.
7. After the magi were corrected by the Scriptures (Matt. 2:4-6), they went to Bethlehem (vv. 8-9), and the star appeared to them again and led them to the place where Christ was, "and when they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy" (v. 10).
8. When the magi were corrected by the Scriptures and restored to the right track, the star appeared to them again; living vision always accompanies the Scriptures.
9. The priests were those who taught people the law (Mal. 2:7), and the scribes were those who knew the Scriptures (Ezra 7:6); both the priests and the scribes had knowledge concerning the birth of Christ (Matt. 2:5-6), but, unlike the magi from the east, they did not see the vision, nor did they have the heart to seek after Christ.
10. Regardless of how "scriptural" we are, if we lose the presence of the Lord, we are absolutely wrong; the New Testament way to find and follow the Lord is to continually stay in His hidden presence—John 5:39-40; Isa. 45:15; Exo. 33:11, 14; cf. 2 Cor. 5:16.
11. It is easy to accumulate scriptural knowledge, but if we would have living guidance, we must live in an intimate relationship with the Lord; we must be one with Him—2:10-14.
12. The magi saw Christ, and they worshipped Him; then they were warned by God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, so they departed into their own country "by another way" (Matt. 2:12); once we have seen Christ, we never take the same way, the way of religion apart from Christ, but we will always take another way.

Day 3 & Day 4

II. Christ's faithful followers are shining and living stars, those who follow Christ as the shining and living Star to be His duplication—Dan. 12:3; cf. Gen. 22:17:

A. The living stars follow the heavenly, living, up-to-date, and

instant vision of Christ as the centrality and universality of God's economy—Acts 26:16-18.

- B. The living stars are those who bless God's people; the more we praise the Lord for God's people and speak well of them in faith, the more we put ourselves under God's blessing—Num. 24:9; Gen. 12:2-3; 22:17.**
- C. The living stars give heed to the prophetic word of the Scriptures "as to a lamp shining in a dark place" so that Christ as the morning star rises in their hearts day by day; if we give heed to the word in the Bible, which shines as a lamp in a dark place, we will have His rising in our hearts to shine in the darkness of apostasy where we are today, before His actual appearing as the morning star—2 Pet. 1:19; John 6:63; Rev. 2:28; 22:16; 2 Tim. 4:8:**
- 1. In the principle of the morning star, a Christian should rise up early because the early morning is the best time to meet the Lord (to fellowship with God, to praise and sing, to pray-read the Bible with the ministry, and to pray to the Lord)—S. S. 7:12; Psa. 5:1-3; 57:8-9; 59:16-17; 63:1-8; 90:14; 92:1-2; 108:2-3; 143:8; Exo. 16:21.**
 - 2. He will secretly give Himself as the morning star to those who love Him and who watch and wait for Him so that they may taste the freshness of His presence at His coming back after a long absence.**
- D. The living stars enjoy and are filled with the sevenfold intensified Spirit to make them intensely living and intensely shining for God's building—Rev. 3:1; 4:5; 5:6.**
- E. The living stars are the messengers of the churches, those who enjoy and experience the pneumatic Christ as the Messenger of God and as the fresh message from God so that they can dispense the fresh and present Christ into the people of God for the testimony of Jesus—1:16, 20; 2:1; Mal. 3:1-3.**

Day 5

- F. The living stars have "great resolutions in heart" and "great searchings of heart"; they are lovers of God who are like the "stars...from their courses" to fight together with God against His enemy so that they may be "like the sun / When it rises in its might"—Judg. 5:15-16, 20, 31; Dan. 11:32; Matt. 13:43.**
- G. The living stars are those who fear Jehovah and hear the voice of His Servant, trusting in Jehovah so that they may have light while walking in darkness—Isa. 50:10-11; Psa. 139:7-12, 23-24:**
1. Those who make light for themselves and walk in their self-made light instead of in God's light will suffer torment—Isa. 50:11.
 2. This should be a warning to us so that we may walk in the light given by God, not in the light we make for ourselves—1 John 1:5.
 3. "Come and let us walk in the light of Jehovah"—Isa. 2:5.
- H. The living stars are typified by the stars that were established on the fourth day of God's restoration with His further creation, in which they rule by their shining; where there is shining, there is ruling for the growth of life—Gen. 1:14-19:**
1. The shining forth of the Lord Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration was the coming of the kingdom in power; this shining forth is actually the ruling presence of the Triune God—Matt. 17:1-8; Mark 9:1-8.
 2. The kingdom of God as the ruling of God, the reigning of God, with all its blessings and enjoyment is the shining of the Lord Jesus, and the kingdom is the spreading of the Lord Jesus by shining over us.
 3. The kingdom is the shining of the reality of the Lord Jesus; whenever He is shining over us and we are under that shining, we are in the kingdom under God's ruling and reigning within us for our growth of life.

Day 6

- I. On the negative side, there are some who are "wandering**

stars”—Jude 12-13:

1. The metaphor of wandering stars indicates that the erratic teachers, the apostates, were not solidly fixed in the unchanging truths of the heavenly revelation but were wandering about among God’s starlike people.
 2. Their destiny is the gloom of darkness, which has been kept for them for eternity; the erratic apostates are wandering stars today, but they will be imprisoned in the gloom of darkness.
 3. We may also say that anyone who keeps us from the genuine local church and from meeting on the ground of the church with the Lord’s people is a wandering star; the true stars are those who turn many to righteousness, those who do not lead people astray but turn them to the right way.
 4. Today the living star and the living stars are not far from us—they are in and with the local churches as the practical expressions of the Body of Christ—Rev. 1:11, 20.
 5. Among all the local churches there are some living stars; we simply need to contact them and keep company with them; they will lead us to the place where Jesus is.
- J. May the Lord be merciful to us that we may always be kept in the right way to meet the Lord, to worship Him, and to offer our love to Him; may the Lord make us all like the magi, following the living star to find Christ in order to become His duplication as the living stars—cf. Eph. 5:8-9.**

WEEK 10 — DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Matt. 2:1-2 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star at its rising and have come to worship Him.

Num. 24:17 ...There shall come forth a Star out of Jacob...

Jesus was born in Bethlehem....The strange thing, however, is this: far away from the so-called Holy Land, far away from the genuine religion, far away from the temple, far away from the Jewish religious center, far away from the priests, the scribes, the Pharisees, and all the religious people, was a star showing something of Christ in a heathen land. It did not appear to the Jews, but to the Gentiles, the heathen.

Merely to hold the Bible in our hand and read Micah 5:2, which indicates that Christ will be born in Bethlehem, does not work. We may say after we have read it that we have it, but we may not have seen it. We may have it, but nothing has happened to us. Those chief priests and scribes knew the Bible so well, but the Lord did not go to them. He went far away to a heathen land to reveal this matter to some pagans, not through the Scriptures but through something which human hands cannot touch—a heavenly star. (CWWL, 1970, vol. 1, "New Testament Service," pp. 276-277)

Today's Reading

We may have the Bible, yet we may miss the star. To hold the book in our hand is easy, but to wait and look unto the star is rather difficult. We simply do not know when and where the star will appear. We may study the Scriptures and obtain a degree in those studies, and we may learn all that the Bible has to say about Christ, but we simply cannot determine when the star will come. The book was with the Jewish people, the religious people, but the star appeared to the heathen. Have you seen this? We may think that the star should have appeared to those priests praying in the temple,

but it appeared to some pagans far away from the temple.

Oh, we all need to see this star! It is not a matter of holding the Bible but a matter of seeing the star. What is the star? The star is the living revelation, the living vision, not the dead knowledge of the Scriptures in the letter, not the dead knowledge of Micah 5:2. What we need today is not merely Bible knowledge but the heavenly vision, the instant vision, the living vision, the vision that human concepts cannot teach.

What do you have? Do you have the Scripture verses, or do you have the star? Do you have the scriptural knowledge, or do you have the heavenly star? Do you have the teachings concerning an old way, or do you have the up-to-date, instant vision? Today many have the Bible in their hands, but they have not seen the star. Merely to have the Bible in our hands may be a deadening thing, but to see the star is a living experience. To find and serve Christ according to the principle shown to us in Matthew 2 was not according to the Old Testament Scriptures. To know Christ today is something living, not according to the knowledge of the Bible in dead letters but according to the living, heavenly star.

In this case the Lord went away from religion, even from the scriptural religion. Wherever and whenever we set up a religion, the Lord may simply go elsewhere. We cannot circumscribe, confine, or restrict the Lord with our religion. We need to learn in the church life never to set up a religion. We should not insist that this method or that way is right. If we do that, the Lord may say, "It may be right for you, but I do not care for it. If you were not so right, I would be with you; but because you are so right, I will go to those who are wrong." When we insist that we are right and others are wrong, the Lord may leave us and go to the ones who are wrong.

Numbers 24:17 says, "There shall come forth a Star out of Jacob," but this star did not appear to any of the people of Jacob. The star out of Jacob appeared to the pagans. (CWWL, 1970, vol. 1, "New Testament Service," pp. 277-278)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1970, vol. 1, "New Testament Service," chs. 5-6; Truth Lessons—Level Four, vol. 1, lsn. 3

WEEK 10 — DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

Matt. 2:9-10 And after they heard the king, they went their way, and behold, the star which they saw at its rising led them until it came and stood over the place where the child was. And when they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.

Exo. 33:11 And Jehovah would speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his companion...

Consider what the magi did: They saw the heavenly star and they followed it, but they made a great mistake. They received the vision, but they soon turned to their human concept and exercised their natural understanding. They realized that this star signified the King of the Jews; therefore, they reasoned that they should go to Jerusalem and inquire of those who would have knowledge of such matters. Their going, as we know, caused much trouble....They need not have gone to Jerusalem. They were thoroughly wrong and caused many young and innocent lives to be taken. The Jewish religious leaders had the knowledge, and the magi had the vision. Nevertheless, those who received the vision made a great mistake and, apart from divine intervention, would have caused the loss of the little child Jesus. (CWWL, 1970, vol. 1, "New Testament Service," p. 278)

Today's Reading

When the magi arrived in Jerusalem, Herod was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him (Matt. 2:3). Herod, yes, but why Jerusalem? Were those in Jerusalem not for Christ? Why was all Jerusalem troubled at the birth of the One for whom they were waiting? This is religion. I am afraid that many who are seemingly for the Lord's return will be troubled by His coming. Then Herod called the chief priests and scribes of the people together and inquired of them where the Christ was to be born (v. 4). The scribes were those among the people who had doctor's degrees in theology. Immediately, they answered, "Bethlehem." They gave him the right book, the right chapter,

and the right verse. They quoted Micah 5:2, but did any one of them go to Bethlehem? Not one! They were troubled by the news, but no one cared to go and see what had happened.

When the magi came into religion, they missed the star; but when they left religion, the star appeared to them [Matt. 2:9-10]. They could not find living guidance in Jerusalem. They did not receive the heavenly vision in religion; they had to leave. When they departed from Jerusalem, behold, the star went before them. In principle, it is the same today.

Micah 5:2 was the holy writing, the Holy Scripture, prophesying that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem. However, by that verse alone you could not find Jesus. You would know in what city Jesus was to be born, but you would not know on what street or in what house....Even if you have the knowledge of the Scriptures, you still need the instant, up-to-date, living star to lead you to the very street and the very house where Jesus is....It is easy to accumulate scriptural knowledge, but if you would have living guidance, you need to live in an intimate relationship with the Lord; you need to be one with Him.

The heavenly star led the magi to the very spot ["where the child was" (Matt. 2:9)]. This is all we need. I do believe that if they had no knowledge whatever of Micah 5:2 but simply followed the star, they could have arrived at that place. How can we find Christ and serve Him? Not merely by Bible knowledge but by the living star....Those who followed the heavenly star found Him and worshipped Him. Do we need the knowledge of the Scriptures? Of course we do. It helps, but there is a condition: the living, instant guidance, the guidance of this very moment to lead us to the very spot where Jesus is, is indispensable.... It is the living guidance that brings us to Jesus so that we may worship Him and offer our gifts to Him. (CWWL, 1970, vol. 1,"New Testament Service," pp. 278-280)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1970, vol. 3,"Being Delivered from Religious Rituals and Walking according to the Spirit," chs. 2, 10; CWWN, vol. 15, ch. 2

WEEK 10 — DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

Rev. 2:1 ...These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand...

2 Pet. 1:19 And we have the prophetic word made more firm, to which you do well to give heed as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

Not only is Christ Himself the star, but also His followers, the shining ones in the churches, are stars. In Acts and the Epistles the leading ones were called elders, but in the last book of the Bible they are the stars. Now it is not a matter of title or position but a matter of shining. All the leading ones of the local churches should be shining stars. In the beginning of the New Testament there was mention of only one star in the heavens, but at the end of the New Testament there are seven stars in seven local churches. In every local church there is a star; in every local church there is something shining, leading people to the right way. (CWWL, 1970, vol. 1, "New Testament Service," pp. 286-287)

Today's Reading

In the Bible we see how we may not only follow the star but even become one of the stars. There are two ways: first, by the Bible, and second, by the Spirit.

Second Peter 1:19 gives us the first secret....We have the prophetic word, the Bible. However, the prophetic word is not the star; the Bible is not the star....Since we have the prophetic word, we need to give heed to it, we need to pay full attention to it, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in our hearts. The word used for star here can be translated into English as "phosphorous." This star is something as phosphorous, bringing light in the darkness....The Bible should not simply be words in black and white; it should not be dead letters. We should give heed to the words of the Bible until something as phosphorous rises within us—that is, Christ as the morning star.

Sometimes we may take the Bible, read it, and feel that we receive nothing. Other times, however, when we open our heart and give heed to this prophetic word, something within is shining, rising, dawning, breaking through. While we are pray-reading the verses of the Bible, there is a sense deep within of enlightening, of shining, and this shining creates a love toward the Lord Jesus. We feel that He is so lovable....Many times by this shining we are beside ourselves with love to the Lord Jesus. That is Jesus coming to us as the dawning day, as the morning star rising in our hearts.... Many times when I was with this holy Word, something has risen within me like the daybreak. Oh, it is wonderful! The situation may not be bright, the surroundings may be full of darkness, but something within is enlightening, shining, filling with glory.

In the days of the magi, the seeing of the star was a miraculous occurrence, but today to see the morning star is only normal and should be our regular experience. Day by day we need to have the morning star rising in our heart. Today, therefore, the star comes from the living word.... First, we have the word; second, by giving heed to the prophetic word, we have the morning star rising in our heart. If we will simply go along continually with this inner, rising star, we will consistently be in the Spirit.

In 2 Peter we have the prophetic word, but in Revelation 3:1 we have the seven Spirits....The hand of Jesus holds not only the seven stars but also the seven Spirits. This means that the seven Spirits are one with the seven stars, and the seven stars are one with the seven Spirits. If we have the living word as the morning star rising within us and we are one with the seven Spirits, eventually we will become the stars. We not only have the star shining within us, but by looking to the star and following in the Spirit, we become the stars. (CWWL, 1970, vol. 1,"New Testament Service," pp. 287-289)

Further Reading: Life-study of Matthew, msg. 7; Life-study of Revelation, msg. 9,14; CWWL, 1991-1992, vol. 1,"Elders' Training, Book 11: The Eldership and the God-ordained Way (3)," ch. 1

WEEK 10 — DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

Psa. 5:3 O Jehovah,...in the morning I will set forth my words in order to You, and I will watch.

90:14 Satisfy us in the morning with Your lovingkindness that we may give a ringing shout and rejoice all our days.

Rev. 22:16 ...I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright morning star.

2:28 And to him I will give the morning star.

The best time to meet the Lord, to contact Him, and to fellowship with Him is early in the morning. Manna is gathered before the sun rises (Exo. 16:14-21). Anyone who wants to eat God's food should rise up early. When the sun waxes hot, manna melts and is gone. If we want to receive spiritual nourishment and spiritual edification, and if we want to have spiritual fellowship and spiritual supply, we need to rise up early. If we rise up late, the manna will be gone. The early morning is the very time when God dispenses His spiritual food and holy fellowship to His children.... All those who know God rise up early.

We should spend the best time of the day—the early morning—before the Lord, rather than in other things. Some Christians spend the whole day on other matters and kneel down to read the Bible and pray only at night when they are about to go to sleep. No wonder they are ineffective in their Bible reading, their prayer, and their fellowship with the Lord....The moment we believe in the Lord, we should set apart the early morning for fellowshiping with God and for contacting Him. (CWWN, vol. 48,"Messages for Building Up New Believers (1)," pp. 165-167)

Today's Reading

Revelation 2:28 tells us that Christ will give the morning star to the overcomers. The New Testament reveals that Christ, who is signified by the

heavenly luminaries, the lights, is the bright morning star (22:16). Concerning the types of Christ, the entire Bible begins with Him as the light (Gen. 1:3) and ends with Him as the morning star, a luminary. The morning star appears in the darkest hour, after midnight and prior to the dawn. This indicates that Christ will appear as the bright morning star in the darkest time, prior to the close of this age.

No star is as bright as the morning star. At the darkest time, within the overcomers there is a star shining. The overcomers will have and enjoy the particular light, Christ as the morning star. At the beginning of the New Testament the star was outside of religion (Matt. 2:1-6), but at the end of the New Testament the star is within the church....Today the star is in the church and among the churches. Jesus Christ, who is the morning star, is walking today among the local churches. To see the star, we must come to the local churches....When we are in religion, we have the sense of being in darkness, but when the Lord brings us into the churches, we see the bright star. The heavenly star today is in the local churches.

According to 2 Peter 1:19, the morning star is associated with the Bible....If we take heed to the word of prophecy, the day will dawn within us, and the morning star will arise in our hearts. To take heed to the prophetic word is to pay attention to the living Word. It is not simply to read the Word; it is to enter into the Word until something arises within us. We may call this the dawn, or the morning star. In 2 Peter 1:19 the term "morning star" in Greek is phosphoros, a light-bearing substance....Christ is the real phosphorus shining in today's darkness....We must take heed [to the Word] until something begins to shine within us. That shining will become the divine "phosphorus" in our heart. Then we will have the morning star. We will be like the wise men, and something from the heavens will shine over us. We must come to the sure Word and open up our whole being to the Word—our mouth, our eyes, our mind, our spirit, and our heart—until Christ as the morning star rises up in us and shines over us. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 4190-4192)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 48, ch. 11; The Conclusion of the New Testament, msgs. 113, 407, 411; CWWL, 1953, vol. 3, "The Knowledge of Life," ch. 14

WEEK 10 — DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

Gen. 1:16-18 ...God made the two great light-bearers, the greater light-bearer to rule the day and the lesser light-bearer to rule the night, and the stars....God set them...to give light on the earth and to rule over the day and over the night and to separate the light from the darkness...

Dan. 12:3 And those who have insight will shine like the shining of the heavenly expanse, and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars, forever and ever.

On the fourth day, there was...the appearance of the stronger, more solid lights (Gen. 1:14-17). Although light came in on the first day, it was not that solid, not that strong. On the fourth day, not only the lights came, but also the light bearers—the sun, the moon, and the stars. These are lights which are stronger, more solid, and more available. This is the first requirement for the growth of life.

In typology, the sun typifies Christ,...[and] the moon is the church....We not only have the sun, the moon, but also the stars: not only Christ, the church, but also all the overcoming saints. Daniel 12:3 says that those who turn many to righteousness shine like the stars. If we are going to help people to be saved, if we are going to turn people from darkness to light, if we are going to recover all the backsliders, we must be the shining stars. Revelation 1:20 tells us...that the messengers (the living ones in the churches) are the shining stars. The Lord said that the saints are "the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14), and Paul said that the saints shine "as luminaries in the world" (Phil. 2:15). (Life-study of Genesis, pp. 39-40)

Today's Reading

Many of us have to be the shining stars. We need to contact Christ, we need to contact the church, and we also need to contact the shining saints....When you come to a living brother or a living sister, do you not

sense an amount of light, that when you enter their presence you are under a certain kind of shining? This is light. This light will help us to grow in life.

The lights God made on the fourth day were established "to rule over the day and over the night" by their shining (Gen. 1:18a). The light not only shines, but also rules by its shining. Where there is shining, there is ruling. Darkness brings in confusion, but light regulates. For the growth of life, we need the ruling and the regulating of the fourth-day lights.

The lights on the fourth day also "separate the light from the darkness" (Gen. 1:18b). The separation of the light from the darkness...had happened already (Gen. 1:4). Now, the ruling of the fourth-day lights' shining strengthens this separation. For the growth of life, we need the ruling of the lights and also the strengthening of the separation. This is the second requirement for the growth of life.

On the first day, we had the light from the Spirit and from the Word. As we go on, we need the lights of the fourth day. On the fourth day, the lights come from Christ, from the church, and from the shining saints....The light on the first day is for the generating of life; the lights on the fourth day are for the growth of life. The lights on the fourth day mainly come from Christ directly, also from the church and the shining saints. If we are to grow in life after we have received the eternal life, we must first contact Christ, second contact the church, and third contact the living saints. While we are under such a shining, we are in the process of growth.

[Bring these points to the Lord in prayer.] "Lord, I have the life. But Lord, You know that I need the lights of the fourth day. I have the light from the first day already, but I need the lights of the fourth day. Lord Jesus, I need You as the sun. I need to contact You directly. I want to be in Your presence day by day. I want to be under Your shining. I also need the church, the moon. And I need the stars. I need the overcoming saints, the ones who are shining, who turn many to righteousness. I need those who can turn people from darkness to light." (Life-study of Genesis, pp. 41, 44, 46)

Further Reading: Life-study of Genesis, msgs. 4-5; CWWL, 1972, vol. 2, "The Kingdom," ch. 2; CWWL, 1953, vol. 3, "The Knowledge of Life," ch. 14

WEEK 10 — DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

Rev. 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw upon My right hand and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

Jude 13 ...Wandering stars, for whom the gloom of darkness is kept for eternity.

[Jude 13 speaks] of the heretics as "wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shames; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of darkness is kept for eternity"...These apostates are false shepherds, empty clouds, dead trees, and wandering stars. They are hidden reefs and wild, raging waves of the sea, foaming out, without restraint, their own shame. The metaphor of wandering stars indicates that the erratic teachers, the apostates, are not solidly fixed in the unchanging truths of the heavenly revelation, but are wandering about among God's star-like people (Dan. 12:3; Phil. 2:15). Their destiny will be the gloom of darkness, which has been kept for them for eternity (Life-study of Jude, p. 14)

Today's Reading

There is...a negative aspect to the stars—the wandering stars....We should be the stars but not the wandering stars. These are the false leading ones. So many Christians today are not stars; some, however, are stars, but they are wandering stars. There are religious leaders and teachers today who are in this category. A proper star has a certain position and fixed orbit. It continues in its course steadfastly. However, there are some stars with no fixed position or orbit; they are wandering stars. It seems that some Christians are stars; it seems that they are shining, but their shining is a deception.... If you follow them, you will be misled; eventually, you will not know where to go....They have no ground; they have no standing; they have no certain way to go on with the Lord. Today they say one thing, and tomorrow they will say something different; they are wandering. We need

to be careful. We cannot find Jesus by following a wandering star.

How can we recognize the wandering stars? There are some signs. They are autumn trees without fruit; they are waterless clouds. We need to look for the fruit. The Lord Jesus said that we may know a tree by its fruit (Matt. 7:16-20). If we follow the wandering stars, eventually our portion will be the same as theirs— the gloom of darkness that has been kept for them for eternity.

We need to follow the shining stars, those with a definite standing and a certain course. These are the stable stars, the steadfast ones. If anyone comes to us without a definite standing and a certain course, we should avoid him. The proper standing is the local church, and the right course is to go on in the Spirit in the local church....We need to take the proper standing and keep ourselves in the right course....If you intend to go to a certain place, you need to get out your map, get on the right road and in the right lane, and as you drive you will reach your destination.

We are aware of today's confusion. Oh, the dead things! Oh, the frustrations, the distractions of the wandering ones! Anyone who keeps us from the genuine local church and from meeting on the ground of oneness with the Lord's people is a wandering star. The true stars are those who turn many to righteousness, those who do not lead people astray, but turn them to the right way. Today the way for you and me and for everyone else to find Christ is to see the living star. Hallelujah! Today the star is not far from us—it is with the local churches. Among all the local churches there are some living stars. You simply need to contact them; you need to keep company with them. They will lead you to the place where Jesus is.

May the Lord be merciful to us so that we may always be kept in the right way to serve the Lord, to worship Him, and to offer our love to Him. May the Lord make us all like those magi, following the star to find Christ. Today the living star and the living stars are in the local churches. Let us follow them, and let us each be one of them. (CWWL, 1970, vol. 1, "New Testament Service," pp. 291-293)

Further Reading: Life-study of Jude, msg. 2

<< WEEK 10 — HYMN >>

Hymns, #840 Freed from self and Adam's nature

The Church—Her Building

- 1 Freed from self and Adam's nature,
Lord, I would be built by Thee
With the saints into Thy temple,
Where Thy glory we shall see.
From peculiar traits deliver,
From my independent ways,
That a dwelling place for Thee, Lord,
We will be thru all our days.**
- 2 By Thy life and by its flowing
I can grow and be transformed,
With the saints coordinated,
Builded up, to Thee conformed;
Keep the order in the Body,
There to function in Thy will,
Ever serving, helping others,
All Thy purpose to fulfill.**
- 3 In my knowledge and experience
I would not exalted be,
But submitting and accepting
Let the Body balance me;
Holding fast the Head, and growing
With His increase, in His way,**

**By the joints and bands supplying,
Knit together day by day.**

**4 By Thy Spirit daily strengthened
In the inner man with might,
I would know Thy love surpassing,
Know Thy breadth and length and height;
Ever of Thy riches taking,
Unto all Thy fulness filled,
Ever growing into manhood,
That Thy Body Thou may build.**

**5 In God's house and in Thy Body
Builded up I long to be,
That within this corporate vessel
All shall then Thy glory see;
That Thy Bride, the glorious city,
May appear upon the earth,
As a lampstand brightly beaming
To express to all Thy worth.**