

HWMR - CRYSTALLIZATION STUDY OF LEVITICUS, Book 3, Week 4

The Significance of Eating and the Defeat of Death

Scripture Reading: Lev. 11; John 6:53-57; 11:25; Heb. 2:14-15; 2 Tim. 1:10

- John 6:53 Jesus therefore said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless you **eat the flesh** of the Son of Man and **drink His blood**, you do not have life within yourselves.
- John 6:54 He who **eats My flesh** and **drinks My blood** has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day.
- John 6:55 For My flesh is **true food**, and My blood is **true drink**.
- John 6:56 He who **eats My flesh** and **drinks My blood** abides in Me and I in him.
- John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who **eats Me**, he also shall live because of Me.
- 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;
- Hebrews 2:14 Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that **through death** He might **destroy** him who has the might of death, that is, the devil,
- Hebrews 2:15 And might release those who because of the **fear of death** through all their life were **held in slavery**.
- 2 Timothy 1:10 But now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who **nullified death** and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel,

We do not need outward rituals or practices. In today's religion people are following outward practices. But **God's economy** is not a matter of outward things; it is a matter of **Christ coming into us inwardly**. For this, we need to take Christ in by eating Him. (Life-Study of Matthew, Chapter 46, Sec.3)

I. In order to know the real meaning of eating in Leviticus 11, we need to know the significance of eating:

- A. To eat is to contact things outside of us that could affect us inside—vv. 1-23:
- Eating** is not merely **contacting** something but also **receiving** something into us—Jer. 15:16.
 - Once a thing is received into us, that thing can be digested inside to become our **constituent**, that is, our being, our **constitution**.
 - We all are a constitution of the food that we eat and digest; what we digest becomes our constitution—John 6:53-57.
- B. **Taking in the Lord** to digest and assimilate Him so that **He may become life to us** is signified by our eating the bread of the Lord's table—vv. 50-51, 57; Mark 14:22:
- Eating the bread** of the Lord's table indicates that the Lord comes into us as **our life supply**, and then the bread becomes us, the food becomes us, and we become the bread—1 Cor. 10:17.
 - There is not only an organic **union** between us and the food that we eat, digest, and assimilate; we are also **mingled** with the food that we assimilate into us:
 - In a similar way, when we take Christ as our food, we are mingled with Him—John 6:53-57.
 - Eating, digesting, and assimilating** food involve an intrinsic mingling of the food with our being; eating, digesting, and assimilating also involve a becoming, for the food that we assimilate becomes our very being—Ezek. 3:1-3; John 6:57, 63.
- C. God wants us to eat, digest, and assimilate Him so that **we become God in life, nature, constitution, and expression but not in the Godhead**—1:1, 14; 6:57:
- The Lord Jesus is the **bread of God**—the bread of life, the living bread, the true bread out of heaven—vv. 32-33, 48, 51, 17.
 - God wants to be digested and assimilated by us so that He can become the **constituent** of our inward being—vv. 53-57.
 - Because we are what we eat, if we eat God as our food, we will be one with God and even **become God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead**.

God in eternity past was God only, but in incarnation **He was made man**. **He made Himself man that man may become God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead**. We may be able to say that we “become like God” in life and nature, but do we have the boldness to say that we “become God” in life and nature? We need to see that **we have been born of God**, and we are the sons of God. Have you not been born of man? Then are you not man? If you are not man, then what are you? In the same way, since we are born of God and are the sons of God, are we not God? You are whatever you have been born of. If you have been born of Chinese, you are Chinese. If you have been born of Caucasians, you are Caucasian. Since we are born of God, **we may say and even we should say that we are God in life and nature but not in the Godhead**.

God makes us like Him by **imparting His life and nature into us**. Second Peter 1:4 says that we have become “*partakers of the divine nature*.” John 1:12-13 says that we were born, regenerated, by God with His life. As God's children we are “baby gods,” having God's life and nature but not His Godhead. The Godhead is unique; He is the only One who should be worshipped.

We have been born of God and today, having God's life and nature, we are partially like Him. One day, when He comes, we will be wholly and entirely like Him. (The Truth Concerning the Ultimate Goal of God's Economy, Chapter 1, Section 2)

- D. The way for us to become the **reality of the kingdom** of the heavens is to eat Christ as the all-inclusive bread—Matt. 15:26-27, 32-37:
1. **God's economy** is not a matter of outward things but of **Christ coming into us inwardly**; for this, we need to take Christ by eating Him—Eph. 3:17a; John 6:57.
 2. The reality of the kingdom of the heavens is Christ Himself—Luke 17:20-21.
 3. As the heavenly King and the kingdom itself, **Christ rules over us by feeding us** with Himself as bread—Matt. 15:26-27:
 - a. We can be the reality of the kingdom of the heavens only **by being nourished with Christ as our food**—vv. 26-27, 32-37.
 - b. The more we eat Christ as the all-inclusive bread, the more the **royal ingredients** are constituted into us to become the **ruling element within us** and to cause us to become the increase of Christ as the reality of the kingdom of the heavens—Dan. 2:34, 35b, 44-45.
 4. By eating the kingly Christ as the all-inclusive bread, we are **cleansed** inwardly—Matt. 23:25-27; 15:1-2, 18, 20, 26-27:
 - a. In order for us to be cleansed in our inner being, something must get into us, and the only way that this can take place is by eating—23:25-27.
 - b. As our food, Christ is the best **cleansing element**; He washes our inner being, and we thereby experience the washing of our disposition.
 - c. **We all need an inward cleansing from the Lord—the cleansing that comes from eating Jesus.**

The question is how we can be **inwardly cleansed**. In order to be cleansed from within, something must get into us, and the only way this can take place is by eating. As the nourishing food, the Lord Jesus is the best cleansing element. When He comes into us as food, He not only **nourishes** us, but also inwardly **cleanses** us. He does not wash our hands; He washes our system, our very being. This matter of inward cleansing through the eating of Jesus is the link that joins the first two sections of chapter fifteen. (Life-Study of Matthew, Chapter 46, Section 1)

- E. Eating Jesus is the secret of overcoming; the unique way to be an overcomer is to eat Jesus—Rev. 2:7, 17; 3:20; John 6:57, 18
- F. The fact that Leviticus 11 speaks of death in relation to diet indicates that our diet, our eating, is a **matter of life or death**— vv. 2-4, 9, 24-25, 39, 47.

Now we can see that there is no other **way to overcome**. The unique way is **eating**. We need to eat Jesus. Eating is the unique matter in the whole Bible. The Bible starts with the eating of the tree of life, and it ends with the same thing. In the New Jerusalem in the last chapter of the Bible, out of the throne of God flows a river, and on either side of the river grows the tree of life, producing fruits every month to supply the need of all the people of the New Jerusalem.

II. Leviticus 11 is concerned very much with **death**—vv. 24-25, 27b-28a:

- A. **Death** is abominable to God; in His eyes **death** is the **most ugly thing**, whereas **life** is the **most precious thing**—Rom. 5:10, 12, 17; John 10:10b; 11:25.
- B. From Eden onwards, God's controversy with Satan has been the issue of death and life—Gen. 2:9, 16-17; 3:22; John 5:25; Rom. 6:9-10; 1 Cor. 15:26, 54-55.
- C. According to the Bible, **death is more defiling and abominable than sin**—Lev. 11:31:
 1. Through the **trespass** offering, any sin could be forgiven immediately, but a person who touched the carcass of any animal was unclean until the evening—vv. 24-25, 27b-28a, 31b-32, 39-40.
 2. Our **sins** are forgiven immediately after we confess them to God (1 John 1:9), but a certain period of time must pass before we can be cleansed from the defilement of spiritual death—Num. 19:9, 11.
- D. **Death** is an exceedingly great power; apart from God, death is the greatest power in the universe—Heb. 2:14-15; John 1:1, 4; 11:25.
- E. Death is allied with the devil—Heb. 2:14-15:
 1. Since the devil is God's enemy, death is also God's enemy.
 2. **Death is the last enemy that God will abolish**—1 Cor. 15:26.

Death is Satan and life is Christ. Do not let yourself be associated with Satan in the flesh, but always stay in your spirit with Christ as life. Then you will see that Christ, who is your life, will have a free course within you to spread into every part of your being. Eventually, He will saturate every part of you. This is the enlivening, the quickening, of life. Life will enliven your mind, emotion, and will and even be imparted into your mortal body. Thus, every part of your being will be life. The spirit is life, the mind will be life, and the body also will be life. When this happens, death, the last enemy, will be swallowed up. (Life-Study of Romans, Chapter 36, Section 4)

- F. The attack upon the church will come from the gates of Hades, from death—Matt. 16:18:
1. The ultimate weapon that Satan uses to attack the church is death.
 2. **Only the life of Christ and that which issues from the life of Christ will prevail against the gates of Hades**—John 11:25.
 3. God intends for the church to manifest the life of Christ; thus, the church must be full of life—Rom. 5:10, 17, 21; 6:4; 8:2, 6, 10-11; 12:4-5; 16:1, 4.
 4. In ourselves we cannot overcome death, because Satan has injected death into us; the only One who can overcome death is the Lord Jesus Christ—5:12; 7:24; Rev. 1:17-18; 1 Cor. 15:22.
- G. On the **cross Christ** tasted death, destroyed the devil, and nullified death—Heb. 2:9, 14-15; 2 Tim. 1:10:

1. The Lord Jesus tasted death not only for human beings but also for everything created by God, thereby enabling God in Christ to **reconcile** all things to Himself—Heb. 2:9; Col. 1:20.
 2. Through His death on the cross, Christ **destroyed** the devil, who has the might of death, and released those who were held in slavery because of the fear of death—Heb. 2:14-15:
 - a. The Son of God became flesh so that He might **destroy** the devil in man's flesh through His death on the cross; this was to **abolish** Satan, to bring him to nought—Gen. 3:15; Gal. 4:4; John 3:14; Heb. 2:14; 1 Cor. 2:6.
 - b. Since the Lord destroyed the devil, who has the might of death, we who were held in slavery because of the fear of death have **been released** by Him—Heb. 2:15:
 - 1) Death reigned over us (Rom.5:14), and we were under its slavery, continually fearing death.
 - 2) Since the Lord destroyed the devil, **we now have no more fear of death and are released from its slavery**—Heb. 2:15.
 3. Through His work on the cross, **Christ nullified death**— 2 Tim. 1:10:
 - a. Through His devil-destroying death, Christ brought death to nought.
 - b. To nullify death is not to remove death but to make it of none effect; **death will be removed when it is cast into the lake of fire**—Rev. 20:14.
 - c. Although death has not yet been removed, it is nonetheless a fact that death has been **nullified** through Christ's death on the cross—2 Tim. 1:10.
- H. Through His resurrection the Lord Jesus overcame death and broke through death—Acts 2:24; Rev. 1:17-18: 20
1. The last thing that the devil used to attack the Lord Jesus was death:
 - a. Christ **came** to meet His enemy, who has the might of death—Heb. 2:14.
 - b. The Lord Jesus **did not avoid death**, because He did not fear it and knew that He would overcome it.
 - c. The Lord **delivered Himself to death**, but **death had no way to detain Him**; rather, **death was defeated by Him**, and He rose up from it—Acts 2:24.
 2. Death **could not hold the Lord**, the grave **could not restrict Him**, and Hades **could not detain Him**; He resurrected; resurrection is the overcoming of death—Rev. 1:17-18.
- I. Because the resurrected Christ as the life-giving Spirit dwells in us, we can reign in life over death; **the divine life enthrones us as kings to reign in life over death**—1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 8:10; 5:17.
- J. For the building up of the Body of Christ, we need to **minister life**; we experience and **enjoy the resurrection life** within and then minister this life by being a channel through which this life can **flow into other members of the Body**—1 John 5:11-12, 16; 2 Cor. 4:10-12.

THE GOD OF RESURRECTION OVERCOMING DEATH

Death is the **last enemy** that God will abolish in the universe (1 Cor. 15:26). The **last thing** that the devil, who has the might of death (Heb. 2:14), used to attack the Lord Jesus was death. The Lord **came to meet** His enemy, who has the might of death. The Lord **did not avoid death**. If He had avoided death, it would have meant that He feared death and that He was unable to overcome death. The Lord did not avoid death, because He **did not fear it**, and He could overcome it. The Lord could overcome death because He is living. **Death could not overcome Him**. The Lord did not fear death; rather, He accepted the challenge of death.

The Lord **entered** into death in order to give it an opportunity to fight with all its might. Death has been operating and fighting in Adam's descendants for thousands of years. Except for the Lord, every person who has entered into death has been overcome by death. All who have entered into death have been swallowed up by death. As a result, everyone fears death. Our Lord, however, did not fear death; He overcame death. He entered into death and **emerged** from death.

The Lord's entering into death and emerging from it testify to the fact that He is the living God and to the surpassing greatness of His resurrection power. The **cross**, the **grave**, and the power of **Hades** could not subdue the living Lord. He **overcame** death, the grave, and the power of Hades, and thus He resurrected. **The Lord is the Lord of life**. It was not possible for Him to be held by death (Acts 2:24). Satan utilized the world, the environment, the cross, the grave, and lastly, Hades in order to attack the Lord, but the Lord withstood every attack. The Lord willingly **passed** through the baptism of death and **entered** into Hades, letting them do whatever they wanted, because He is the living Lord, whom Satan cannot conquer. **Death could not hold the Lord**, the grave **could not restrict Him**, and Hades **could not detain Him**; He resurrected. **Resurrection is deliverance from death. Resurrection is the overcoming of death.**

Resurrection is different from being living. In order to be living, one does not need to pass through death, but in order to be in resurrection, one must pass through death and emerge from it. **Resurrection stands the test of death**, that is, passes through and emerges from death. Hence, the Lord Jesus said, *"I am the First and the Last and the living One; and I became dead, and behold, I am living forever and ever; and I have the keys of death and of Hades"* (Rev. 1:17-18).

Hence, God is not only the living God but also the God of resurrection. He died, but He overcame death. Death fought the Lord with all its might, but it could not conquer Him. **The principle of resurrection is overcoming death and emerging from death**. The God of resurrection has been tested and proven to possess an unshakable life. (The Living God and the God of Resurrection, Chapter 2, Section 1)