

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Prophecy Message Seven : The Intrinsic Significance of the Materials of the Temple

I. Overview:

In order to become materials for God's building, we need to experience Christ in His death, Christ in His resurrection, and Christ as the Spirit. Cypress signifies the crucified Christ; the doors of the temple were made of cypress wood and were carved with cherubim and palm trees. The carving of the palm trees and the cherubim on the door signifies that the victory of Christ and the glory of the Lord have been "carved" into our being through sufferings. Cedar trees grew on the mountains of Lebanon; thus, cedar signifies Christ's humanity in resurrection. We need to be those who send forth our roots into Christ, then we are planted in the house of Jehovah. Olive wood signifies Christ's humanity in the Spirit of God, the anointed Christ, who is also the compound Spirit as the anointing. The pillars of the temple were built of bronze, signifying God's judgment, and the pillar is a sign of God's building. On the top of the capitals were lilies and pomegranates; lilies signify a life of faith in God, and pomegranates signify the fullness, the beauty, and the expression of the riches of Christ as life. The stones of the temple signify Christ's humanity in transformation to be transformed into the living stone, the foundation stone, the cornerstone, and the topstone; the stones used for the building up of the church must be living inwardly and cut outwardly.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Expound what the three kinds of wood used in the temple are and they signify.

In ancient times the Jews planted cypress trees above their graves; hence, cypress signifies Christ's humanity in His death, the crucified Jesus. Cedar trees grew on the mountains of Lebanon; thus, cedar signifies Christ's humanity in resurrection, the resurrected Christ. Olive oil typifies the Spirit of God; hence, olive wood signifies Christ's humanity in the Spirit of God, the anointed Christ.

B. Explain the three kinds of wood and their spiritual significance.

In summary, these three kinds of wood show three great matters concerning the Lord Jesus. The first matter is that He died, the second matter is that He resurrected, and the third matter is that He became the Spirit. These three kinds of wood also show us, the saved ones, three aspects of our spiritual experience; that is our death with Christ, our resurrection with Christ, and our receiving the Holy Spirit with Christ.

Day 2 —

A. Expound that cherubim and palm trees were carved on all the wooden wainscoting.

On all the wooden wainscoting, cherubim and palm trees were carved. The cherubim signify the glory of the Lord manifested upon the creatures. Among the cherubim are palm trees, signifying the victory of Christ and the everlasting and ever-existing power of Christ.

The cherubim and palm trees are not painted on the wood but are carved into the wood. This reveals that, as the wainscoting, we need to be "carved" by the Lord.

B. Describe in Hosea 14:4-8 a picture of Israel in the restoration.

He will be like the dew to Israel. Israel will bud like the lily, signifying a pure life, and will send forth his roots like the trees of Lebanon, signifying standing steadily. His shoots will go forth, signifying flourishing and spreading; his splendor will be like that of the olive tree, signifying glory in fruitfulness, and his fragrance will be like that of the trees of Lebanon, signifying the sweet odor of a life in the uplifted humanity. Those who sit under his shade, signifying being overshadowed by the sufficient grace, will return.

Day 3 —

A. Explain Romans 11:17, the Gentiles becoming the root of fatness of the olive tree.

Fatness in verse 17 is a reference to the riches of Christ. The fatness of a tree is the sap, the life-juice, of the tree. Practically, today the fatness of the olive tree, that is, the riches of Christ, is the life-giving Spirit, whom Christ became in His resurrection. If we desire to partake of the riches of Christ as the fatness of the heavenly olive tree, we need to contact the life-giving Spirit as the life-juice of Christ.

B. Expound that being grafted into Christ is to be joined to Christ organically.

In order for us to be grafted into Christ, He must be the Spirit, and we must have a spirit. Otherwise, there is no way for us to be grafted into Christ. Our being grafted into Christ is a fact, a reality, in the spirit, that is, in the mingling of the divine Spirit with the human spirit. Today Christ is the life-giving Spirit, and we have a human spirit as the organ for us to receive Christ.

Day 4 —

A. State the spiritual significance of the olive oil and wine of the vine.

The olive tree signifies Christ as the One who is full of the Holy Spirit and anointed with the Spirit, signified by the olive oil. The oil of the olive tree was used to honor God and man, signifying that those who walk by the Spirit honor God, and those who minister the Spirit honor man. The vine signifies Christ as the One who sacrificed Himself by being “pressed” on the cross to produce new wine to cheer God and man.

B. Expound how to cut us off from our old way in our experience.

The more we breathe Christ, the more we partake of and enjoy His riches. The eventual result is that the more we pray-read the Word, the more we are filled with Christ, and the more we are cut off from our old background. There is no need for us to try to cut ourselves off from all the old things. The more we pray-read, the more our pray-reading will do the work of cutting us off from the old things. If we pray-read the Word daily, this pray-reading will cut us off from our old way of dressing.

Day 5 —

A. Expound the meaning and the experience of the two bronze pillars.

In typology, bronze always signifies God’s judgment. That the two pillars were made of bronze clearly indicates that if we would be a pillar, we must realize that we are those under God’s judgment. We should not only be under God’s judgment, but also under our own judgment. I am not good for anything but I am only qualified for death in God’s economy.

B. Testify who are those who became a true profit to the building of the church.

All those who became a true profit to the building of the church were those who did not think of themselves as being qualified for leadership. Rather, they always said, “I am not qualified. I am too poor. My disposition is not suitable, and I am still too much in my natural life. I do not consider myself to be good.” To say this is not only to be under God’s judgment, but also under self-judgment. We should say, “I am worthy of nothing but death.

Day 6 —

A. Expound what the stones signify and their spiritual experience.

The stones signify Christ’s humanity in transformation, the transformed Christ. As God, Christ in His incarnation put on man’s flesh. Having become a man in the flesh, that is, a man in the old creation, He needed to be transformed in His human part. Such a transformed Christ is now the foundation stone, the cornerstone, the living stone, the precious stone, and the topstone in God’s divine building.

B. Explain the stones being cut in a mountain fitting for the building.

In addition to wood, stone was used for the building of the temple. The stones were cut in a mountain quarry in the wilderness with much effort. This signifies that the materials for the building of the church are found in the world and cut with much effort. Every saved one in the church is a stone in the church. Then God’s workers and God’s work began to deal with us and do a cutting work upon us.

III. Conclusion:

Before the Lord Jesus was crucified, He revealed to His disciples four times that He would be handed over to be crucified, but they did not seem to listen. They were arguing about who was the greatest, but Mary had listened and took the opportunity to break the alabaster flask and poured it over His head. She breaking the jar, that signifies the outer man is broken down and dealt with. This is our experience of the cross of Christ, which allows the anointing oil and the fragrance to be filled the whole house. This is indeed the sweet-smelling savor of Christ’s resurrection. If there is anyone in the home meetings today, doing what Mary did of breaking the alabaster jar to pour out the ointment, breaking himself, not to keep himself whole, then the meetings will be full of fragrance.