

HWMR: AN OVERVIEW OF THE CENTRAL BURDEN AND PRESENT TRUTH OF THE LORD'S RECOVERY BEFORE HIS APPEARING, (Week 5)

Scripture Reading: Lev. 1:3, 9; 6:8-13; John 21:15-17; 1 John 3:14; 5:1; 2:6; 4:17; Gal. 6:2-3; Rom. 8:2

The God-man Living

- Leviticus 1:3 If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall present it, a male without blemish; he shall present it at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, that he may be accepted before Jehovah.
- Leviticus 1:9 But its inward parts and its legs he shall wash with water. Then the priest shall burn the whole on the altar, as a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.
- Leviticus 6:8 Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,
- Leviticus 6:9 Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the burnt offering: The burnt offering shall be on the hearth on the altar all night until the morning, and the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it.
- Leviticus 6:10 And the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen trousers he shall put on his flesh; and he shall take up the ashes to which the fire has consumed the burnt offering on the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar.
- Leviticus 6:11 Then he shall take off his garments and put on other garments and carry the ashes outside the camp to a clean place.
- Leviticus 6:12 And the fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it; it must not go out. And the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and he shall lay the burnt offering in order upon it and shall burn the fat of the peace offerings on it.
- Leviticus 6:13 Fire shall be kept burning on the altar continually; it shall not go out.
- John 21:15 Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs.
- John 21:16 He said to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep.
- John 21:17 He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.
- 1 John 3:14 We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brothers. He who does not love abides in death.
- 1 John 5:1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten of God, and everyone who loves Him who has begotten loves him also who has been begotten of Him.
- 1 John 2:6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk even as He walked.
- 1 John 4:17 In this has love been perfected with us, that we may have boldness in the day of the judgment because even as He is, so also are we in this world.
- Galatians 6:2 Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ completely.
- Galatians 6:3 For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.
- Romans 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

Day 1

Ephesians 4:20-21 - But you did not so learn Christ, If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus,

1 Peter 2:21 - For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered on your behalf, leaving you a model so that you may follow in His steps;

Day 2

Matthew 11:29 - Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Romans 8:29 - Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

- I. The desire of God's heart is that "the reality...in Jesus" (Eph. 4:21), the actual condition of the **God-man living** of Jesus as recorded in the four Gospels, would be **duplicated** in the many members of Christ's Body by the Spirit of reality to become the reality of the Body of Christ, the highest peak in God's economy (vv. 20-24):
- A. The four Gospels show the pattern of the life that God desires, the mold of the life that can satisfy God and fulfill His purpose; Jesus lived a life in which He **did everything in God, with God, and for God**; God was in His living, and He was one with God; this is what is meant by *the reality is in Jesus*; to learn Christ as the reality is in Jesus is to be molded into the pattern of Christ, to be conformed to the image of Christ—Rom. 8:28-29; Eph. 4:20-21.
 - B. We are being **perfected** by the Lord to be God-men, living the divine life by **denying our natural life** according to the model of Christ as the first God-man—Matt. 11:29a; 17:5b; 1 Pet. 2:21:
 - 1. In His life on earth He set up a pattern, as revealed in the four Gospels; then He was crucified and resurrected to become the life-giving Spirit so that He might enter into us to be our life; we learn from Him according to His example, not by our natural life but by Him as our **life in resurrection**—1 Cor. 15:45b; Col. 3:4.
 - 2. Our Christian life is a **life in Christ and also a life of Christ in us**; we are in Christ as the mold, and He is in us as our life; in this way we learn Christ as the reality is in Jesus; this reality is the reality of the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:17; 12:2a; Col. 1:27; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 8:10.
 - C. As we **love** the Lord, **contact** Him, and **pray** to Him, we automatically live Him according to the mold, the form, the pattern, described in the Gospels; in this way we are **shaped, conformed**, to the image of this mold—this is what it means to learn Christ—Matt. 11:29; Rom. 8:29.
 - D. When we **live in the mingled spirit**, we are learning Christ according to the reality in Jesus by the Spirit of reality; we learn from Him as our model so that His biography becomes our history; the living of the Body of Christ as the new man should be exactly the same as the living of Jesus revealed in the Gospels—Gal. 6:17-18; Rom. 1:1, 9; Eph. 4:20-24; Phil. 2:5; Matt. 11:29; 1 Pet. 2:21.
 - E. The purpose of God in sending the Lord Jesus to be a man was for Him to **live a God-man life by the divine life**; when we eat Him, we live because of Him to become a universal great man who is exactly the same as He is—a man living a God-man life by the divine life—Lam. 3:22-24, 55-56; Rev. 2:4, 7; John 6:57, 63; Jer. 15:16; Eph. 6:17-18; Psa. 119:15.

The truth in Jesus is the real situation of the life of Jesus as recorded in the four Gospels. In the godless walk of the nations, the **fallen people**, there is **vanity**. But in the **godly life of Jesus there is truth, reality**. Jesus lived a life always doing things in God, with God, and for God. God was in His life, and He was one with God. This is the truth in Jesus. We, the believers, regenerated with Christ as our life and taught in Him, learn from Him as the truth is in Jesus.

We have pointed out that it is a **mistake** to endeavor to **imitate Christ by the efforts of our natural life**. We have also seen that when we believed in the Lord Jesus and were saved, God put us into Christ as the mold. This mold is the life of Jesus recorded in the four Gospels, a life absolutely according to truth. Truth is the shining of light, the expression of light. Since God is light, **truth is the expression of God**. Every aspect of the life of Jesus recorded in the Gospels is an expression of God. In everything He said and did, He expressed God. This expression of God is the shining of light; hence, it is the truth. This life of Jesus according to truth is the pattern in which God has placed us. In this pattern we have learned Christ as the truth is in Jesus. This means that we have learned Christ according to the truth shown in the Gospels, that is, according to the life of the Lord Jesus, which was wholly according to God's truth. This life is the shining of light. The shining of the light is truth, and truth is the expression of God. Therefore, **in the life of Jesus there is truth**. The essence of the pattern set up by the Lord Jesus is truth. This means that the **essence of the life of Jesus is truth**. We have learned **Christ as the truth is in Jesus**.

The truth, the **reality**, in Jesus in verse 21 is in **contrast** to the **vanity** of the mind in verse 17. The nations walk in the vanity of their mind, but we believers live a life as the truth is in Jesus. When the Lord Jesus was living on earth, He never walked in vanity. Rather, He **always walked in truth**, that is, in the shining of the divine light. This means that the Lord Jesus lived and walked in the expression of God. We have learned Christ according to this very truth that is in Jesus. (*Life-Study of Ephesians, chapter 46*)

Day 3

Leviticus 1:3 - If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall present it, a male without blemish; he shall present it at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, that he may be accepted before Jehovah.

Leviticus 1:9 - But its inward parts and its legs he shall wash with water. Then the priest shall burn the whole on the altar, as a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.

II. The only life that is pleasing to God is the life that is a **repetition of the life Christ lived on the earth**; this is a life that experiences Christ in His experiences as the **burnt offering**—Lev. 1:9; John 8:29; 2 Cor. 5:9:

- A. The burnt offering typifies Christ in His living a life that is **absolutely for God and for God's satisfaction**; the burnt offering also typifies Christ in His being the life that enables God's people to have such a living—Lev. 1:3; Num. 28:2-3; John 5:30; 6:38; 8:29; Heb. 10:5-10.
- B. The word translated “burnt offering” denotes something that is ascending; this ascending refers to Christ (Lev. 1:3, 10, 14); the only thing that can ascend to God from earth is the **life lived by Christ**, for He is the unique person to live a life that is absolutely for God (John 6:38).
- C. The burnt offering was “a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah” (Lev. 1:9); the Hebrew words translated “satisfying fragrance” literally mean “savor of rest or satisfaction”; a satisfying fragrance is a savor that brings **satisfaction, peace, and rest**; such a satisfying fragrance is an **enjoyment to God**.
- D. By **laying our hands** on Christ as our burnt offering through the proper prayer, we are joined to Him, and He and we become one; as Christ lives in us, He **repeats** in us the life He lived on earth, the life of the burnt offering—v. 4; 1 Cor. 6:17; Gal. 2:20.
- E. In such a **union**, such an **identification**, all our weaknesses, defects, and faults are taken on by Him—2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 2:20a.

Day 4

- Psalms 20:3* - May He remember all your meal offerings / And accept your burnt offering. Selah
- Leviticus 6:11* - Then he shall take off his garments and put on other garments and carry the ashes outside the camp to a clean place.
- Leviticus 1:16* - And he shall take away its crop with its feathers and cast it beside the altar toward the east, in the place of the ashes.

- F. We must **allow** the Lord to burn us so that we may be a **continual** burnt offering to burn others and be reduced to ashes to become the New Jerusalem for God's expression—Psa. 20:3; Lev. 1:16; 6:8-13; 1 Cor. 3:12a; Rev. 3:12; 21:2, 10-11, 18-21:
1. The **ashes** signify **Christ reduced to nothing**; since we are one with the Christ who has been reduced to ashes, we also are reduced to ashes, that is, reduced to nothing, to zero—Mark 9:12; Isa. 53:3; 1 Cor. 1:28; 2 Cor. 12:11.
 2. The more we are identified with Christ in His death, the more we will realize that we have become a heap of ashes; when we become ashes, we are **no longer a natural person**; instead, we are a person who has been **crucified, terminated, burned**—Gal. 2:20a.
- G. Putting the ashes at the east side of the altar, the side of the sunrise, is an allusion to **resurrection**—Lev. 1:16; John 11:25; Phil. 3:10-11; 2 Cor. 1:9:
1. With Christ as the burnt offering, the ashes are not the end—they are the beginning; the ashes mean that Christ has been put to death, but the **east** signifies **resurrection**—Mark 9:31.
 2. The more we are reduced to ashes in Christ, the more we will be put to the east, and on the east we will have the **assurance** that the sun will rise and that we will experience the **sunrise of resurrection**—Phil. 3:10-11.
- H. Eventually, the ashes will become the **New Jerusalem**—Rev. 3:12; 21:2, 10-11:
1. Christ's death brings us to an end, reduces us to ashes, and in resurrection the ashes **become precious materials** for God's building—1 Cor. 3:9b, 12a.
 2. When we are reduced to ashes, we are brought into the **transformation** of the Triune God to become the precious materials for the building of the New Jerusalem—Rom. 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 3:18; Rev. 21:18-21.

The book of Leviticus has much to say about the worship of God. To offer the burnt offering and the other offerings is to worship God. God wants us to worship Him with Christ as the reality of the offerings. God does not want a people who worship Him by bowing down, kneeling, or even merely by singing and praising. Genuine worship, the worship which satisfies God's heart, is a matter of our **coming to worship God by offering to Him the Christ whom we have experienced** and offering Him according to our experiences, reviewing the experiences we have had in our daily life. This is the worship the Father is seeking, the worship He desires.

The Father wants us to worship Him by offering **His Son to Him according to a procedure in which we review our experiences**. This requires much experience. We thank the Lord for showing us from Leviticus that we need to experience Christ in His experiences not only to have Him as the burnt offering but also to be able to go through a procedure in which we offer Christ to God by reviewing our experiences of Him.

You may feel that it is impossible for you to experience Christ in His experiences as the burnt offering. However, in Philippians 3:10 Paul tells us that we can be conformed to Christ's death if we experience the sustaining and strengthening power of Christ's resurrection. In one of his hymns, A. B. Simpson says, " 'Tis not hard to die with Christ when His risen life we know" (Hymns, #481). If we see the vision concerning the experience of Christ in His experiences and are attracted to live such a life, we must have the **faith** that the very Christ who presents His experiences as an example **is now in us as our life supply**. We have an all-sufficient supply within us, and this supply is the Spirit of Christ in His resurrection. This was the reason Paul could say, "I can do all things in Him who empowers me" (Phil. 4:13). Therefore, since Christ is in us and for us, we should not be disappointed. (*Life-Study of Leviticus, chapter 9*)

Day 5

Luke 6:12 - And in these days He went out to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God.

John 8:29 - And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.

The Lord lived as a **man of prayer**. He did not live as a common man praying common prayers to God, as a pious man, a so-called godly man, praying to God in a religious way, or as a **God-seeking man praying to God** for the divine attainments and obtainments. His being a man of prayer was not even as merely a Christ-seeker praying desperately to gain Christ in His excellency. Instead, He was a **man in the flesh praying to the mysterious God** in the divine, mystical realm. The Gospels tell us that He often went to the mountain or withdrew to a private place to pray.

He was a man of prayer, a man who is **one with God**. We may be a Christ-seeker, desperately praying to gain Christ, yet we may not be one with God. He was also a man living in the presence of God without ceasing. He said that **He was never alone**, but the **Father was with Him**. Every moment He saw His Father's face. We may seek Christ, yet not live in the presence of God so closely and continuously without ceasing. Also, He trusted in God and not in Himself, under any kind of suffering and persecution. First Peter 2:23b says that in the midst of His suffering He did not speak threatening words but **kept committing all to Him** who judges righteously. Luke 23:46 says that at the time He was dying on the cross, He prayed, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit." In our daily life, do we trust in God when trouble comes? Maybe we do to a small extent, but not absolutely.

In John 14:30 the Lord said, "The ruler of the world is coming, and in Me he has nothing." This means that in the Lord Jesus, Satan as the ruler of the world had no ground, no chance, no hope, no possibility in anything. If we are enlightened, we will admit that Satan has too many things in us. He has the ground, the chance, the hope, and the possibility in many things. But here was a man of prayer who said that Satan, the ruler of the world, had nothing in Him. This is a particular sentence in the whole Bible. Thus, Christ was a man of prayer, a man who was **one with God, lived in the presence of God continuously**, trusted in God in His suffering and persecution, and in whom Satan had nothing. (*The God-man Living, chapter 10*)

III. In carrying out God's New Testament ministry, the Lord Jesus, as the reality of the burnt offering, did not do anything out of Himself (John 5:19), He did not do His own work (4:34; 17:4), He did not speak His own word (14:10, 24), He did everything not by His own will (5:30), and He did not seek His own glory (7:18); He was never disappointed because He was satisfied only with God (Isa. 42:4; 50:4-5; 53:2a; cf. John 4:13-14; 6:15; Mark 9:7-8):

- A. The Lord's life was His work, His move, and His ministry; His work was His living, and His move was His being; with Him there was no difference between His life, His work, His move, and His ministry; the **Lord Jesus lived His ministry**—cf. Luke 22:26-27; John 10:10b; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 1 John 5:16a; 2 Cor. 3:6; Phil. 1:25.
- B. The Lord Jesus was a **man of prayer**, being one with God, living in the presence of God without ceasing, trusting in God and not in Himself under any kind of suffering and persecution, and being One in whom Satan, the ruler of the world, had nothing (no ground, no hope, no chance, no possibility in anything)—John 10:30; 8:29; 14:30b; 16:32-33; 1 Pet. 2:23:
 1. He was a **man in the flesh praying** to the mysterious God in the divine and mystical realm; He often went to the mountain or withdrew to a private place to pray—Matt. 14:23; Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; 6:12; 9:28.

2. He was **never alone**, for the Father was with Him; every moment He saw His Father's face—John 5:19; 16:32; Psa. 16:7-8.
- C. When Christ as the God-Savior wanted to save an immoral woman of Samaria, He had to travel from Judea to Galilee through Samaria, He detoured from the main way of Samaria to the city of Sychar, and He waited at the well of Jacob, near Sychar, for His object to come that He might **cherish** her by asking her to give Him something to drink so that He might **nourish** her with the water of life, which is the **flowing Triune God Himself**—John 4:3-14.
- D. When none of the accusing Pharisees could condemn the adulterous woman, Christ as the God-Savior, in His humanity, said to her, “Neither do I condemn you,” to cherish her that He, as the great I Am, might nourish her with the freedom from sin and enable her to “sin no more”—8:3-11, 24, 34-36.

Day 6

1 John 4:16-17 - And we know and have believed the love which God has in us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God abides in him. In this has love been perfected with us, that we may have boldness in the day of the judgment because even as He is, so also are we in this world.

Galatians 6:2 - Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ completely.

IV. When we abide in the love that is God Himself, love has been “perfected with us, that we may have boldness in the day of the judgment because even as He is, so also are we in this world” (1 John 4:17)—Christ as the reality of the burnt offering lived in this world a life of God as love, and He is now our life that we may live the same life of love in this world and be the same as He is (3:14; 5:1; 2:6):

- A. The law of the Spirit of life in our spirit is the law of Christ as the law of love (Rom. 8:2; Gal. 6:2-3); the **law of love** must be substantiated by the **law of the Spirit of life** so that we may be able to bear one another's burdens; but if we are filled with **pride**, we will be **unable** to bear others' burdens because we deceive ourselves by thinking that we are something when we are nothing (v. 3).
- B. When the law of love is **activated** within us, we **automatically** and **spontaneously** will be shepherds who have the **loving and forgiving heart** of our Father God and the shepherding and seeking spirit of our Savior Christ—John 21:15-17; Luke 15:3-7.
- C. When the law of love is activated within us, our labor in the Lord is a **labor of love** (1 Cor. 15:58; 1 Thes. 1:3) in which we “support the weak” (Acts 20:35) and “sustain the weak” (1 Thes. 5:14); *the weak* refers to those who are weak either in their spirit or soul or body, or are weak in faith (Rom. 14:1; 15:1).
- D. After His resurrection the Lord shepherded Peter and commissioned him to feed His lambs and shepherd His sheep; this is to incorporate the apostolic ministry with Christ's heavenly ministry to take care of God's flock, the church, which issues in the **building up of the Body of Christ** to consummate in the New Jerusalem for the accomplishment of the eternal economy of God—John 21:15-17.

Shepherding works. We should not desire to be giant speakers to make a name for ourselves. People may be attracted to come to listen to us, but who will take care of them afterward? The way of having large gospel campaigns does not work. In some places this has been tested out. We may have big gospel meetings with many people, but eventually not many of them are added to the church. Also, we should not use famous or well-known people to testify in our meetings. This will not save people to be added to the church. Even if someone is the president of the country, he should be in the meeting just as anyone else. The way that can save people effectively must be by **small vital groups**, and everyone in this small vital group must be a **shepherd**. After a short time the church will be revived. No other way is more prevailing than this shepherding way.

For the shepherding of the saints, there must be the **healthy teaching in the vital groups**. In 1 Timothy 3:2 Paul says that an elder should be apt to teach. Teaching here is similar to parents' teaching their children. An elder must be apt to render this kind of home teaching to the members of a local church. Then in 5:17 Paul says, "Let the elders who take the lead well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in word and teaching." Double honor refers to material supply for the support of the faithful elders, especially those who labor to teach others.

In the vital groups we must have **something to teach others**. We are the prophethood, the prophets speaking for God, and the sonship, the sons of God. **Every son must be a speaker**. Today God speaks in the Son, not only the individual Son but the corporate son. As a son of God, we must learn to be a speaker. We can speak of the five great historical events in John 1: creation, incarnation, the Lamb, the Spirit, and the ladder. This will stir up people's interest. When we explain these things, they will be edified. (*Crystallization-Study of the Gospel of John, chapter 13*)