

**HWMR - CRYSTALLIZATION STUDY OF DEUTORONOMY, Week 7****Enjoying Christ with God on the Ground of Oneness**

Scripture Reading: Deut. 12:5, 8, 11, 13-14, 17-18, 21, 26-27; Psalms 48:2, 11-12; 80:17-19

- Deuteronomy 12:5 **But to the place which Jehovah your God will choose** out of all your tribes to put His name, to His habitation, shall you seek, and **there shall you go.**
- Deuteronomy 12:8 You shall not do according to all that we do here today, each man doing all that is right in his own eyes;
- Deuteronomy 12:11 Then to the **place where Jehovah your God will choose** to cause His name to dwell, **there you shall bring all that I am commanding you**, your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the heave offering of your hand and all your choice vows which you vow to Jehovah.
- Deuteronomy 12:13 Be careful that you do not offer up your burnt offerings in every place that you see;
- Deuteronomy 12:14 But in the **place which Jehovah will choose** in one of your tribes, **there you shall offer up your burnt offerings**, and **there you shall do all that I am commanding you.**
- Deuteronomy 12:17 You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your grain or of your new wine or of your fresh oil, nor the firstborn of your herd or of your flock, or any of your vows which you vow or of your freewill offerings or of the heave offering of your hand;
- Deuteronomy 12:18 **But you shall eat them before Jehovah your God in the place which Jehovah your God will choose**, you and your son and daughter, and your male servant and female servant, and the Levite who is within your gates; and you shall rejoice before Jehovah your God in all your undertakings.
- Deuteronomy 12:21 If the **place where Jehovah your God will choose** to put His name is too far away from you, you may slaughter from your herd and from your flock, which Jehovah has given you, as I have commanded you; and you may eat within your gates according to all that your soul desires;
- Deuteronomy 12:26 But you shall take your holy things which you have and your vows, and **go to the place which Jehovah will choose**;
- Deuteronomy 12:27 And you shall offer your burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of Jehovah your God; and the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out upon the altar of Jehovah your God, and you shall eat the flesh.
- Psalms 48:2 Beautiful in elevation, / The joy of the whole earth, / Is Mount Zion, the sides of the north, / The city of the great King.
- Psalms 48:11 Let Mount Zion rejoice; / Let the daughters of Judah exult / Because of Your judgments.
- Psalms 48:12 Walk about Zion, and go around her; / Count her towers.
- Psalms 80:17 Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, / Upon the son of man whom You have strengthened for Yourself;
- Psalms 80:18 Then we will not turn back from You. / Revive us, and we will call upon Your name.
- Psalms 80:19 O Jehovah God of hosts, restore us; / Cause Your face to shine, and we will be saved.

**Day 1****I. Deuteronomy 12 reveals the enjoyment of Christ with God at the **unique place of God's choice for the keeping of the oneness of God's people**—vv. 5-8, 11-14, 17-18, 21, 26-27; 14:22-23; 16:16; cf. 1 Cor. 10:6, 11; Rom. 15:4:**

- A. The children of Israel were not allowed to worship God and enjoy the offerings they presented to God in the place of their choice (Deut. 12:8, 13, 17); **they were to worship God in the place of His choice, the place where His name, His habitation, and His altar were** (vv. 5-6), by bringing their tithes, offerings, and sacrifices to Him there (vv. 5, 11, 14, 18, 21, 26-27; 14:22-23; 15:19-20; 16:16).
- B. The place of God's unique choice for His worship in Deuteronomy 12 signifies **our meeting on the ground of locality for the expression of the one Body in practicality** (signified by Jerusalem) and for the reality of the one Body in actuality (signified by Zion within Jerusalem)—Psa. 48:2; 50:2; Rev. 1:11; 2:7.
- C. The revelation in the New Testament concerning the worship of God corresponds to the revelation in Deuteronomy 12 in the following ways:
  1. **The people of God should always be one**; there should be **no divisions** among them—Psa. 133; John 17:11, 21-23; 1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:3.
  2. **The unique name into which God's people should gather is the name of the Lord Jesus Christ**, the reality of which name is the Spirit; to be designated by any other name is to be denominated, divided; this is spiritual fornication—Matt. 18:20; 1 Cor. 1:12; 12:3; Rev. 3:8.
  3. In the New Testament **God's habitation, His dwelling place**, is particularly **located in our mingled spirit**, our human spirit regenerated and indwelt by the divine Spirit; in our meeting for the worship of God, **we must exercise our spirit and do everything in our spirit**—Eph. 2:22; John 4:21-24; 1 Cor. 14:15.
  4. In our worship of God we must have the genuine application of the **cross of Christ**, signified by the **altar**, **by rejecting the flesh, the self, and the natural life and worshipping God with Christ and Christ alone**—Psa. 43:4a; Matt. 16:24; Gal. 2:20.
  5. The place that God has chosen for His worship is a place **full of the enjoyment of the riches of Christ and a place full of rejoicing**—Deut. 12:7, 12, 18; 14:23; Eph. 3:8; Phil. 4:4; 1 Cor. 14:3, 4b, 26, 31.
- D. **Wherever we may be, we should be gathered into the Lord's name, in our spirit, and with the cross**; if we all do this, we all will meet in the same place, although we meet in different localities; this one place is the ground of the unique oneness—Deut. 12:5-6; Jer. 32:39:

## Day 2

1. Apparently, we are divided by geography, for we meet in separate cities all over the world on the scriptural ground of locality—the **practice of having one church for one city, one city with only one church**—Acts 8:1; 13:1; Rev. 1:11.
2. Actually, in spite of geographical separation, we all meet in the same place—in the name of the Lord Jesus, in our mingled spirit, and with the cross; this is the oneness, and **this is the ground for the proper worship of God**:
  - a. Many Christians are divided by their preferences; **in the Lord's recovery we must not be for our preference but for the Lord's presence** as the Spirit of reality, the reality of His name—Matt. 18:20; 1 Cor. 1:10; Exo. 33:14.
  - b. The fulfillment of the type in Deuteronomy 12 is not a matter of a geographical place but a matter of our **spirit**—John 4:21-24.
  - c. At the entrance of the church there is the **cross**, and **in order to meet as the church**, we must experience the cross for the **crucifying of the self**, for the overthrowing of “reasonings and every high thing rising up against the knowledge of God” (2 Cor. 10:5), and for the exalting of Christ alone so that He may be all and in all for God's expression and the unique testimony of oneness—Matt. 16:24; 1 Cor. 2:2; 2 Cor. 10:3-5; Col. 1:10, 18b; 3:10-11.

## Day 3

## II. The **unique ground of Jerusalem**, the place where the temple as God's dwelling place was built on Mount Zion, typifies **the unique ground of God's choice, the ground of oneness**—Deut. 12:5; 2 Chron. 6:5-6; Ezra 1:2-3:

- A. In the ancient time all the Israelites came together three times a year at Jerusalem; it was by this **unique place of worship to God**, Jerusalem, that **the oneness of His people was kept for generations**—Deut. 12:5; 16:16.
- B. In the New Testament the proper ground of oneness ordained by God is the unique ground of **one church for one locality**—Rev. 1:11:
  1. The **church is constituted of the universal God**, but it exists on earth in many localities; in nature the church is universal in God, but in **practice the church is local in a definite place**, such as “the church of God which is in Corinth”—1 Cor. 1:2:
    - a. The **church of God** means that the church is not **only possessed by God but has God as its nature and essence**, which are **divine, general, universal, and eternal**—v. 2a.
    - b. The church...which is in Corinth refers to a church in a city, remaining in a definite locality and taking it as its standing, ground, and jurisdiction for its administration in business affairs, which is physical, particular, local, and temporal in time—v. 2b.
  2. Without the **universal aspect**, the **church is void of content**; without the **local aspect**, it is **impossible for the church to have any expression and practice**; the record concerning the establishment of the church in its locality is consistent throughout the New Testament—Acts 8:1; 13:1; 14:23; Rom. 16:1; 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 8:1; Gal. 1:2; Rev. 1:4, 11.

## Day 4

## III. The church life on the ground of oneness is today's Jerusalem; within the church life there must be a group of **overcomers**, and **these overcomers are today's Zion**—Psa. 48:2, 11-12:

- A. As the highlight and beauty of the holy city Jerusalem, **Zion** typifies the overcomers as the **high peak**, the **center**, the **uplifting**, the **strengthening**, the **enriching**, the **beauty**, and the **reality** of the church—20:2; 53:6a; 87:2.
- B. The **overcomers** as Zion are the reality of the Body of Christ and consummate the building up of the Body in the local churches to bring in the consummated holy city, New Jerusalem, the Holy of Holies as God's dwelling place, in eternity—Rev. 21:1-3, 16, 22.
- C. The **church life is the right place for us to be an overcomer**, but this does not mean that as long as we are in the church life, we are an overcomer; **it is one thing to be in the church life, but it is another thing to be an overcomer**—2:7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 20-21.

## Day 5

## IV. In order to be today's overcomers, **we must enjoy Christ with God on the ground of oneness for the exhibition of Christ**, the **building of the church**, and the **preparation of Christ's bride**—Matt. 16:18; Rev. 19:7:

- A. The children of Israel could enjoy the **rich produce** of the good land in two ways:
  1. The **common**, private way was to **enjoy it as a common portion at any time, in any place, and with anyone**—Deut. 12:15.
  2. The **special**, corporate way was to **enjoy the top portion, the firstfruits and the firstlings**, with all the Israelites **at the appointed feasts and in the unique place chosen by God**—vv. 5, 8, 11, 13-14, 17-18, 21, 26-27; 14:22-23; 15:19-20; 16:16-17.
- B. Likewise, the **enjoyment of Christ** by His believers is of two aspects:
  1. The **common**, private aspect is to **enjoy Christ as our God-allotted portion at every time and in every place**—Col. 1:12; 1 Cor. 1:2, 9; Eph. 6:18; 1 Thes. 5:16-18; Rom. 10:12-13.
  2. The **special**, corporate aspect is to **enjoy the top portion of Christ in the meetings of the proper church life on the unique ground of oneness, the place chosen by God**—1 Cor. 14:3, 4b, 26, 31.
- C. **We need to live a life of laboring upon Christ, a life of enjoying Christ personally so that we may enjoy Him together collectively for the building up of the Body of Christ as the house of God for God's expression and as the kingdom of God for God's dominion**—3:16; 1 Tim. 3:15; Rom. 14:17-18:

1. **God's will is for us to enjoy Christ; we must seek to enjoy Christ and experience Him in every situation**—Heb. 10:5-10; Phil. 3:7-14; 4:5-8.
2. Christ is rich beyond measure, but **the church today is groveling in poverty because the Lord's children are indolent**—Prov. 6:6-11; 24:30-34; 26:14; Matt. 25:26, 30; cf. 1 Cor. 15:58.
3. **We must labor on Christ**, our good land, **so that we may reap some produce of His riches to bring to the church meeting and offer**; thus, the meeting will be an exhibition of Christ in His riches and will be a mutual enjoyment of Christ shared by all the attendants before God and with God for the building up of the saints and the church—Col. 2:6-7; 1 Cor. 1:9; 14:3, 31.
4. Whenever we come to the meetings to worship the Lord, we should not come with our hands empty; **we must come with our hands full of the produce of Christ**—v. 26; Deut. 16:15-17.
5. **We meet together to have an exhibition of the Christ upon whom we have labored**, the Christ whom we have experienced and enjoyed—14:22-23.

### Day 6

**V. In order to be today's overcomers, we must maintain the ground of oneness, God's unique choice, without elevating anything other than Christ; in the Lord's recovery we elevate Christ and Christ alone**—Col. 1:18b; Rev. 2:4; 2 Cor. 4:5; 10:5:

- A. **Before** the children of Israel could have the **full enjoyment** of the riches of the good land, they had to **utterly destroy** the heathen places of worship, the idols, and the names of the idols "on the high mountains and on the hills and under every flourishing tree" (Deut. 12:2); the **high mountains and hills signify the exaltation of something other than Christ**, and the **flourishing trees signify things that are beautiful and attractive**—vv. 1-3, 5; 1 Kings 11:7-8; 12:26-31; Num. 33:52.
- B. The intrinsic reason for the desolation and degradation of God's people is that Christ is not exalted by them; they **do not give Him the preeminence, the first place, in everything**—Psa. 80:1, 3, 7, 15-19; 74:1.
- C. The way to be **restored** from desolation is to **exalt Christ**; the enjoyment of Christ with God on the ground of oneness can be **maintained and preserved only when Christ is properly appreciated and exalted by God's people**.

### THE DEFINITENESS OF THE GROUND

It seems that it is easier for people to establish a "church" today than to open a store. If you would open a store, you must register with the government. But to establish a "church" only requires someone to start a meeting in their home. People continually refer to Matthew 18:20 as their ground for meeting. But this is wrong. To judge a church according to the presence of the Lord is never conclusive. Even the Catholic Church can testify that they have the presence of the Lord today. If you inquire of them, they will steadfastly maintain that they have the Lord's presence. But does that vindicate and justify them?

Then there are some who say that the greater the measure of Christ you have, the more you are the church. We cannot agree with this. Madame Guyon was very spiritual. Few have the measure of Christ she had. But she was not right as far as the church was concerned because she remained in the Roman Catholic Church.

Regardless of how spiritual you are, you must come to Jerusalem. Simply to love the Lord by yourself is only one aspect. There is still the **corporate side**. **We must come to the unique ground of oneness, which is the choice of the Lord. If the standing of the church is not according to the ground but according to the so-called spiritual condition, nothing will be stable.** Condition is a very relative matter. Today you may be uplifted in the spirit, but after six months you may be very low. Today I may be weak in the spirit, but by the Lord's mercy after one year, I may be strong. There is no standard of spirituality. How spiritual is spiritual? It is similar to the length or the height. How long is the length, and how high is the height? There is no standard. But the unique ground is exceedingly definite. It is absolutely unequivocal. **The standard of spirituality is extremely vague and obscure. But the matter of the ground is definite.** We are one Body; so wherever we go, wherever we are, we must be in the expression of that one church. This is definite and keeps us in oneness.

Christians consider that as long as they preach the gospel and edify the saints, they are right. But the apostles only worked with the intention of building up the local churches. There was no exception. Can anyone show from the Acts or the Epistles that one of the apostles did any work apart from that of building up the local churches? No, there is not such a hint. All the apostles went forth with the full intention of establishing, edifying, and building up the local churches.

The temple had to be built on Mount Moriah as David appointed. Mount Moriah was and still is the center of Jerusalem. It is the place where God appeared to Abraham and also to David. Abraham offered Isaac on Mount Moriah (Gen. 22:2), and David offered sacrifices to the Lord on the same spot (1 Chron. 21:18-19, 26; 22:1). Thus, David ordained that this very ground be used for the building of the temple. **The people of Israel do not have the right to build the temple in any other place. They must build it on the very spot which David appointed.** The church is the fulfillment of the type shown by the temple. **We have no right to build a church in any place we choose.** If we do, we are simply doing whatever is right in our own eyes. We will please ourselves, but we certainly will not please the Lord. Christians today continually do things which are right in their own eyes. They have no right to do so. **They must build up the local church on the very ground which God has appointed, that is, the local ground.**

"What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea" (Rev. 1:11). "To the seven churches" means to the seven cities. **One church represents one city, and each local church is equal to that city in which it stands.** To establish elders in every church is equivalent to establishing elders in every city (Acts 14:23; cf. Titus 1:5). There should be only one church in one city. In *The Normal Christian Church Life*, Brother Watchman Nee said that anything smaller than the city is not the church, and anything larger than the city is also not the church.

So many Christian workers today have altogether **too much freedom**. They build the "church" everywhere and on any kind of ground. There are all kinds of so-called churches: home churches, street churches, campus churches, and so forth. All manner of churches are built upon all kinds of grounds. It is just as if every Israelite has the right to build a "temple." Benjamin builds a "temple" here, and Jonathan builds another one there. Everywhere there is a so-called temple. This is the situation of today's Christianity. There are not only many churches but many different kinds of churches. How pitiful it is!

*(The Practical Expression of the Church, chapter 9, section 2)*