

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OF JOSHUA

Message Four

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

Hymns:

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

- Matt. 1:5 And Salmon begot Boaz of Rahab, and Boaz begot Obed of Ruth, and Obed begot Jesse,
Josh. 6:22 And Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land, Go to the house of the harlot, and bring out from there the woman and all that belongs to her, as you swore to her.
Josh. 6:23 And the young men who had been spies went and brought out Rahab and her father and her mother and her brothers and all that belonged to her; all her family they brought out and set outside the camp of Israel.
Josh. 6:24 And they burned the city with fire and all that was in it; but the silver and the gold and the vessels of bronze and iron, they put in the treasury of the house of Jehovah.
Josh. 6:25 And Joshua preserved Rahab the harlot and her father's house and all that belonged to her, and she has dwelt within Israel to this day; for she hid the messengers whom Joshua had sent to spy out Jericho.
Josh. 6:26 Then at that time Joshua charged the people with an oath, saying, Cursed be the man before Jehovah who rises up to rebuild this city Jericho! At the cost of his firstborn son shall he lay its foundation, and at the cost of his youngest son shall he set up its gates.
Josh. 7:1 But the children of Israel acted unfaithfully in that which was devoted to destruction, for Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of that which was devoted to destruction; and the anger of Jehovah was kindled against the children of Israel.
Josh. 7:2 Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Beth-aven, east of Bethel; and he spoke to them, saying, Go up and spy out the land. So the men went up and spied out Ai.
Josh. 7:3 And they returned to Joshua and said to him, Not all the people need go up; let about two or three thousand men go up and strike Ai. Do not make all the people labor there, for the enemies are few.
Josh. 7:4 So about three thousand men from the people went up there, but they fled before the men of Ai.
Josh. 7:5 And the men of Ai struck some of them, about thirty-six men; and they pursued them from before the gate unto Shebarim and struck them on the slope. And the heart of the people melted and became like water.
Josh. 7:6 And Joshua rent his clothes and fell to the ground upon his face before the Ark of Jehovah until the evening, he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust upon their heads.

- Josh. 7:10 Then Jehovah said to Joshua, Rise up! Why have you fallen upon your face?
- Josh. 7:11 Israel has sinned. Indeed they have trespassed My covenant, which I commanded them; indeed they have taken of that which was devoted to destruction; indeed they have stolen; indeed they have been deceptive; indeed they have put it among their goods.
- Josh. 7:12 Thus the children of Israel are not able to stand before their enemies; they turn their backs before their enemies, for they have become something devoted to destruction. I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy that which was devoted to destruction from among you.
- Josh. 7:13 Rise up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow; for thus says Jehovah the God of Israel, There is something devoted to destruction among you, O Israel; you will not be able to stand before your enemies until you remove that which was devoted to destruction from among you.
- Josh. 7:14 Therefore in the morning you shall be brought near by your tribes; and the tribe which Jehovah takes shall draw near family by family; and the family which Jehovah takes shall draw near house by house; and the house which Jehovah takes shall draw near warrior by warrior.
- Josh. 7:15 And he who is taken with that which was devoted to destruction shall be burned with fire, he and all that belongs to him, because he has trespassed the covenant of Jehovah and because he has committed folly in Israel.
- Josh. 7:20 Then Achan answered Joshua and said, It is true; I have sinned against Jehovah the God of Israel; and this is what I did:
- Josh. 7:21 When I saw among the spoil a beautiful mantle of Shinar and two hundred shekels of silver and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. And now they are hidden in the earth in my tent, with the silver under it.
- Josh. 9:14 And the men took some of their provisions, but they did not ask for the counsel of Jehovah.

I. When the two spies came to Jericho, Rahab (who was both a harlot and a Canaanite) contacted them and was willing to receive them, hide them, and deliver them by acts that issued out of her faith (Josh. 2:1b-7, 15-16, 22; James 2:25); she believed in the God of Israel and declared, “Jehovah your God, He is God in heaven above and upon earth beneath” (Josh. 2:11b):

- Josh. 2:1 Then Joshua the son of Nun secretly sent out from Shittim two men as spies, saying, Go, view the land, especially Jericho. And they went and entered the house of a woman who was a harlot, whose name was Rahab; and they lay down there.
- Josh. 2:2 And the king of Jericho was told, saying, There are some men who have now come here tonight from the children of Israel to search out the land.
- Josh. 2:3 Then the king of Jericho sent word to Rahab, saying, Bring out the men who have come to you and who entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land.
- Josh. 2:4 And the woman took the two men and hid them. And she said, Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from.
- Josh. 2:5 And when it was time to shut the gate at dark, the men went out; I do not know where the men have gone. Pursue quickly after them, for you can overtake them.
- Josh. 2:6 But she had taken them up to the roof and hidden them among stalks of flax that she had laid out on the roof.
- Josh. 2:7 So the men pursued after them on the way toward the Jordan as far as the fords. And as soon as those who pursued after them went out, the gate was shut.
- Josh. 2:15 Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was on the wall of the city and she dwelt on the wall.
- Josh. 2:16 And she said to them, Go to the mountain, so that your pursuers do not come upon you; and hide yourselves there for three days, until your pursuers return; then afterward you can go on your way.

Josh. 2:22 And they left and came to the mountain, and they remained there for three days, until their pursuers returned. And although their pursuers searched the entire way, they could not find them.

James 2:25 And in like manner was not also Rahab the harlot justified by works in that she received the messengers and sent them out by a different way?

Josh. 2:11 When we heard, our hearts melted; and there no longer remained any spirit in any man because of you; for Jehovah your God, He is God in heaven above and upon earth beneath.

A. Jehovah provided Rahab the harlot to Joshua for the gaining of the land; because of her faith in God, she “did not perish with those who were disobedient” (Heb. 11:31); she turned to Israel and their God, and she trusted in Him and His people (Josh. 2:12-13).

Heb. 11:31 By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish with those who were disobedient, since she had received the spies with peace.

Josh. 2:12 So now, swear to me by Jehovah, I beg you, since I have dealt kindly with you, that you also will deal kindly with my father's house; and give me some token of trust,

Josh. 2:13 That you will preserve my father and my mother and my brothers and my sisters and all that they have, and will deliver our lives from death.

B. The sign for Rahab and her house to be saved was for her to hang a line of scarlet thread in the window of her house (vv. 18, 21); the scarlet thread tied in the window typifies an open confession of the redeeming blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:18-19); she believed that by this sign she and her household would be delivered.

Josh. 2:18 Unless, when we enter the land, you tie this line of scarlet thread in the window through which you let us down, and gather your father and your mother and your brothers and all your father's house to you in your house.

Josh. 2:21 And she said, According to your words, so shall it be. Then she sent them away, and they left. And she tied the scarlet line in the window.

1 Pet. 1:18 Knowing that it was not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, that you were redeemed from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers,

1 Pet. 1:19 But with precious blood, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot, the blood of Christ;

C. Although Rahab was a condemned Canaanite and a prostitute in Jericho (Josh. 2:1), a place cursed by God for eternity (6:26), after she turned to God and to God's people (vv. 22-25; Heb. 11:30-31), she married Salmon (Matt. 1:5), the son of a leader of Judah, a leading tribe of Israel (1 Chron. 2:10-11), and probably one of the two spies; then she brought forth Boaz, a godly man, out of whom Christ came, and she became associated with Christ in His incarnation for the fulfillment of God's eternal economy (Matt. 1:5).

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Josh. 6:26 Then at that time Joshua charged the people with an oath, saying, Cursed be the man before Jehovah who rises up to rebuild this city Jericho! At the cost of his firstborn son shall he lay its foundation, and at the cost of his youngest son shall he set up its gates.

- Josh. 6:22 And Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land, Go to the house of the harlot, and bring out from there the woman and all that belongs to her, as you swore to her.
- Josh. 6:23 And the young men who had been spies went and brought out Rahab and her father and her mother and her brothers and all that belonged to her; all her family they brought out and set outside the camp of Israel.
- Josh. 6:24 And they burned the city with fire and all that was in it; but the silver and the gold and the vessels of bronze and iron, they put in the treasury of the house of Jehovah.
- Josh. 6:25 And Joshua preserved Rahab the harlot and her father's house and all that belonged to her, and she has dwelt within Israel to this day; for she hid the messengers whom Joshua had sent to spy out Jericho.
- Heb. 11:30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell, having been encircled for a period of seven days.
- Heb. 11:31 By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish with those who were disobedient, since she had received the spies with peace.
- Matt. 1:5 And Salmon begot Boaz of Rahab, and Boaz begot Obed of Ruth, and Obed begot Jesse,
- 1 Chron. 2:10 And Ram begot Amminadab, and Amminadab begot Nahshon, the prince of the children of Judah;
- 1 Chron. 2:11 And Nahshon begot Salma, and Salma begot Boaz,

D. This shows that regardless of our background, if we turn to God and His people and are joined to the proper person among God's people (not in a physical sense but in a spiritual sense), we will bring forth proper fruit and participate in the enjoyment of the birthright of Christ—Exo. 24:13; 33:11; Num. 27:18; Deut. 34:9; Josh. 1:1; 2 Kings 2:2-15; Phil. 2:19-23; 1 Cor. 4:17.

- Exo. 24:13 And Moses rose up with Joshua his attendant, and Moses went up to the top of the mountain of God.
- Exo. 33:11 And Jehovah would speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his companion. And Moses would return to the camp, but his attendant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart out of the tent.
- Num. 27:18 And Jehovah said to Moses, Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand upon him;
- Deut. 34:9 And Joshua the son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him; and the children of Israel listened to him and did as Jehovah had commanded Moses.
- Josh. 1:1 After the death of Moses the servant of Jehovah, Jehovah spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' attendant, saying,
- 2 Kings 2:2 And Elijah said to Elisha, Stay here, for Jehovah has sent me as far as Bethel. And Elisha said, As Jehovah lives and as your soul lives, I will not leave you. So they went down to Bethel.
- 2 Kings 2:3 Then the sons of the prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha and said to him, Do you know that Jehovah will take away your master from over your head today? And he said, I too know it; be silent.
- 2 Kings 2:4 And Elijah said to him, Elisha, stay here, for Jehovah has sent me to Jericho. And he said, As Jehovah lives and as your soul lives, I will not leave you. And they came to Jericho.
- 2 Kings 2:5 And the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho approached Elisha and said to him, Do you know that Jehovah will take away your master from over your head today? And he said, I too know it; be silent.

- 2 Kings 2:6 And Elijah said to him, Stay here, for Jehovah has sent me to the Jordan. And he said, As Jehovah lives and as your soul lives, I will not leave you. So the two of them went on.
- 2 Kings 2:7 And fifty men from the sons of the prophets went and stood opposite them at a distance, while the two of them stood by the Jordan.
- 2 Kings 2:8 And Elijah took his mantle and wrapped it together and struck the water; and it parted to this side and that, so that the two of them crossed over on dry ground.
- 2 Kings 2:9 And when they had crossed over, Elijah said to Elisha, Ask what I should do for you before I am taken from you. And Elisha said, Let a double portion of your spirit be upon me.
- 2 Kings 2:10 And he said, You have asked a hard thing. If you see me when I am taken from you, so will it be to you; but if not, it will not be so.
- 2 Kings 2:11 And as they went on and talked, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared; and they separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.
- 2 Kings 2:12 And Elisha saw it and cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen! And he did not see him anymore. And he grasped his clothes and tore them in two pieces.
- 2 Kings 2:13 And he picked up Elijah's mantle, which had fallen from him, and returned and stood by the bank of the Jordan.
- 2 Kings 2:14 And he took Elijah's mantle, which had fallen from him, and struck the water and said, Where is Jehovah, the God of Elijah? And when he also struck the water, it parted to this side and that, and Elisha crossed over.
- 2 Kings 2:15 And when the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho opposite him saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha. And they came to meet him and bowed themselves to the ground before him.
- Phil. 2:19 But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged by knowing the things concerning you.
- Phil. 2:20 For I have no one like-souled who will genuinely care for what concerns you;
- Phil. 2:21 For all seek their own things, not the things of Christ Jesus.
- Phil. 2:22 But you know his approvedness, that as a child with a father he has served with me unto the gospel.
- Phil. 2:23 Him therefore I hope to send immediately, as soon as I see how things go with me.
- 1 Cor. 4:17 Because of this I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church.

II. After the destruction of Jericho, Israel was defeated at Ai; at Jericho, according to God's economy, Joshua sent out spies, not for fighting but to gain Rahab; but at Ai, because Israel had lost the presence of the Lord (Josh. 7:12c), Joshua sent out spies for fighting (vv. 2-3):

- Josh. 7:12 Thus the children of Israel are not able to stand before their enemies; they turn their backs before their enemies, for they have become something devoted to destruction. I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy that which was devoted to destruction from among you.
- Josh. 7:2 Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Beth-aven, east of Bethel; and he spoke to them, saying, Go up and spy out the land. So the men went up and spied out Ai.
- Josh. 7:3 And they returned to Joshua and said to him, Not all the people need go up; let about two or three thousand men go up and strike Ai. Do not make all the people labor there, for the enemies are few.

- A. The report of the spies to Joshua concerning Ai indicates that Israel had set God aside; instead of asking God what they should do against Ai, they forgot God and cared only for themselves; at that time they were not one with God but acted on their own, without seeking the Lord's direction and without having the Lord's presence; Israel was separated from God because of their sin—vv. 1-5, 12c:

Josh. 7:1 But the children of Israel acted unfaithfully in that which was devoted to destruction, for Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of that which was devoted to destruction; and the anger of Jehovah was kindled against the children of Israel.

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Josh. 7:4 So about three thousand men from the people went up there, but they fled before the men of Ai.

Josh. 7:5 And the men of Ai struck some of them, about thirty-six men; and they pursued them from before the gate unto Shebarim and struck them on the slope. And the heart of the people melted and became like water.

Josh. 7:12 Thus the children of Israel are not able to stand before their enemies; they turn their backs before their enemies, for they have become something devoted to destruction. I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy that which was devoted to destruction from among you.

1. The secret of Israel's defeat at Ai was that they had lost God's presence and were no longer one with God; after this defeat Joshua learned the lesson of staying with the Lord before the Ark (v. 6); eventually, the Lord came in to speak to him and to tell him what to do (vv. 10-15).

Josh. 7:6 And Joshua rent his clothes and fell to the ground upon his face before the Ark of Jehovah until the evening, he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust upon their heads.

Josh. 7:10 Then Jehovah said to Joshua, Rise up! Why have you fallen upon your face?

Josh. 7:11 Israel has sinned. Indeed they have trespassed My covenant, which I commanded them; indeed they have taken of that which was devoted to destruction; indeed they have stolen; indeed they have been deceptive; indeed they have put it among their goods.

Josh. 7:12 Thus the children of Israel are not able to stand before their enemies; they turn their backs before their enemies, for they have become something devoted to destruction. I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy that which was devoted to destruction from among you.

Josh. 7:13 Rise up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow; for thus says Jehovah the God of Israel, There is something devoted to destruction among you, O Israel; you will not be able to stand before your enemies until you remove that which was devoted to destruction from among you.

Josh. 7:14 Therefore in the morning you shall be brought near by your tribes; and the tribe which Jehovah takes shall draw near family by family; and the family which Jehovah takes shall draw near house by house; and the house which Jehovah takes shall draw near warrior by warrior.

Josh. 7:15 And he who is taken with that which was devoted to destruction shall be burned with fire, he and all that belongs to him, because he has trespassed the covenant of Jehovah and because he has committed folly in Israel.

2. The spiritual lesson to be learned from this account is that we, the people of God, should always be one with our God, who is not only among us but also in us, making us men with God—God-men.
3. As God-men, we should practice being one with the Lord, walking with Him, living with Him, and having our entire being with Him; this is the way to walk as a Christian, to fight as a child of God, and to build up the Body of Christ.
4. If we have the Lord's presence, we have wisdom, insight, foresight, and the inner knowledge concerning things; the Lord's presence is everything to us—2 Cor. 2:10; 4:6-7; Gal. 5:25; Gen. 5:22-24; Heb. 11:5-6.

2 Cor. 2:10 But whom you forgive anything, I also forgive; for also what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, it is for your sake in the person of Christ;

2 Cor. 4:6 Because the God who said, Out of darkness light shall shine, is the One who shined in our hearts to illuminate the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Cor. 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not out of us.

Gal. 5:25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Gen. 5:22 And Enoch walked with God after he had begotten Methuselah three hundred years, and he begot more sons and daughters.

Gen. 5:23 And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty-five years.

Gen. 5:24 And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

Heb. 11:5 By faith Enoch was translated so that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had translated him. For before his translation he obtained the testimony that he had been well pleasing to God.

Heb. 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to Him, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

- B. If we would enter, possess, and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ as the reality of the good land, we must do so by the presence of the Lord; the Lord promised Moses, "My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest" (Exo. 33:14); God's presence is His way, the "map" that shows His people the way they should take:

Exo. 33:14 And He said, My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest.

1. In order for us to fully gain and possess Christ as the all-inclusive land for God's building, we must hold on to this principle: God's presence is the criterion for every matter; regardless of what we do, we must pay attention to whether or not we have God's presence; if we have God's presence, we have everything, but if we lose God's presence, we lose everything—Matt. 1:23; 2 Tim. 4:22; Gal. 6:18; Psa. 27:4, 8; 51:11; 2 Cor. 2:10; Ezek. 48:35.

Matt. 1:23 "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel" (which is translated, God with us).

2 Tim. 4:22 The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

- Gal. 6:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.
- Psa. 27:4 One thing I have asked from Jehovah; / That do I seek: / To dwell in the house of Jehovah / All the days of my life, / To behold the beauty of Jehovah, / And to inquire in His temple.
- Psa. 27:8 When You say, Seek My face, / To You my heart says, Your face, O Jehovah, will I seek.
- Psa. 51:11 Do not cast me from Your presence, / And do not take the Spirit of Your holiness away from me.
- 2 Cor. 2:10 But whom you forgive anything, I also forgive; for also what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, it is for your sake in the person of Christ;
- Ezek. 48:35 It shall be eighteen thousand reeds all around, and the name of the city from that day shall be, Jehovah Is There.

2. The presence of the Lord, the smile of the Lord, is the governing principle; we must learn to be kept, to be ruled, to be governed, and to be guided, not by His secondhand presence but by the direct, firsthand presence of the Lord; His precious presence is the power for us to possess the all-inclusive Christ as the reality of the good land flowing with milk and honey—Exo. 3:8; 25:30; Deut. 26:9; Ezek. 20:6.

- Exo. 3:8 And I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites.
- Exo. 25:30 And you shall set the bread of the Presence upon the table before Me always.
- Deut. 26:9 And He has brought us to this place and has given us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.
- Ezek. 20:6 On that day I lifted up My hand to them to bring them out of the land of Egypt to a land that I had spied out for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all the lands.

3. “In my youth I was taught various ways to overcome, to be victorious, to be holy, and to be spiritual. However, not any of these ways worked. Eventually, through more than sixty-eight years of experience, I have found out that nothing works but the Lord’s presence. His being with us is everything”—Life-study of Joshua, p. 48.

C. When the Israelites entered into the land of Canaan and gained the victory over Jericho, the first person to commit sin was Achan; the intrinsic, spiritual significance and divine view of Achan’s serious sin was his coveting a beautiful Babylonian garment (Shinar is the area that was later called Babylon) in his seeking to improve himself, to make himself look better for the sake of appearance—Josh. 7:21:

- Josh. 7:21 When I saw among the spoil a beautiful mantle of Shinar and two hundred shekels of silver and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. And now they are hidden in the earth in my tent, with the silver under it.

1. Ananias and Sapphira, who lied to the Holy Spirit, sinned in the same principle—this is the principle of Babylon, which is hypocrisy—Acts 5:1-11; Rev. 17:4, 6; Matt. 23:13-36:

- Acts 5:1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a piece of property

- Acts 5:2 And put aside for himself some of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it. And he brought some part of it and laid it at the feet of the apostles.
- Acts 5:3 But Peter said, Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to deceive the Holy Spirit and to put aside for yourself some of the proceeds of the land?
- Acts 5:4 While it remained, was it not your own? And when it was sold, was it not under your authority? Why is it that you have contrived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.
- Acts 5:5 And when Ananias heard these words, he fell down and expired; and great fear came upon all those who heard this.
- Acts 5:6 And the young men arose and wrapped him up; and carrying him out, they buried him.
- Acts 5:7 And it happened that after an interval of about three hours, his wife, not knowing what had happened, came in.
- Acts 5:8 And Peter answered her, Tell me whether you have sold the land for this much? And she said, Yes, for this much.
- Acts 5:9 And Peter said to her, Why is it that it was agreed between you two to test the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out.
- Acts 5:10 And she fell down instantly at his feet and expired. And the young men came in and found her dead; and carrying her out, they buried her with her husband.
- Acts 5:11 And great fear came upon the whole church and upon all those who heard these things.
- Rev. 17:4 And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and gilded with gold and precious stone and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the unclean things of her fornication.
- Rev. 17:6 And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And I marveled with great marvel when I saw her.
- Matt. 23:13 But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you close off the kingdom of the heavens in the face of men; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to enter.
- Matt. 23:14 But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour the widows' houses, even while for a pretense you make long prayers. For this reason you shall receive greater judgment.
- Matt. 23:15 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you go about the sea and the dry land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of Gehenna as yourselves.
- Matt. 23:16 Woe to you, blind guides, who say, Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound.
- Matt. 23:17 Fools and blind men, which is greater, the gold or the temple which sanctifies the gold?
- Matt. 23:18 And, Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift which is upon it, he is bound.
- Matt. 23:19 Blind men, which is greater, the gift or the altar which sanctifies the gift?
- Matt. 23:20 Therefore he who swears by the altar swears by it and by all the things upon it;
- Matt. 23:21 And he who swears by the temple swears by it and by Him who dwells in it;
- Matt. 23:22 And he who swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits upon it.
- Matt. 23:23 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you give a tenth of the mint and the anise and the cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law— justice and mercy and faithfulness. But these you should have done and not neglected the others.
- Matt. 23:24 Blind guides, who strain out the gnat but swallow the camel!

Matt. 23:25 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish, but inwardly they are full of extortion and self-indulgence.

Matt. 23:26 Blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup and the dish so that their outside also may become clean.

Matt. 23:27 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you resemble white-washed graves, which outwardly appear beautiful but inwardly are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.

Matt. 23:28 So you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

Matt. 23:29 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build up the graves of the prophets and adorn the tombs of the righteous,

Matt. 23:30 And say, If we had been there in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

Matt. 23:31 So then you testify against yourselves that you are the sons of those who murdered the prophets.

Matt. 23:32 And you, fill up the measure of your fathers!

Matt. 23:33 Serpents! Brood of vipers! How shall you escape the judgment of Gehenna?

Matt. 23:34 Therefore, behold, I send to you prophets and wise men and scribes. Some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city,

Matt. 23:35 So that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zachariah, son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.

Matt. 23:36 Truly I say to you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

a. They did not love the Lord very much, but they wanted to be looked upon as those who greatly loved the Lord; they were just pretending; God's children need to be delivered from pretending before men.

b. They were not willing to offer everything cheerfully to God, but before man they acted as if they had offered all; whenever we put on a garment that does not match our actual condition, we are in the principle of Babylon—6:1-6; 15:7-8.

Matt. 6:1 But take care not to do your righteousness before men in order to be gazed at by them; otherwise, you have no reward with your Father who is in the heavens.

Matt. 6:2 Therefore when you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be glorified by men. Truly I say to you, They have their reward in full.

Matt. 6:3 But you, when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,

Matt. 6:4 So that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

Matt. 6:5 And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners, so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, They have their reward in full.

Matt. 6:6 But you, when you pray, enter into your private room, and shut your door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

Matt. 15:7 Hypocrites! Well has Isaiah prophesied concerning you, saying,

Matt. 15:8 "This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart stays far away from Me;

2. Everything done in falsehood to receive glory from man is done in the principle of the harlot, not in the principle of the bride; false consecration and spirituality are sins, but true worship is in spirit and truthfulness; may God make us true men— Rev. 17:4-5; 19:7-9; Luke 12:1; 1 Cor. 2:9-10; 2 Cor. 2:10; 5:14-15; John 4:23-24.

Rev. 17:4 And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and gilded with gold and precious stone and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the unclean things of her fornication.

Rev. 17:5 And on her forehead there was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

Rev. 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.

Rev. 19:8 And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousneses of the saints.

Rev. 19:9 And he said to me, Write, Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true words of God.

Luke 12:1 Meanwhile, when the myriads of the crowd were gathered together so that they trampled on one another, He began to say to His disciples first, Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

1 Cor. 2:9 But as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard and which have not come up in man's heart; things which God has prepared for those who love Him."

1 Cor. 2:10 But to us God has revealed them through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.

2 Cor. 2:10 But whom you forgive anything, I also forgive; for also what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, it is for your sake in the person of Christ;

2 Cor. 5:14 For the love of Christ constrains us because we have judged this, that One died for all, therefore all died;

2 Cor. 5:15 And He died for all that those who live may no longer live to themselves but to Him who died for them and has been raised.

John 4:23 But an hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truthfulness, for the Father also seeks such to worship Him.

John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.

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

1 Sam. 16:7 But Jehovah said to Samuel, Do not regard his appearance and the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For it is not how man sees that matters; for man looks on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looks on the heart.

Psa. 119:11 In my heart I have treasured up Your word / That I might not sin against You.

Eph. 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

Eph. 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

Luke 6:44 For each tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not collect figs from thorns, nor do they pick grapes from a thornbush.

Luke 6:45 The good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, brings forth that which is good, and the evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, brings forth that which is evil; for out of the abundance of his heart his mouth speaks.

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

- Josh. 7:11 Israel has sinned. Indeed they have trespassed My covenant, which I commanded them; indeed they have taken of that which was devoted to destruction; indeed they have stolen; indeed they have been deceptive; indeed they have put it among their goods.
- Josh. 7:12 Thus the children of Israel are not able to stand before their enemies; they turn their backs before their enemies, for they have become something devoted to destruction. I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy that which was devoted to destruction from among you.
- Josh. 7:20 Then Achan answered Joshua and said, It is true; I have sinned against Jehovah the God of Israel; and this is what I did:
- Josh. 7:21 When I saw among the spoil a beautiful mantle of Shinar and two hundred shekels of silver and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. And now they are hidden in the earth in my tent, with the silver under it.
- Josh. 8:1 Then Jehovah said to Joshua, Do not be afraid or dismayed. Take all the people of war with you, and rise and go up to Ai. See, I have given the king of Ai and his people and his city and his land into your hand.
- Josh. 8:2 And you shall do to Ai and to its king as you did to Jericho and to its king; except its spoil and its cattle you shall take for your plunder. Set an ambush for the city behind it.
- Josh. 8:3 So Joshua rose up with all the people of war to go up to Ai. And Joshua chose thirty thousand men, mighty men of valor, and sent them out by night.
- Josh. 8:4 And he commanded them, saying, See, you shall lie in ambush for the city behind the city. Do not go very far from the city, and all of you be ready.
- Josh. 8:5 And I and all the people who are with me will draw near to the city. Then when they come forth to meet us, as it was the first time, we will flee before them.
- Josh. 8:6 And they will come out after us until we have drawn them out from the city, for they will say, They are fleeing before us as they did the first time. Thus we will flee before them.
- Josh. 8:7 Then you shall rise up from the ambush and take possession of the city, for Jehovah your God will give it into your hand.
- Josh. 8:8 And when you capture the city, you shall set the city on fire. You shall do according to the word of Jehovah. See, I have commanded you.
- Josh. 8:9 Then Joshua sent them forth; and they went to the place of ambush, and they stayed between Bethel and Ai, to the west of Ai. And Joshua spent that night among the people.
- Josh. 8:10 And Joshua rose early in the morning and mustered the people; and he and the elders of Israel went up before the people to Ai.
- Josh. 8:11 And all the people of war who were with him went up and drew near and came before the city. And they camped to the north of Ai, so that the valley was between them and Ai.
- Josh. 8:12 Now he had taken about five thousand men and set them in ambush between Bethel and Ai, to the west of the city.
- Josh. 8:13 So they set the people, the whole camp, which was north of the city, and the rearguard to the west of the city. And Joshua went into the valley that night.
- Josh. 8:14 Now when the king of Ai saw this, the men of the city hurried and rose up early and went to meet Israel in battle, he and all his people, at the assigned place, facing the Arabah; for he did not know that there was an ambush set for him behind the city.
- Josh. 8:15 And Joshua and all Israel pretended to be beaten before them, and they fled by the way of the wilderness.

- Josh. 8:16 Then all the people who were in the city were called together to pursue after them; and they pursued after Joshua and thus were drawn out of the city.
- Josh. 8:17 And not a man was left in Ai or in Bethel who did not go forth after Israel, but they abandoned the city, leaving it open, and pursued after Israel.
- Josh. 8:18 Then Jehovah said to Joshua, Stretch out the javelin that is in your hand toward Ai, for I will give it into your hand. And Joshua stretched out the javelin that was in his hand toward the city.
- Josh. 8:19 And the ambush rose up quickly from their place and ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand, and they entered the city and captured it; and they hurried and set the city on fire.
- Josh. 8:20 And when the men of Ai turned to see behind them, they looked, and there it was-the smoke of the city going up to heaven; and they had no way to flee this way or that way when the people who had fled into the wilderness turned back upon the pursuers.
- Josh. 8:21 When Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city and that the smoke of the city was rising, they turned and slew the men of Ai.
- Josh. 8:22 And the others came out from the city to meet them, so that they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side and some on that side. And they struck them, so that no one was left to survive or escape.
- Josh. 8:23 But they took the king of Ai alive and brought him to Joshua.
- Josh. 8:24 And when Israel had finished slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, in the wilderness where they had pursued them, and all of them had fallen by the edge of the sword until they were consumed, all Israel returned to Ai and struck it with the edge of the sword.
- Josh. 8:25 And all those who fell that day, both of men and of women, were twelve thousand, all the people of Ai.
- Josh. 8:26 And Joshua did not withdraw his hand with which he stretched out the javelin until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.
- Josh. 8:27 Only the cattle and the spoil of that city Israel took for themselves as plunder, according to the word of Jehovah, which He commanded Joshua.
- Josh. 8:28 So Joshua burned Ai and made it a heap forever; it is a desolation to this day.
- Josh. 8:29 And he hanged the king of Ai on a tree until evening time. And when the sun set, Joshua commanded, and they took his corpse down from the tree and threw it at the entrance of the city gate, and they erected over him a great heap of stones, which is there to this day.
- Josh. 8:30 Then Joshua built an altar to Jehovah the God of Israel on Mount Ebal,
- Josh. 8:31 As Moses the servant of Jehovah had commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of unhewn stones upon which no one had lifted up an iron tool. And they offered upon it burnt offerings to Jehovah, and they sacrificed peace offerings.
- Josh. 8:32 And there he wrote upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written in the presence of the children of Israel.
- Josh. 8:33 And all Israel and their elders and their officers and their judges stood on either side of the Ark in front of the Levitical priests who carried the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah, both sojourner and native alike: half of them in front of Mount Gerizim and half of them in front of Mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of Jehovah had first commanded, to bless the people of Israel.
- Josh. 8:34 And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse, according to all that was written in the book of the law.
- Josh. 8:35 There was not a word of all that Moses had commanded that Joshua did not read before all the congregation of Israel and the women and the little ones and the sojourners who went among them.
- Josh. 9:1 And when all the kings who were across the Jordan in the hill country and in the lowland and on all the shore of the Great Sea toward Lebanon, the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, heard of this,
- Josh. 9:2 They gathered themselves together to fight with Joshua and Israel with one accord.
- Josh. 9:3 But the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai,

Josh. 9:4 And so they too acted craftily. And they went out as though they were envoys; and they took old sacks upon their donkeys, and old torn up and bound up wineskins,

Josh. 9:5 And old patched sandals on their feet, and old garments upon themselves; and all the bread of their provisions was dry and had become moldy.

Josh. 9:6 And they went to Joshua at the camp of Gilgal and said to him and to the men of Israel, From a faraway land we have come; now therefore make a covenant with us.

Josh. 9:7 And the men of Israel said unto the Hivites, Perhaps you dwell among us. How then can we make a covenant with you?

Josh. 9:8 And they said to Joshua, We will be your servants. And Joshua said to them, Who are you, and where are you coming from?

Josh. 9:9 And they said to him, From a very far land your servants have come because of the name of Jehovah your God, for we have heard reports of Him and all that He did in Egypt

Josh. 9:10 And all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites who were across the Jordan, to Sihon the king of Heshbon and to Og the king of Bashan, who was in Ashtaroath.

Josh. 9:11 So our elders and all the inhabitants of our land spoke to us, saying, Take provisions in your hand for the journey, and go to meet them; and you shall say to them, We will be your servants; make then a covenant with us.

Josh. 9:12 This bread of ours was hot when we took it for our provisions from our houses on the day we went forth to come to you; and here it now is: it is dry and has become moldy.

Josh. 9:13 And these wineskins, which we filled, were new; and here they are: they are torn up. And these clothes and sandals of ours have become old because of the very long journey.

Josh. 9:14 And the men took some of their provisions, but they did not ask for the counsel of Jehovah.

Josh. 9:15 And Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them to let them live, and the leaders of the assembly swore an oath to them.

Josh. 9:16 Then at the end of three days, after they had made the covenant with them, they heard that they were their neighbors and that they dwelt among them.

Josh. 9:17 And the children of Israel set out and came to their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon and Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath-jearim.

Josh. 9:18 And the children of Israel did not strike them, for the leaders of the assembly had sworn to them by Jehovah the God of Israel; and all the assembly murmured against the leaders.

Josh. 9:19 Then all the leaders said to all the assembly, We have sworn to them by Jehovah the God of Israel; therefore now we cannot touch them.

Josh. 9:20 This we will do with them and let them live, so that wrath does not come upon us because of the oath that we swore to them.

Josh. 9:21 And the leaders said to them, Let them live. So they became woodcutters and drawers of water for all the assembly, as the leaders had said concerning them.

Josh. 9:22 Then Joshua called for them and spoke to them, saying, Why have you deceived us, saying, We are very far from you; when you dwell among us?

Josh. 9:23 Now therefore you shall be cursed; and there shall never fail to be slaves from among you, woodcutters and drawers of water for the house of my God.

Josh. 9:24 And they answered Joshua and said, Because it had been told to your servants for certain that Jehovah your God had commanded Moses His servant to give you all the land and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you. Therefore we were very afraid for our lives because of you, and we did this thing.

Josh. 9:25 And now here we are in your hand: Do as it seems good and upright in your sight to do to us.

Josh. 9:26 And he did so to them and delivered them from the hand of the children of Israel, and they did not slay them.

Josh. 9:27 And that day Joshua made them woodcutters and drawers of water for the assembly and for the altar of Jehovah, as they are to this day, in the place that He would choose.

A. The Gibeonites were Hivites (vv. 3, 7; 11:18-19)—one of the nations in the land of Canaan that had to be exterminated by Israel because they were devilish and

mingled with demons (Deut. 7:2; 9:4-5; 18:9-14); the inhabitants of Gibeon deceived Israel with their craftiness (Josh. 9:3-14).

- Josh. 9:3 But the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai,
Josh. 9:7 And the men of Israel said unto the Hivites, Perhaps you dwell among us. How then can we make a covenant with you?
- Josh. 11:18 Joshua made war with all these kings a long time.
Josh. 11:19 There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel except the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon; they took all in battle.
- Deut. 7:2 And Jehovah your God delivers them up before you and you defeat them, you shall utterly destroy them; you shall make no covenant with them, nor shall you show them any favor.
- Deut. 9:4 Do not say in your heart when Jehovah your God drives them out from before you, Because of my righteousness, Jehovah has brought me in to possess this land. Rather, it is because of the wickedness of these nations that Jehovah is about to dispossess them from before you.
- Deut. 9:5 It is not because of your righteousness nor because of the uprightness of your heart that you are entering in to possess their land, but Jehovah your God is about to dispossess them from before you because of the wickedness of these nations and so that Jehovah may establish the word that He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.
- Deut. 18:9 When you enter the land which Jehovah your God is giving you, you shall not learn to do things according to the abominations of those nations.
- Deut. 18:10 There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or daughter pass through fire; anyone who performs divination, practices soothsaying, or interprets omens; or anyone who employs sorcery
- Deut. 18:11 Or casts spells; or anyone who consults a spirit of the dead or a familiar spirit or inquires of the dead;
- Deut. 18:12 For everyone who does these things is an abomination to Jehovah; and on account of these abominations Jehovah your God is dispossessing them from before you.
- Deut. 18:13 You shall be blameless toward Jehovah your God.
- Deut. 18:14 For these nations whom you are dispossessing listen to those who practice soothsaying and to those who perform divination, but Jehovah your God has not allowed you to do so.
- Josh. 9:3 But the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai,
Josh. 9:4 And so they too acted craftily. And they went out as though they were envoys; and they took old sacks upon their donkeys, and old torn up and bound up wineskins, Josh. 9:5 And old patched sandals on their feet, and old garments upon themselves; and all the bread of their provisions was dry and had become moldy.
- Josh. 9:6 And they went to Joshua at the camp of Gilgal and said to him and to the men of Israel, From a faraway land we have come; now therefore make a covenant with us.
- Josh. 9:7 And the men of Israel said unto the Hivites, Perhaps you dwell among us. How then can we make a covenant with you?
- Josh. 9:8 And they said to Joshua, We will be your servants. And Joshua said to them, Who are you, and where are you coming from?
- Josh. 9:9 And they said to him, From a very far land your servants have come because of the name of Jehovah your God, for we have heard reports of Him and all that He did in Egypt
- Josh. 9:10 And all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites who were across the Jordan, to Sihon the king of Heshbon and to Og the king of Bashan, who was in Ashtaroth.
- Josh. 9:11 So our elders and all the inhabitants of our land spoke to us, saying, Take provisions in your hand for the journey, and go to meet them; and you shall say to them, We will be your servants; make then a covenant with us.

- Josh. 9:12 This bread of ours was hot when we took it for our provisions from our houses on the day we went forth to come to you; and here it now is: it is dry and has become moldy.
- Josh. 9:13 And these wineskins, which we filled, were new; and here they are: they are torn up. And these clothes and sandals of ours have become old because of the very long journey.
- Josh. 9:14 And the men took some of their provisions, but they did not ask for the counsel of Jehovah.

B. Because they had heard of Israel’s defeating both Jericho and Ai, they wanted to make peace and a covenant with Israel so that Israel would let them live; they went out as though they were envoys and pretended to have come from afar; they went to Joshua at the camp of Gilgal and said to him and to the men of Israel, “From a faraway land we have come...We will be your servants; make then a covenant with us” (vv. 6, 11).

- Josh. 9:6 And they went to Joshua at the camp of Gilgal and said to him and to the men of Israel, From a faraway land we have come; now therefore make a covenant with us.
- Josh. 9:11 So our elders and all the inhabitants of our land spoke to us, saying, Take provisions in your hand for the journey, and go to meet them; and you shall say to them, We will be your servants; make then a covenant with us.

C. Joshua 9:14 is a very powerful portion of the Scriptures that shows us why the children of Israel were deceived by the Gibeonites—“they did not ask for the counsel of Jehovah”; thus, Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them to let them live (v. 15):

- Josh. 9:14 And the men took some of their provisions, but they did not ask for the counsel of Jehovah.
- Josh. 9:15 And Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them to let them live, and the leaders of the assembly swore an oath to them.

1. The children of Israel were deceived because they were like a wife who forgot her husband; the entire Bible is a divine romance, a record of how God courts His chosen people and eventually marries them (Gen. 2:21-24; S. S. 1:2-4; Isa. 54:5; 62:5; Jer. 2:2; 3:1, 14; 31:32; Ezek. 16:8; 23:5; Hosea 2:7, 19; Matt. 9:15; John 3:29; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-32; Rev. 19:7; 21:2, 9-10; 22:17a).

- Gen. 2:21 And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place.
- Gen. 2:22 And Jehovah God built the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman and brought her to the man.
- Gen. 2:23 And the man said, This time this is bone of my bones / And flesh of my flesh; / This one shall be called Woman / Because out of Man this one was taken.
- Gen. 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.
- S.S. 1:2 Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! / For your love is better than wine.
- S.S. 1:3 Your anointing oils have a pleasant fragrance; / Your name is like ointment poured forth; / Therefore the virgins love you.
- S.S. 1:4 Draw me; we will run after you - The king has brought me into his chambers - / We will be glad and rejoice in you; / We will extol your love more than wine. / Rightly do they love you.

- Isa. 54:5 For your Maker is your Husband; / Jehovah of hosts is His name. / And the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; / He is called the God of all the earth.
- Isa. 62:5 For as a young man marries a virgin, / Your sons will marry you; / And with the joy of the bridegroom over the bride / Your God will rejoice over you.
- Jer. 2:2 Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus says Jehovah: / I remember concerning you the kindness of your youth, / The love of your bridal days, / When you followed after Me in the wilderness, / In a land that was not sown.
- Jer. 3:1 It is said, / If a man divorces his wife / And she goes from him / And becomes another man's wife, / Will he return to her again? / Will not that land be / Utterly polluted? / But you have committed fornication with many lovers. / Yet return to Me, declares Jehovah.
- Jer. 3:14 Return, O apostate children, declares Jehovah, for I am a Husband to you; and I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and will bring you to Zion.
- Jer. 31:32 Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by their hand to bring them out from the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was their Husband, declares Jehovah.
- Ezek. 16:8 Then I passed by you and saw you; and then was your time a time of love. And I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness; indeed I swore unto you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord Jehovah, and you became Mine.
- Ezek. 23:5 And Oholah committed fornication instead of remaining with Me, and she lusted after her lovers, after the Assyrians, who were close to her,
- Hosea 2:7 And she will pursue her lovers / But will not overtake them; / And she will seek them but not find them; / And she will say, I will go / And return to my first Husband, / For it was better for me then than now.
- Hosea 2:19 And I will betroth you to Myself forever; / Indeed I will betroth you to Myself / In righteousness and justice / And in lovingkindness and compassions;
- Matt. 9:15 And Jesus said to them, The sons of the bridechamber cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.
- John 3:29 He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices with joy because of the bridegroom's voice. This joy of mine therefore is made full.
- 2 Cor. 11:2 For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.
- Eph. 5:25 Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her
- Eph. 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,
- Eph. 5:27 That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.
- Eph. 5:28 In the same way the husbands also ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his own wife loves himself.
- Eph. 5:29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ also the church,
- Eph. 5:30 Because we are members of His Body.
- Eph. 5:31 For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh.
- Eph. 5:32 This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.
- Rev. 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.
- Rev. 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

- Rev. 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.
- Rev. 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
- Rev. 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! And let him who is thirsty come; let him who wills take the water of life freely.

2. The Bible shows us that we, as God's elect, are His wife and that between Him and us there must be a marriage union of mutual love; the universe, therefore, is a wedding place, the place where the Husband, the processed and consummated Triune God, is being joined in marriage to the redeemed, regenerated, sanctified, renewed, transformed, and glorified tripartite man; eventually, the Bible ends with the New Jerusalem as the ultimate consummation of God's elect in the new heaven and new earth, as the universal wife for eternity—21:9-10; 22:17a.

- Rev. 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.
- Rev. 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
- Rev. 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! And let him who is thirsty come; let him who wills take the water of life freely.

3. A wife should never leave her husband; rather, she should always rely upon him and be one with him; when the Gibeonites came to Israel, as the wife Israel should have gone to her Husband and checked with Him about what to do—Josh. 9:14.

- Josh. 9:14 And the men took some of their provisions, but they did not ask for the counsel of Jehovah.

4. As believers who love the Lord and aspire to be the constituents of His overcoming bride, we should consult God related to every problem that we encounter; we need to bring every matter to the Lord and to consider, examine, and determine things before Him and in fellowship with Him:

a. In this respect, every believer needs to be weak to the extent that he does not have his own ideas, make his own decisions, or take any action related to what he encounters without contacting the Lord and consulting with Him, allowing Him to make the decisions; this is the sweetest living of a Christian—2 Cor. 12:9-10.

2 Cor. 12:9 And He has said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly therefore I will rather boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ might tabernacle over me.

2 Cor. 12:10 Therefore I am well pleased in weaknesses, in insults, in necessities, in persecutions and distresses, on behalf of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am powerful.

b. We have no alternative but to fellowship with God in all things, discuss all things with Him, and allow Him to handle all things, speak in all things, and make every decision; it is glorious for a Christian to be dependent on another One—God—at every moment and in every matter—Phil. 4:6-7; Prov. 3:5-6; Jer. 17:7-8; 2 Cor. 1:8-9; Psa. 62:8; Psa. 102, title and v. 7.

- Phil. 4:6 In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;
- Phil. 4:7 And the peace of God, which surpasses every man's understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.
- Prov. 3:5 Trust in Jehovah with all your heart, / And do not rely on your own understanding;
- Prov. 3:6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, / And He will make your paths straight.
- Jer. 17:7 Blessed is the man who trusts in Jehovah / And whose trust Jehovah is.
- Jer. 17:8 And he will be like a tree transplanted beside water, / Which sends out its roots by a stream, / And will not be afraid when heat comes; / For its leaves remain flourishing, / And it will not be anxious in the year of drought / And will not cease to bear fruit.
- 2 Cor. 1:8 For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of our affliction which befell us in Asia, that we were excessively burdened, beyond our power, so that we despaired even of living.
- 2 Cor. 1:9 Indeed we ourselves had the response of death in ourselves, that we should not base our confidence on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead;
- Psa. 62:8 Trust in Him at all times, O people; / Pour out your heart before Him; / God is a refuge to us. Selah.
- Psa. 102 title A prayer of an afflicted one, when he is fainting and pouring out his complaint before Jehovah
- Psa. 102:7 I watch, and I am like / A lone sparrow on a housetop.

5. If God leads you to take a way that you do not know, “this forces you to have hundreds and thousands of conversations with Him, resulting in a journey that is an everlasting memorial between you and Him”—The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, vol. 7, p. 1144.

6. The result of Israel’s not seeking the counsel of her Husband was that this independent and individualistic wife was deceived, and she had no protection, no safeguard; from this record in the Scriptures, we need to learn that, as the Lord’s wife, we should co-live with Him, always relying on Him and being one with Him all the time; this is the intrinsic significance of Joshua 9.

Josh. 9 See the verses listed under *Scripture Reading* of this message.