

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OF JOSHUA

Week 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: E389 (E792)

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

OUTLINE

§Day 1

- I. **When the two spies came to Jericho, Rahab (who was both a harlot and a Canaanite) contacted them and was willing to receive them, hide them, and deliver them by acts that issued out of her faith (Josh. 2:1b-7, 15-16, 22; James 2:25); she believed in the God of Israel and declared, "Jehovah your God, He is God in heaven above and upon earth beneath" (Josh. 2:11b):**
 - A. **Jehovah provided Rahab the harlot to Joshua for the gaining of the land; because of her faith in God, she "did not perish with those who were disobedient" (Heb. 11:31); she turned to Israel and their God, and she trusted in Him and His people (Josh. 2:12-13).**
 - B. **The sign for Rahab and her house to be saved was for her to hang a line of scarlet thread in the window of her house (vv. 18, 21); the scarlet thread tied in the window typifies an open confession of the redeeming blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:18-19); she believed that by this sign she and her household would be delivered.**

- C. Although Rahab was a condemned Canaanite and a prostitute in Jericho (Josh. 2:1), a place cursed by God for eternity (6:26), after she turned to God and to God's people (vv. 22-25; Heb. 11:30-31), she married Salmon (Matt. 1:5), the son of a leader of Judah, a leading tribe of Israel (1 Chron. 2:10-11), and probably one of the two spies; then she brought forth Boaz, a godly man, out of whom Christ came, and she became associated with Christ in His incarnation for the fulfillment of God's eternal economy (Matt. 1:5).
- D. This shows that regardless of our background, if we turn to God and His people and are joined to the proper person among God's people (not in a physical sense but in a spiritual sense), we will bring forth proper fruit and participate in the enjoyment of the birthright of Christ—Exo. 24:13; 33:11; Num. 27:18; Deut. 34:9; Josh. 1:1; 2 Kings 2:2-15; Phil. 2:19-23; 1 Cor. 4:17.

§Day 2

- 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):
 - A. The report of the spies to Joshua concerning Ai indicates that Israel had set God aside; instead of asking God what they should do against Ai, they forgot God and cared only for themselves; at that time they were not one with God but acted on their own, without seeking the Lord's direction and without having the Lord's presence; Israel was separated from God because of their sin—vv. 1-5, 12c:
 - 1. The secret of Israel's defeat at Ai was that they had lost God's presence and were no longer one with God; after this defeat Joshua learned the lesson of staying with the Lord before the Ark (v. 6); eventually, the Lord came in to speak to him and to

tell him what to do (vv. 10-15).

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

§Day 3

- B. If we would enter, possess, and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ as the reality of the good land, we must do so by the presence of the Lord; the Lord promised Moses, "My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest" (Exo. 33:14); God's presence is His way, the "map" that shows His people the way they should take:**
- 1. In order for us to fully gain and possess Christ as the all-inclusive land for God's building, we must hold on to this principle: God's presence is the criterion for every matter; regardless of what we do, we must pay attention to whether or not we have God's presence; if we have God's presence, we have everything, but if we lose God's presence, we lose everything—Matt. 1:23; 2 Tim. 4:22; Gal. 6:18; Psa. 27:4, 8; 51:11; 2 Cor. 2:10; Ezek. 48:35.**
 - 2. The presence of the Lord, the smile of the Lord, is the governing principle; we must learn to be kept, to be ruled, to be governed, and to be guided, not by His secondhand presence but by the direct, firsthand presence of the Lord; His precious presence is the power for us to possess the all-inclusive Christ as the reality of the good land flowing with milk and honey—Exo. 3:8; 25:30; Deut. 26:9; Ezek. 20:6.**

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

§Day 4

- C. **When the Israelites entered into the land of Canaan and gained the victory over Jericho, the first person to commit sin was Achan; the intrinsic, spiritual significance and divine view of Achan’s serious sin was his coveting a beautiful Babylonian garment (Shinar is the area that was later called Babylon) in his seeking to improve himself, to make himself look better for the sake of appearance—Josh. 7:21:**
 1. **Ananias and Sapphira, who lied to the Holy Spirit, sinned in the same principle—this is the principle of Babylon, which is hypocrisy—Acts 5:1-11; Rev. 17:4, 6; Matt. 23:13-36:**
 - a. **They did not love the Lord very much, but they wanted to be looked upon as those who greatly loved the Lord; they were just pretending; God’s children need to be delivered from pretending before men.**
 - b. **They were not willing to offer everything cheerfully to God, but before man they acted as if they had offered all; whenever we put on a garment that does not match our actual condition, we are in the principle of Babylon—6:1-6; 15:7-8.**
 2. **Everything done in falsehood to receive glory from man is done in the principle of the harlot, not in the principle of the bride; false consecration and spirituality are sins, but true worship is in spirit and truthfulness; may God make us true men—Rev. 17:4-5; 19:7-9; Luke 12:1; 1 Cor. 2:9-10; 2 Cor. 2:10; 5:14-15; John 4:23-24.**
 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).

§Day 5

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

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

- 2. The Bible shows us that we, as God's elect, are His wife and that between Him and us there must be a marriage union of mutual love; the universe, therefore, is a wedding place, the place where the Husband, the processed and consummated Triune God, is being joined in marriage to the redeemed, regenerated, sanctified, renewed, transformed, and glorified tripartite man; eventually, the Bible ends with the New Jerusalem as the ultimate consummation of God's elect in the new heaven and new earth, as the universal wife for eternity—21:9-10; 22:17a.**
- 3. A wife should never leave her husband; rather, she should always rely upon him and be one with him; when the Gibeonites came to Israel, as the wife Israel should have gone to her Husband and checked with Him about what to do—Josh. 9:14.**

§Day 6

- 4. As believers who love the Lord and aspire to be the constituents of His overcoming bride, we should consult God related to every problem that we encounter; we need to bring every matter to the Lord and to consider, examine, and determine things before Him and in fellowship with Him:**
 - a. In this respect, every believer needs to be weak to the extent that he does not have his own ideas, make his own decisions, or take any action related to what he encounters without contacting the Lord and consulting with Him, allowing Him to make the decisions; this is the sweetest living of a Christian—2 Cor. 12:9-10.**
 - b. We have no alternative but to fellowship with God in all things, discuss all things with Him, and allow Him to handle all things, speak in all things, and make every decision; it is glorious for a Christian to be dependent on another One—God—at every moment and in every matter—Phil. 4:6-7; Prov. 3:5-6; Jer. 17:7-8; 2 Cor. 1:8-9; Psa. 62:8; Psa. 102, title and v. 7.**
- 5. If God leads you to take a way that you do not know, “this forces you to have hundreds and thousands of conversations with Him, resulting in a journey that is an everlasting memorial between you and Him”—The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, vol. 7, p.**

1144.

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

WEEK 4 — DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Josh. 2:11 When we heard, our hearts melted;...for Jehovah your God, He is God in heaven above and upon earth beneath.

1 Pet. 1:18-19 ...You were redeemed from your vain manner of life...with precious blood, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot, the blood of Christ.

Matt. 1:5 And Salmon begot Boaz of Rahab, and Boaz begot Obed of Ruth...

Joshua sent the two spies to spy out the good land, especially Jericho (Josh. 2:1a). Joshua's real purpose in sending out the spies was to find Rahab. Rahab believed in the God of Israel (vv. 8-11; Heb. 11:31a). She told the spies that she knew that Jehovah had given the land to the people of Israel and that all the inhabitants of the land melted before them. She went on to say that they had heard how Jehovah had dried up the water of the Red Sea before Israel when they came out of Egypt and what they did to the two kings of the Amorites, Sihon and Og, whom they utterly destroyed. Then Rahab declared, "Jehovah your God, He is God in heaven above and upon earth beneath" (Josh. 2:11b). Because of her faith in God, she "did not perish with those who were disobedient" (Heb. 11:31a). (Life-study of Joshua, p. 16)

Today's Reading

Rahab was willing to receive the spies, hide them, and deliver them by her acts out of her faith (Josh. 2:1b-7, 15-16, 22; James 2:25). Her receiving, hiding, and delivering the spies were acts of faith. This indicates that her faith was active. After receiving the spies, she had good fellowship with them concerning what God intended to do.

The spies told Rahab to hang a line of scarlet thread in the window of her house (Josh. 2:18). According to their word, "she tied the scarlet line in the window" (v. 21). The scarlet thread tied in the window of Rahab's

house was hung out in the open; it was there for everyone to see. Thus, the scarlet thread tied to the window typifies an open confession of the redeeming blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:18-19). Rahab made such an open confession and believed that by this sign she and her household would be delivered.

Eventually Rahab the harlot became one of the excellent, prominent ancestors of Christ. This Canaanite woman married Salmon, a leader of the tribe of Judah, and through her union with this Jewish leader she became a part of Israel and brought forth Boaz, the great-grandfather of David. What an honor it is that Rahab's name is included in the genealogy of Christ in Matthew 1! This is a strong sign that the history recorded in Joshua is in line with God's eternal economy concerning Christ. (Life-study of Joshua, pp. 17, 15-16)

Now we must pay our full attention to the principles governing our association with Christ. The first principle is that, no matter what our background is, we must turn to God and to God's people. Second, we must marry the proper person, not in a physical sense, but in a spiritual sense. After we have turned to God and to God's people, we must be joined, built up, and involved with the proper person. Third, we must bring forth the proper fruit. Then we will be fully in the portion of the birthright of Christ.

It seems that many Christians today have lost their birthright. They do not have Salmon and Boaz. If you would have a Salmon and a Boaz, you must become involved with the proper believers, with the proper leading ones in the leading tribes. Then you need to bring forth the proper fruit, Boaz, who will be a forefather of David. We must turn to the Lord, and we must turn to the Lord's people; we must also take care of how we become involved with others. If we become involved with the proper persons, surely we shall bring forth the proper fruit. This will keep us in the full enjoyment of the birthright of Christ. (Life-study of Matthew, p. 31)

Further Reading: Life-study of Matthew, msg. 3; CWWL, 1953, vol. 1, "Knowing Life and the Church," chs. 16-17

WEEK 4 — DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

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...

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.

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

At Jericho, according to God's economy, Joshua sent out spies, not for fighting but to gain Rahab. In the destruction of Jericho, no fighting was needed. But at Ai, because they lost the presence of the Lord, Joshua sent out spies for fighting (Josh. 7:2). The spies returned to Joshua and said that because the enemies were few, not all the people needed go up.... Because of their foolishness, pride, and blindness, they despised their enemy. Nevertheless, Joshua received the report from the spies and sent three thousand men of war against Ai. But when Israel was defeated by the people of Ai and thirty-six men were slaughtered, Joshua realized that something was wrong. He then fell to the ground upon his face before the Ark of Jehovah until evening (vv. 6-9). (Life-study of Joshua, p. 46)

Today's Reading

We all need to learn a lesson from this account. We, the people of God, should always be one with our God. Today, especially in the New Testament, our God is not only among us but also within each one of us. Therefore, every one of us is not a solitary individual, a person alone. On the contrary, we are men with God, God-men.... For this reason, we must realize that whatever we do, wherever we go, and whatever we are should not be by ourselves. We should not act, behave, or do things by ourselves but with God.

The report of the spies to Joshua indicates that Israel had set God aside.

They forgot God and knew only themselves. At that time they were not one with God but cared only for themselves. Thus, God stayed away from them, and He said to Joshua, “I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy that which was devoted to destruction from among you” (Josh. 7:12c). It is a very serious matter for God no longer to be with us. Israel was separated from God because of their sin. This sin caused them to become foolish. Israel should have asked God what He wanted them to do against Ai. This was the secret for their victory. Joshua should have said to the people, “Do not forget what we experienced at Jericho. We did not fight, but instead we walked with God as one. Let us do the same thing at Ai, walking around the city with the Ark.”

The secret of Israel’s defeat at Ai was that they lost God’s presence and were no longer one with Him. After this defeat, Joshua learned the lesson of staying with the Lord before the Ark. Eventually, the Lord came in to speak to him and to tell him what to do. The principle is the same with us today. If we have God’s presence, we have wisdom, insight, foresight, and the inner knowledge concerning things.

As we study the intrinsic significance of this part of Israel’s history, we need to learn the secret of walking with the Lord. Today we should not merely follow the Lord but walk with Him, living with Him and having our 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. We need to remember that we are God-men and to practice being one with the Lord. Concerning this, the Lord Jesus said, “In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you” (John 14:20). This word reveals that we are a people of “ins”: we are in Christ and He is in us (15:4). Therefore, whatever we do should not be done by ourselves but should be done with and by another One. (Life-study of Joshua, pp. 46-48)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1958, vol. 2, “The Building Work of God,” ch. 7; CWWN, vol. 7, pp. 1143-1144; CWWL, 1991-1992, vol. 2, “The Christian Life,” ch. 15

WEEK 4 — DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

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

Psa. 27:8 When You say, Seek My face, to You my heart says, Your face, O Jehovah, will I seek.

Matt. 1:23 “...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.

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)

Today’s Reading

If we would go on to possess the land, we must do so by the presence of the Lord. If the presence of the Lord goes with us, we can enter and enjoy the land. You remember how the Lord promised Moses, “My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest” (Exo. 33:14). This means that He would bring the people into the possession of the land by His presence. So Moses said to the Lord, “If Your presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here” (v. 15). Moses demanded that the Lord’s presence must go with them; otherwise, he would not go.

One time, four or five of us who were serving the Lord together were going to a certain place....One brother at that time, however, was not happy with us, yet he had no choice but to go. We all traveled on the same train: all but this one brother sat in car number one, and he sat by himself in car number two.... He left with us, he traveled with us, and he arrived with us, but his presence was not with us.

Some Christian workers have said to me, "...Do you not believe that the Lord has blessed us?" "Undoubtedly," I have answered, "the Lord has helped you and blessed you, but let us be silent for a little while before the Lord." After a while I have asked, "Brother, do you feel in your deepest sense that you have the presence of the Lord with you? I know that you have done something for the Lord; I know that the Lord has helped you and blessed you. But I wish to know, in the innermost part of your being, do you feel that the Lord is so present with you? Do you always sense His face smiling upon you, and has the very smile of the Lord entered into you?"...Eventually, such brothers have said, "I must tell you, for some time I have lost my fellowship with the Lord." Then I asked, "Brother, ...are you governed by the help of the Lord or by His presence? Are you governed by His blessing or by His smile?"

Although it may be with tears in our eyes, we must say day by day, "Lord, nothing but Your smiling presence will satisfy me. I do not want anything but the smile of Your glorious face. As long as I have this, I care not whether the heaven comes down or the earth falls apart. The whole world may rise against me, but as long as I have Your smile upon me, I can praise You, and everything is well." The Lord said, "My presence shall go with you." What a treasure! The presence, the smile, of the Lord is the governing principle. We must be fearful of receiving anything from the Lord yet losing His presence....

The Lord Himself may very well give you something, and yet that very thing will rob you of His presence....We must learn to be kept, to be ruled, to be governed, to be guided simply by the presence of the Lord....We do not want His presence secondhand....Try to be governed by the direct, firsthand presence of the Lord. This is not only a requirement and a qualification but also a power for you to go on to possess the land. The firsthand presence of the Lord will strengthen you with might to obtain the fullness, the all-inclusiveness of Christ. What a strength, what a power, is in the direct presence of the Lord! (CWWL, 1961-1962, vol. 4, "The All-inclusive Christ," pp. 294-296)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1961-1962, vol. 4, "The All-inclusive Christ," ch. 11; Life-study of Exodus, msgs. 175-177

WEEK 4 — DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

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.

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.

In Joshua 6 the children of Israel gained the victory over Jericho, but in fighting against Ai they were defeated. Because Achan kept a Babylonian garment (7:21), God's people suffered a defeat. Anything that is Babylonian gives Satan the ground to defeat the people of God. Therefore, we must forsake everything Babylonian. If we would serve God as His pure people, we first need to have a thorough clearance of all Babylonian things. (Life-study of Isaiah, p. 180)

Today's Reading

When the Israelites entered into the land of Canaan, the first person to commit sin was Achan. What was the sin which Achan committed? He said, "When I saw among the spoil a beautiful mantle of Shinar, ...I coveted them and took them" (Josh. 7:21). A Babylonian garment seduced Achan to commit sin.... A beautiful garment is worn for the sake of appearance. When one puts on a beautiful garment, it means that he adorns himself to improve his appearance and to add a little luster to himself. Achan's coveting of the Babylonian garment meant that he was seeking to improve himself, to make himself look better. This was Achan's sin.

Who were the first ones to commit sin in the New Testament, after the church began? The Scriptures reveal that they were Ananias and Sapphira. What was the sin that they committed? They lied to the Holy Spirit. 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. They were

not willing to offer everything cheerfully to God. Before man, however, they acted as if they had offered all. This is the Babylonian garment. The principle of Babylon, therefore, is hypocrisy. There is no reality, yet people act as if there is in order to obtain glory from man. Here is a real danger to God's children—pretending to be spiritual. There is a great deal of spiritual behavior which is acted out in falsehood.... Many long prayers are counterfeit; many prayerful tones are unreal. There is no reality, but it is made to appear as if there is. This is the principle of Babylon. Whenever we put on a garment which does not match our actual condition, we are in the principle of Babylon.

God's children do not know how much falsehood they have put on in order to receive glory from man. This is entirely opposite from the attitude of the bride. Everything done in falsehood is done in the principle of the harlot, not in the principle of the bride. It is a great matter for God's children to be delivered from pretending before man. The principle of Babylon is to pretend in order to receive glory from man. If we set our sight upon man's glory and man's position in the church, we are participating in the sin of the Babylonian garment and the sin committed by Ananias and Sapphira. False consecration is sin, and false spirituality is also sin. True worship is in spirit and truthfulness.

God hates the principle of Babylon more than anything else. We must note in His presence how much of our being is still not absolute for Him. Anything which is halfway and not absolute is called Babylon. We need God to enlighten us so that in His light we may judge everything in us which is not absolute toward Him. Only when we judge ourselves in this way can we confess that we too hate the principle of Babylon. By His grace, may the Lord not allow us to seek any glory and honor outside of Christ. (CWWN, vol. 34, "The Glorious Church," pp. 102-103, 105-106)

Further Reading: Life-study of Isaiah, msg. 26; CWWN, vol. 34, "The Glorious Church," ch. 5

WEEK 4 — DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

Josh. 9:14 And the men...did not ask for the counsel of Jehovah.

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.

To study the Old Testament histories and prophecies we need a full scope, a full view, of the entire Scriptures concerning God's economy for Christ and the church, which consummates in the New Jerusalem. My burden in this message is to apply this principle to Joshua 9 so that we may see the intrinsic significance of this chapter...The children of Israel were deceived by the Gibeonites ...because they were like a wife who forgot her husband. What they did here was exactly the same as what Eve did in Genesis 3. The subtle serpent wanted to tempt, to seduce, Adam, yet he did not dare to go to him directly. Instead, Satan went to Adam's counterpart, a female, because he knows that it is easier to deceive a female (2 Cor. 11:3; 1 Tim. 2:14). (Life-study of Joshua, p. 53)

Today's Reading

The Bible is the record of a romance, in the most pure and holy sense, of a universal couple. The male of this couple is God Himself, and the female is God's redeemed people as a corporate being. 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 based upon 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, transformed, and glorified tripartite man. The Husband is triune and the wife is tripartite, and thus they match each other very well to live together as the unique couple in the entire universe.

This divine romance is revealed repeatedly throughout the Bible. After man fell, God selected one man, Abraham. This one with all of his

descendants, both Jewish and Gentile, became God's wife. In the Old Testament God often refers to Himself as the Husband and to His people as the wife (Isa. 54:5...). 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 (Rev. 21:9-10).

There were some "bridal days" [Jer. 2:2], a period of time in which God "courted" Israel. By the time God had brought Israel out of Egypt to Sinai, surely she had "fallen in love" with this universal Man, this unique Hero. Whatever Israel wanted, He could do. What they needed, He had. He had the wisdom, the capacity, the ability, the strength, the might, the power, and the authority to do everything.... I believe that when Israel arrived at Sinai they made a definite determination to "marry" this One.

A wife should never leave her husband. Rather, she should always rely upon him and be one with him. If Eve had kept this principle when Satan came to seduce her, she would have run away to her husband. That would have been her protection, her safeguard.

Suppose I am a wife and a poor woman comes to me asking for some help. As a wife, should I do something directly, on my own, for this poor woman? Since this seems to be an insignificant matter, I might just give her a little money or some bread without asking my husband about it. This is what happened in Joshua 9. The Gibeonites came to Israel like a poor woman coming to a rich lady from a strong, high-ranking family. Israel, the wife, should have gone to her Husband and checked with Him. But Israel "did not ask for the counsel of Jehovah" (v. 14). Instead, Israel was deceived by the Gibeonites and made a covenant with them. Once the people of Israel had made this covenant, swearing to the Gibeonites by the name of Jehovah, the covenant could not be altered, and the Israelites could not touch the Gibeonites. (Life-study of Joshua, pp. 53-55)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1959, vol. 3, "Lessons for New Believers," ch. 21

WEEK 4 — DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

Phil. 4:6-7 In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses every man's understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

The real married life is when the wife is co-living with her husband, always one with him.... However, this dear wife, Israel, never learned to be habitual in this matter. At Ai they suffered a defeat and learned the lesson to be one with the Lord, but they did not learn it fully....Whereas the people of Ai fought against Israel strongly, [in Joshua 9] the Gibeonites came to them begging to be their servants. The result was that Israel, this independent, individualistic wife, was deceived. She had no protection, no safeguard. From this chapter we need to learn that, as the Lord's wife, we should be one with Him all the time. This is the intrinsic significance of Joshua 9. (Life-study of Joshua, p. 55)

Today's Reading

A normal Christian life is a life of fellowship. This means that we cannot be separated from God; we cannot be independent from God. From the day of our salvation...we should no longer be independent.

We usually pay attention to whether something is right or wrong or good or bad, but these are moral concepts....Our concept in God's salvation should not be morality or religion; it should be fellowship.... In doing something,...we must ask whether we did it independently from God or in fellowship with God. Therefore, a life of fellowship means that we have fellowship with God, are connected to Him, and have a mutual flow with Him in everything. We should not focus on doing things that are right, good, or godly. Rather, we should focus on whether we are joined to God, connected to Him, and in a mutual flow with Him when doing things that

are right, good, or godly. We should focus on not being separated from God.

Before a person is saved, he may be the most independent person on earth.... But once this great and capable person is saved, he becomes a dependent person. Without God he cannot live, make decisions, or have an opinion. Previously, he had his own point of view, method, and insight concerning everything. But from the day he becomes a Christian, he is changed and can no longer decide things on his own or be independent. He feels that he needs to contact and consult God related to every problem he encounters, that is, to bring every matter to the Lord and to consider, examine, and determine things before Him. This believer is the best type of Christian. In this respect, every Christian needs to be weak to the extent that he neither has his own ideas, nor makes his own decisions, nor takes any action related to what he encounters without contacting the Lord and consulting with Him, allowing Him to make the decisions. This is the best and sweetest living of a Christian.

We need to realize that every descendant of Adam, every fallen man, is very strong and independent. This applies both to men and women and to the elderly and children. We can all find a way out of any situation and cope with problems on our own....Therefore, one of the consequences of being saved is that strong, independent persons such as ourselves become weak and are no longer strong or independent. We feel that 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....We feel that we cannot do anything without Him. Therefore, we depend on Him and rely on Him....Today it is shameful for someone to be referred to as a dependent person; rather, it is considered an honor to be self-supporting and independent. However, for a Christian...it is glorious...to be dependent....We depend on another One—God—at every moment and in every matter. (CWWL, 1959, vol. 3, “Lessons for New Believers,” pp. 282-284)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 3, “The Organic Aspect of God’s Salvation,” ch. 4

« WEEK 4 — HYMN »

Hymns, #792 Waiting on Thee, Lord, waiting on Thee

Prayer — Waiting on God

- 1 Waiting on Thee, Lord, waiting on Thee;
Let me now rest in Thee;
Make Thy will clear to me,
This is my earnest plea-
Waiting on Thee, waiting on Thee.
- 2 Waiting on Thee, Lord, waiting on Thee;
While here with Thee I stay,
Show me Thy glorious way,
Ever by Thee to pray-
Waiting on Thee, waiting on Thee.
- 3 Waiting on Thee, Lord, waiting on Thee;
Mingle Thyself with me,
Till truly one with Thee
Thine image I will be-
Waiting on Thee, waiting on Thee.
- 4 Waiting on Thee, Lord, waiting on Thee;
Make me Thy will to know,
Help me Thy way to go,
That life thru me may flow-
Waiting on Thee, waiting on Thee.
- 5 Waiting on Thee, Lord, waiting on Thee;
Make all my prayer to Thee
Thyself expressed thru me,
Give me Thy secret key-
Waiting on Thee, waiting on Thee.

