

Guidelines for the exercise of the Lord's day Prophesying Message Four : Job and the Two Trees

I. Overview:

According to the divine revelation in the Scriptures, there are two trees, two sources, two ways, two principles, and two consummations. God's intention was not to have a Job in the line of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil but a Job in the line of the tree of life. God's purpose in dealing with Job was to turn him from the way of good and evil to the way of life so that he might gain God to the fullest extent. Every genuine believer in Christ is a miniature garden of Eden, with God as the tree of life in his spirit and Satan as the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in his flesh. Whenever we contact the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, we will live out the life of Satan, the devil, and the result will be death; whenever we contact the tree of life, we will live out God, and the result will be life. Romans 8 reveals that the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Explain the Bible revealing the two trees and the two ends.

In Genesis 2 there are two trees—the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But in Revelation 22 are involved with two ends, which are the city of water and the lake of fire. Between the two sources and the two ends are two lines, which become two ways. Each source issues in a line that becomes a way consummating in an end.

B. Expound what the two trees signify.

The tree of life signifies the Triune God, as life to man in man's relationship with Him. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, as the highest negative sign, signifies Satan the devil, even the evil one, as death to man in man's fall before God. The first tree signifies God only as life, with no implications of other elements. The second tree signifies Satan as death, with the implications of knowledge, good, and evil.

Day 2 —

A. Explain what the Bible reveals the first way is the way of life.

The first way is the way of life, the constricted way, the Way, the straight way, the way of righteousness, the way of salvation, the way of God, and the way of the Lord, for men to seek God, to gain God, and to enjoy God in His eternal life as the supply, transformed and conformed into His glorious image, and glorified in Him as glory to gain Him and participate in Him to the fullest extent.

B. Explain what the Bible reveals the second way is the way of good and evil.

The second way is the way of good and evil, the way of death, the broad way, for men to follow Satan to be his children unto death and his companions in his eternal perdition. In this way of death and of good and evil are Cain, Lamech, Jabal, Jubal, Tubal-cain, Ham, Cush, Nimrod, Korah, Balaam, Saul, Absalom, Antichrist and his followers, and all unbelievers.

Day 3 —

A. Explain Adam eating the tree of knowledge, by which human being was developed.

Adam ate the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This tree was thus sown into Adam and grew within him, and it has been growing in all of Adam's descendants. At Job's time the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was only two thousand years old, but now it is six thousand years old. Today the entire human race is a race constituted according to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In every human society, regardless of the kind of ethics it has, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is growing.

B. Expound how we turn from the tree of knowledge to the tree of life in our married life.

In our married life, we may be in the line of the tree of knowledge, and by the way we talk with our spouse we may not only grow this tree but also water it and fertilize it. What, then, should we do? We need to remember Paul's word in Galatians 2:20—"It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me"—and turn from the tree of knowledge to the tree of life.

Day 4 —

A. Explain the tree of life being the center of the universe.

The tree of life is the center of the universe. According to the purpose of God, the earth is the center of the universe, the garden of Eden is the center of the earth, and the tree of life is the center of the garden of Eden.... Nothing is more central and crucial to both God and man than the tree of life. The tree of life in the garden was an indicator that God desires to be our life in the form of food.

B. Expound the New Testament revealing Christ as the fulfillment of the figure of the tree of life. Speaking of Christ, John 1:4 says, "In Him was life." Since John 1:3 refers to the creation in Genesis 1, the mention of life in verse 4 should refer to the life indicated by the tree of life in Genesis 2. This is confirmed by John's mention of the tree of life in Revelation 22. The life displayed by the tree of life in Genesis 2 was the life incarnated in Christ.

Day 5 —

A. Explain that man can live according to the two kinds of principles.

In Genesis 2 the two trees were put there to show us that man, especially a Christian, can live on earth according to two different principles. Man can live according to the principle of right and wrong or according to the principle of life. Some Christians take the principle of right and wrong as the standard for their living, while other Christians take the principle of life as their standard for living.

B. Expound that Christian living is based on an inner life, not an outward right and wrong. Many worldly people, who are not saved, live according to the best standard of living they can attain: the principle of right and wrong. Christians are different from non-Christians because we do not live by an outward standard or law. Our subject is not human morality or concepts. We do not determine whether something is right or wrong by subjecting it to human criticism or opinion, but judge it by the inner life.

Day 6 —

A. Describe that we Christian inside are just like a garden of Eden.

As a result of the fall, Satan as the tree of knowledge came into man's flesh. As a result of our believing in Christ, God as the tree of life came into our spirit. Therefore, the two trees that were once in the garden outside of man are now within us, one in our flesh and the other in our spirit. Thus, every genuine Christian is a miniature garden of Eden.

B. Expound the seed in Genesis 2 growing in Romans 8.

The seed of this triangular situation was sown in Genesis 2, and the growth of the seed is found in Romans 8, where we see the outcrop of the two trees. Romans 8:6 says that the mind set on the flesh is death and that the mind set on the spirit is life and peace. In Genesis 2 the two trees were objective; in Romans 8 they are subjective.

III. Conclusion:

To see that each one of us as Christian is a miniature garden of Eden. Before the fall of man, the tree of knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life were outside of man. When man fell, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was within us. When man is regenerated, the tree of life is now within us. Today in our spirit there is the tree of life and in our flesh there is a tree of knowledge of good and evil. The key today is our contacting of the Lord. Whenever we contact the tree of knowledge of good and evil, we live out of the life of Satan, and the result will be death. Whenever we contact the tree of life, we will live out God, and the result will be life. Another point of the exercise is in Romans 8: 6, which also reveals a miniature garden of Eden in us, with the flesh and death on one side, the spirit and life on the other side, and the mind in the middle. The key is to take the initiative letting the mind set on the spirit, which is life and peace; this is also the tree of life.