

Message Four
Job and the Two Trees

Scripture Reading: Gen. 2:9, 17; Rev. 22:1-2, 14; Job 1:1; 2:3; 42:1-6

Gen. 2:9—And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Gen. 2:17—But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, of it you shall not eat; for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.

Rev. 22:1-2—And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street. ²And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Rev. 22:14—Blessed are those who wash their robes that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter by the gates into the city.

Job 1:1—There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and this man was perfect and upright, and he feared God and turned away from evil.

Job 2:3—And Jehovah said to Satan, Have you considered My servant Job? For there is none like him on the earth, a perfect and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, though you have moved Me against him to destroy him without cause.

Job 42:1-6—Then Job answered Jehovah and said, ²I know that You can do all things And that no purpose of Yours can be restrained. ³Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge? Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. ⁴Hear now, and I will speak; I will ask of You, and You shall inform me. ⁵I had heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye has seen You; ⁶Therefore I abhor *myself*, and I repent In dust and ashes.

I. In the divine revelation there are two trees, two sources, two ways, two principles, and two consummations:

A. Two trees:

1. The tree of life signifies the Triune God as life to man in man's relationship with Him—Gen. 2:9; Psa. 36:9a.

Gen. 2:9—And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Psa. 36:9—For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light we see light.

2. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil signifies Satan, the devil, the evil one, as death to man in man's fall before God—Gen. 2:17.

Gen. 2:17—But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, of it you shall not eat; for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.

B. Two sources:

1. The tree of life is the source of men who seek God as life for their supply and enjoyment—John 1:4; 15:1.

John 1:4—In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

John 15:1—I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman.

2. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil is the source of men who follow Satan as their poison unto death and eternal perdition—8:44.

John 8:44—You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks the lie, he speaks *it* out of his own *possessions*; for he is a liar and the father of it.

3. The outcome of these two sources is two kingdoms—the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan—Matt. 21:43; 12:26; Col. 1:13.

Matt. 21:43—Therefore I say to you that the kingdom of God shall be taken from you and shall be given to a nation producing its fruit.

Matt. 12:26—And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand?

Col. 1:13—Who delivered us out of the authority of darkness and transferred *us* into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

C. Two ways:

1. The first way is the way of life, the constricted way, for men to seek God, to gain God, and to enjoy God in His eternal life as the supply—Matt. 7:14; Acts 9:2; 16:17; 18:25-26; 2 Pet. 2:15, 21.

Matt. 7:14—Because narrow is the gate and constricted is the way that leads to life, and few are those who find it.

Acts 9:2—And asked for letters from him to Damascus for the synagogues, so that if he found any who were of the Way, both men and women, he might bring *them* bound to Jerusalem.

Acts 16:17—This woman followed after Paul and us and cried out, saying, These men are slaves of the Most High God, who announce to you a way of salvation.

Acts 18:25-26—This man was instructed in the way of the Lord, and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. ²⁶And this man began to speak boldly in the synagogue. And when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him to *themselves* and expounded the way of God to him more accurately.

2 Pet. 2:15—Forsaking the straight way, they have gone astray, following the way of Balaam, the *son* of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness

2 Pet. 2:21—For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than, knowing *it*, to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them.

2. The second way is the way of death and of good and evil, the broad way, for men to follow Satan to be his children—Matt. 7:13; 1 John 3:10a.

Matt. 7:13—Enter in through the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it.

1 John 3:10—In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest. Everyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, neither he who does not love his brother.

D. Two principles:

1. The first principle is the principle of life—the principle of dependence on God—John 15:5; Gen. 4:4.

John 15:5—I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

Gen. 4:4—And Abel also brought *an offering*, from the firstlings of his flock, that is, from their fat portions. And Jehovah had regard for Abel and for his offering.

2. The second principle is the principle of death and of good and evil—the principle of independence from God—Jer. 17:5-6; Gen. 4:3.

Jer. 17:5-6—Thus says Jehovah, Cursed is the man who trusts in man And makes flesh his arm And whose heart turns away from Jehovah. ⁶And he will be like a shrub in the desert And will not see when good comes; But he will dwell in the parched places in the wilderness, A land of salt and uninhabited.

Gen. 4:3—And in the course of time Cain brought an offering to Jehovah from the fruit of the ground.

E. The two consummations are the final outcome of the two ways men take in their relationship with God:

1. The consummation of God's way of life is a city of water of life, the New Jerusalem—Rev. 21:2, 10-11; 22:1-2.

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. 21:10-11—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, ¹¹Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

Rev. 22:1-2—And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street. ²And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

2. The consummation of the way of death and of good and evil is a lake of fire—19:20; 20:10, 14-15; 21:8.

Rev. 19:20—And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet, who in his presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshipped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire, which burns with brimstone.

Rev. 20:10—And the devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where also the beast and the false prophet were; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Rev. 20:14-15—And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵And if anyone was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire.

Rev. 21:8—But the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and fornicators and sorcerers and idolaters and all the false, their part will be in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

II. God's intention was not to have a Job in the line of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil but a Job in the line of the tree of life:

A. The logic of Job and his friends was according to the line of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—Job 2:11—32:1.

B. Job, like his friends, was halted in the knowledge of right and wrong, not knowing God's economy—4:7-8.

Job 4:7-8—Remember now, who, being innocent, has *ever* perished? And where have the upright *ever* been cut off? ⁸According to what I have seen, those who plow iniquity And those who sow trouble reap the same.

C. Job and his friends were in the realm of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; God was trying to rescue them from that realm and put them into the realm of the tree of life—1:1; 2:3; 19:10.

Job 1:1—There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and this man was perfect and upright, and he feared God and turned away from evil.

Job 2:3—And Jehovah said to Satan, Have you considered My servant Job? For there is none like him on the earth, a perfect and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, though you have moved Me against him to destroy him without cause.

Job 19:10—He has broken me all around, and I am gone; And He has plucked up my hope like a tree.

D. God's purpose in dealing with Job was to turn him from the way of good and evil to the way of life so that he might gain God to the fullest extent—42:1-6.

Job 42:1-6—Then Job answered Jehovah and said, ²I know that You can do all things And that no purpose of Yours can be restrained. ³Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge? Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. ⁴Hear now, and I will speak; I will ask of You, and You shall inform me. ⁵I had heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye has seen You; ⁶Therefore I abhor *myself*, and I repent In dust and ashes.

III. We need a vision of the tree of life—a vision of God in Christ as our food—Gen. 2:9; Rev. 22:1-2, 14:

Gen. 2:9—And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Rev. 22:1-2—And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street. ²And on this side and on that

side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Rev. 22:14—Blessed are those who wash their robes that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter by the gates into the city.

- A. The tree of life signifies the Triune God in Christ to dispense Himself into His chosen people as life in the form of food—Gen. 2:9.

Gen. 2:9—And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

- B. The tree of life is the center of the universe:

1. According to the purpose of God, the earth is the center of the universe, the garden of Eden is the center of the earth, and the tree of life is the center of the garden of Eden; hence, the universe is centered on the tree of life.

2. Nothing is more central and crucial to both God and man than the tree of life—3:22; Rev. 22:14.

Gen. 3:22—And Jehovah God said, Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat and live forever—

Rev. 22:14—Blessed are those who wash their robes that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter by the gates into the city.

- C. The New Testament reveals that Christ is the fulfillment of the figure of the tree of life—John 1:4; 15:5.

John 1:4—In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

John 15:5—I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

- D. All the aspects of the all-inclusive Christ revealed in the Gospel of John are the outcome of the tree of life—6:48; 8:12; 10:11; 11:25; 14:6.

John 6:48—I am the bread of life.

John 8:12—Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

John 10:11—I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

John 11:25—Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;

John 14:6—Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.

- E. The enjoyment of the tree of life will be the eternal portion of all of God's redeemed—Rev. 22:1-2, 14:

Rev. 22:1-2—And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street. ²And on this side and

on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Rev. 22:14—Blessed are those who wash their robes that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter by the gates into the city.

1. The tree of life fulfills for eternity what God intended for man from the beginning—Gen. 1:26; 2:9.

Gen. 1:26—And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

Gen. 2:9—And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

2. The fruits of the tree of life will be the food for God's redeemed in eternity; these fruits will be continually fresh, being produced every month—Rev. 22:2.
Rev. 22:2—And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

IV. When we were regenerated, Christ planted Himself into us as the tree of life—John 1:12-13; 3:3, 5-6, 15; 11:25; 15:1, 5:

John 1:12-13—But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name, ¹³Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 3:3—Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:5-6—Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

John 3:15—That everyone who believes into Him may have eternal life.

John 11:25—Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;

John 15:1—I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman.

John 15:5—I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

- A. In our practical living, we may not be in the line of the tree of life but in the line of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—Prov. 16:25; 21:2.

Prov. 16:25—There is a way which seems right to a man, But the end of it is the ways of death.

Prov. 21:2—Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, But Jehovah weighs the hearts.

- B. Job pursued something in the realm of ethics, but we, the believers in Christ, should pursue something in the realm of God—1 Cor. 15:28; Eph. 3:16-21.

1 Cor. 15:28—And when all things have been subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to Him who has subjected all things to Him, that God may be all in all.

Eph. 3:16-21—That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, ¹⁷That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are ¹⁹And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God. ²⁰But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us, ²¹To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

- C. In our daily living, we should not be in the realm of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil but in the realm of the life-giving Spirit—1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 8:2.

1 Cor. 15:45—So also it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living soul”; the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.

Rom. 8:2—For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

- D. God’s intention is to tear us down and rebuild us with Himself as our life and nature so that we may be persons absolutely one with Him—2 Cor. 1:9; 4:14.

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;

2 Cor. 4:14—Knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will make *us* stand before *Him* with you.