

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OF JEREMIAH AND LAMENTATIONS, Week 8

God's Economy with His Dispensing in the Book of Jeremiah

Scripture Reading: Jer. 2:13; 15:16; 17:7-8, 19-27; 23:5-6; 31:31-34; Heb. 8:8-12

Jeremiah 2:13	For My people have committed two evils: / They have forsaken Me, / The fountain of living waters , / To hew out for themselves cisterns, / Broken cisterns, / Which hold no water.
Jeremiah 15:16	Your words were found and I ate them , / And Your word became to me / The gladness and joy of my heart, / For I am called by Your name, / O Jehovah, God of hosts.
Jeremiah 17:7	Blessed is the man who trusts in Jehovah / And whose trust Jehovah is.
Jeremiah 17:8	And he will be like a tree transplanted beside water, / Which sends out its roots by a stream , / And will not be afraid when heat comes; / For its leaves remain flourishing, / And it will not be anxious in the year of drought / And will not cease to bear fruit.
Jeremiah 17:19	Thus said Jehovah to me, Go and stand in the gate of the sons of the people, through which the kings of Judah come in and through which they go out, and in all the gates of Jerusalem,
Jeremiah 17:20	And say to them, Hear the word of Jehovah, O kings of Judah and all Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem who enter through these gates:
Jeremiah 17:21	Thus says Jehovah, Take heed to your souls and bear no burden on the Sabbath day , nor bring anything through the gates of Jerusalem.
Jeremiah 17:22	And do not bring out any burden from your houses on the Sabbath day, nor do any work ; but sanctify the Sabbath day , as I commanded your fathers.
Jeremiah 17:23	But they did not listen or incline their ear; rather they stiffened their neck that they might not hear or receive correction.
Jeremiah 17:24	But if indeed you listen to Me, declares Jehovah, and bring no burden through the gates of this city on the Sabbath day, but sanctify the Sabbath day and do not do any work on it ,
Jeremiah 17:25	Then kings and princes who sit on the throne of David, riding on chariots and on horses, they and their princes, the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, will come through the gates of this city; and this city will be inhabited forever .
Jeremiah 17:26	And they will come from the cities of Judah and the places surrounding Jerusalem and from the land of Benjamin and from the lowland and from the hill country and from the Negev, bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices and meal offerings and frankincense and bringing thanksgiving to the house of Jehovah.
Jeremiah 17:27	But if you do not listen to Me to sanctify the Sabbath day and not to bear a burden when coming in through the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, then I will kindle a fire in its gates, and it will devour the palaces of Jerusalem and will not be extinguished .
Jeremiah 23:5	Indeed, days are coming, / Declares Jehovah, / When I will raise up to David a righteous Shoot ; / And He will reign as King and act prudently / And will execute justice and righteousness in the land.
Jeremiah 23:6	In His days Judah will be saved, / And Israel will dwell securely; / And this is His name by which He will be called, / Jehovah our righteousness .
Jeremiah 31:31	Indeed, days are coming, declares Jehovah, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah ,
Jeremiah 31:32	Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by their hand to bring them out from the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was their Husband, declares Jehovah.
Jeremiah 31:33	But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares Jehovah: I will put My law in their inward parts and write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they will be My people.
Jeremiah 31:34	And they will no longer teach, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for all of them will know Me, from the little one among them even to the great one among them, declares Jehovah, for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.
Hebrews 8:8	For finding fault with them He says, "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, and I will consummate a new covenant upon the house of Israel and upon the house of Judah,
Hebrews 8:9	Not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by their hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord.
Hebrews 8:10	For this is the covenant which I will covenant with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will impart My laws into their mind, and on their hearts I will inscribe them; and I will be God to them, and they will be a people to Me.
Hebrews 8:11	And they shall by no means each teach his fellow citizen and each his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all will know Me from the little one to the great one among them.
Hebrews 8:12	For I will be propitious to their unrighteousnesses, and their sins I shall by no means remember anymore."

In Jeremiah 2:13 we have the first crucial matter in this book concerning God's economy. In this verse God, through the prophet, presents Himself to the children of Israel as a fountain of living waters. In principle, God did the same thing in Genesis 2, after the creation of man.... Then God commanded the man, saying, "*Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*" (vv. 16-17). This indicates that God wanted man to partake of Himself as signified by the **tree of life**. Immediately after the first mention of the tree of life, we are told that "a river went out of Eden to water the garden" (v. 10). It is significant that the last chapter of the Bible also speaks of the tree of life and the river of water of life. The picture in Genesis 2 of the tree of life and the river indicates that God is both the tree of life and the living water for man's existence. What God desires of man is that **man would eat of Him as the tree of life and drink of Him as the water of life**. Through our eating and drinking of Him, **God is able to dispense Himself into us as our life and our life supply**. (*Excerpt from the Life-Study of Jeremiah and Lamentations, chapter 12, section 2*)

Jeremiah's prophecy concerning Christ indicates that **only Christ can fulfill God's economy**. Only Christ is the answer to God's requirements in His economy. In fulfilling God's economy, Christ is first our righteousness and then our redemption and our all-inclusive inner life. As our life supply, Christ is our food and drink. What Christ is to us today He will be to Israel at the time of His coming back. At His coming back, Israel will repent and receive Christ. They will receive Christ as their righteousness, redemption, and life, and they will drink of the fountain of living waters and eat of the tree of life. As a result, Israel too will be constituted with God and become one with God in life, nature, image, and appearance. (*Excerpt from the Life-Study of Jeremiah and Lamentations, chapter 12, section 4*)

Day 1

I. Jeremiah 17:7-8 says, “Blessed is the man who trusts in Jehovah / And whose trust Jehovah is. / And he will be like a tree transplanted beside water, / Which sends out its roots by a stream, / And will not be afraid when heat comes; / For its leaves remain flourishing, / And it will not be anxious in the year of drought / And will not cease to bear fruit”:

- A. These verses can be understood in two different ways—according to the natural understanding or according to God’s economy; these verses are not concerned with a shallow matter of trusting in God to receive material blessings; actually, these verses refer to **God’s economy carried out by His dispensing**:
1. The revelation here reveals that according to God’s economy, the one who trusts in God is like a tree transplanted beside water, signifying **God as the fountain of living waters** (2:13a); **we not only trust in God**, but also **God Himself is our trust in Him**.
 2. The tree grows beside water by **absorbing** all the riches of the water into it; this is a picture of **God’s dispensing**; in order to receive the divine dispensing, we as the trees **must absorb God** as the living water to be dispensed into our being in order to become our very constituent.
- B. The thought here is the same as that in 1 Corinthians 3:6, where Paul says, “I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth”; the watering is for the tree’s absorbing, and the **absorbing is the receiving of God’s dispensing**:
1. The tree grows with God as the **Supplier and the supply**; the supply is the **riches of the supplying God** dispensed into us as the plants so that we may grow into God’s measure; eventually, the plants and God, God and the plants, become one, having the same element, essence, constitution, and appearance—Col. 2:19.
 2. We all need to see the crucial significance of absorbing God as the living water that we may be **constituted with His element and essence and grow with the growth of God**; where the growth in life is lacking, the believers’ Christian life will be a mess, the church life will be damaged, and the Body life will be destroyed.
 3. In order to grow in life for the building up of the Body of Christ, we need to absorb God by **taking root downward and bearing fruit upward** (Isa. 37:31); this means that we need to have **hidden times of fellowship with God** (Matt. 6:6; 14:22-23); the empowering, enlightening, enjoying of rest, rejoicing, believing, solving of problems, overcoming of trials, temptations, and hardships, and comforting for a Christian all depend upon his secret fellowship with God through prayer and God’s word (Dan. 6:10; Col. 4:2; 2 Tim. 3:14-17).

Jeremiah 17:8 says, “*He will be like a tree transplanted beside water, / Which sends out its roots by a stream.*” In Matthew 13 the Lord told the parable of a sower. The Lord is the Sower, and He is also the seed. In this parable there are four kinds of soil. One kind is the rocky places. The Lord Jesus said, “*Others fell on the rocky places, where they did not have much earth, and immediately they sprang up because they had no depth of earth. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered*” (vv. 5-6). When some first come into the church life, they spring up, and other saints are amazed. In the Lord’s parable the sun signifies the suffering, persecution, trial, and difficult circumstances that we, we should pray, “*Lord, I want to be deeply rooted in You. I want to have a strong root system in You.*”

Roots are under the soil; this indicates that much of our growth in life is unseen. If we pull a plant out of the soil to admire the roots, it will kill the plant. What causes the health, growth, vibrancy, and wonderful appearance of a plant is its root system, which is its unseen growth. This shows that we need to have much secret contact with the Lord and a secret history with Him so that we can grow in life. This is not only for our personal growth but also for the growth in life of all the saints; the corporate growth in life is the building up of the Body of Christ. Thus, as a member of the Body, we personally need to grow in life for the sake of the Body. **For this, every day we need to have a “heart exam” by the Lord, allowing Him to search our heart to expose any rocks within it.** These rocks may be hidden sins, personal desires, self-seeking, or self-pity. When we are asked to do something in the church, we may pity ourselves, thinking, “Don’t the brothers realize all the pressure that I am under?” As soon as such a thought comes up in our being, we need to realize that this is a rock that needs God’s light to deal with it. (*Excerpt from The Ministry of the Word, Crystallization-Study of Jeremiah and Lamentations Vol. 24, No.6, page 162-163*)

Day 2

II. In Jeremiah 17:19-27 we have a word about keeping God’s Sabbath; the way to keep God’s Sabbath is to enjoy Him, to rest in Him, and to be satisfied in Him as the fountain of living waters—2:13:

- A. In Exodus 31:12-17, after a long record concerning the building up of God’s dwelling place, there is a repetition of the commandment to keep the Sabbath; according to Colossians 2:16-17 and Matthew 11:28-30, **Christ is the reality of the Sabbath rest**—Heb. 4:7-9; Isa. 30:15a:
1. If we only know how to work for the Lord but do not know how to rest with Him, we are acting contrary to the divine principle:
 - a. **God rested** on the seventh day because He had **finished His work and was satisfied**; God’s glory was manifested because man had His image, and His authority was about to be exercised for the subduing of His enemy, Satan; as long as man **expresses God** and deals with God’s enemy, God is satisfied and can rest—Gen. 1:26, 31; 2:1-2.
 - b. Later, the seventh day was commemorated as the Sabbath (Exo. 20:8-11); God’s seventh day was man’s first day; after man was created, he did not join in God’s work; **he entered into God’s rest**.
 2. Man was **created** not to work first but **to be satisfied with God and rest with God**; with God it is a matter of working and resting, but with man it is a matter of resting and working; it is a divine principle that after a full enjoyment of God, we may work together with Him—cf. Matt. 11:28-30:
 - a. If we do not know how to enjoy God Himself and how to be filled with God, we will not know how to work with Him and be one with Him in His divine work; **man enjoys what God has accomplished in His work**.
 - b. On the day of Pentecost the disciples were **filled with the Spirit**, which means that they were **filled with the enjoyment of Christ** as the heavenly wine; only after they were filled with this enjoyment did they begin to work with God in oneness with Him—Acts 2:4a, 12-14.

The work of the Lord to build up the church should begin with the enjoyment of God, which will indicate that we do not work for God by our own strength but by enjoying Him and being one with Him; this is to keep the principle of the Sabbath with Christ as the inner rest in our spirit (1 Cor. 3:9 ; 15:58 ; 16:10 ; 2 Cor. 6:1a). It would be good to frame the first part of this statement and place it in a highly visible place in our home: “The work of the Lord to build up the church should begin with the enjoyment of God.” Enjoying God is the first thing we need to do; it is our duty. If we do not enjoy God, we have no way to shepherd others or minister God to others. We need to enjoy the Lord for the sake of others. This is why in Ephesians 3:2 Paul speaks of “the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you.” The grace of God is the enjoyment of God. This was given to Paul for the sake of others. The building up of the church is our motivation for enjoying God. (*Excerpt from The Ministry of the Word, Crystallization-Study of Jeremiah and Lamentations Vol. 24, No.6, page 176*)

Day 3

- B. As God’s people, we must **bear a sign** that we rest with God, enjoy God, and are filled up with God first; then we **work** with the very One who fills us; furthermore, we not only work with God but also work by being one with God, having Him as our **strength** to work and our **energy** to labor—Exo. 31:13, 17.
- C. In the church life we may do many things **without first enjoying** the Lord and **without serving** the Lord by being one with the Lord; that kind of service results in **spiritual death** and the **loss of the fellowship in the Body**—vv. 14-15.
- D. The work of the Lord to build up the church should begin with the enjoyment of God, which will indicate that we do not work for God by our own strength but by enjoying Him and being one with Him; this is to keep the principle of the Sabbath with Christ as the inner rest in our spirit—1 Cor. 3:9; 15:58; 16:10; 2 Cor. 6:1a.

Day 4

III. The book of Jeremiah is an abstract of the entire Bible; Jeremiah’s prophecy indicates that only Christ can fulfill God’s economy and only Christ is the answer to God’s requirements in His economy; the picture portrayed by Jeremiah shows that **we are nothing and that Christ is everything to us**:

- A. Jeremiah speaks of Christ, in the fulfilling of God’s economy, being our **righteousness** and our **redemption** (23:5-6), of God being the **fountain of living waters** (2:13), of Christ being our **food** (15:16), and of Christ as the **reality of the new covenant** with all its blessings (31:31-34; Heb. 8:8-12):
 - 1. On the one hand, we may say that the **new covenant** is synonymous with God’s economy, being the **contents** and **substance** of God’s economy—Jer. 31:31-34; Job 10:13; cf. Eph. 3:9:
 - a. All the major items of the new covenant are the contents of God’s economy and His dispensing with both His judicial redemption and organic salvation to **deify us for the building up of the Body of Christ**, consummating in the New Jerusalem.
 - b. The apostles’ ministry is the ministry for God’s new covenant economy; it is the new covenant ministry that is centered on the economy of God—1 Tim. 1:3-4; cf. 2 Cor. 3:3, 6.
 - 2. On the other hand, we may say that the **new covenant** is the way that **God fulfills**, or **accomplishes**, His economy; 2 Corinthians reveals that the ministry of the new covenant is for the accomplishment of God’s eternal economy—2:12—4:1.
- B. **Christ** is the reality of the new testament, the new covenant, the reality of all that God is and of all that God has given to us; therefore, **Christ is the new covenant**:
 - 1. The **bequests** are many, but all these many bequests are actually one person—the **pneumatic Christ**—Isa. 42:6; 49:8; Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:8-12; John 20:22; Eph. 3:8.
 - 2. The bequests bequeathed to us by the Lord in the new testament are **inexhaustible**, and they are for us to experience and enjoy through the Spirit for eternity—Heb. 9:15.

Day 5

- 3. We need to take the ancient paths of our forefathers by walking in the way of the new covenant focused on the economy of God, **the way that leads to life**; the bypaths are the paths of Satan’s schemes according to his devious stratagems that lead to destruction; to take the bypaths is to go downward, but to take the ancient paths, a way that is cast up, is to go upward—Jer. 18:15; cf. Matt. 7:13-14.
- 4. In the **new covenant**, the eternal covenant, God gives us one heart and one way (Jer. 32:39-41); the **one heart** is a heart to **love God**, to **seek God**, to **live God**, and to be **constituted with God** so that we may be His expression; the **one way** is the Triune God Himself as the **inner law of life with its divine capacity** (31:33-34); this one heart and one way are the one accord (Acts 1:14; 2:46; 4:24; Rom. 15:6).
- C. As the ascended One sitting on the throne in the heavens, **Christ is now executing the new covenant**, which He has bequeathed to us as a testament, interceding for us and ministering to us that we may realize, experience, and enjoy all the bequests contained in the new testament—Heb. 12:2; 7:25; 8:1-2:
 - 1. The new testament, the new covenant, the will, has been **validated by Christ’s death** and is being **executed and enforced by Christ in His resurrection and ascension**.
 - 2. The new covenant has been bequeathed to us as the new testament, and now, in the mystical realm of His heavenly ministry, Christ is executing what He has bequeathed.
 - 3. Christ is now in the heavens, living, divine, and capable; He is able to execute the new testament, the new covenant, in every detail, making every bequest in it available and real to us:
 - a. As the divine **High Priest**, Christ is executing the new covenant by **interceding for us**, praying that we would be brought into the reality of the new covenant—7:25.
 - b. As the **Mediator**, the **Executor**, of the new covenant, Christ in His heavenly ministry is **executing the new testament** and carrying out in us every item of its bequests—8:6; 9:15; 12:24.
 - c. As the **surety** of the new covenant, **Christ is the pledge** that everything in the new covenant will be fulfilled; He **guarantees and ensures the effectiveness of the new testament**—7:22.

- d. As the **Minister of the true (heavenly) tabernacle**, Christ is **serving us** with the bequests, the blessings, of the new testament, making the facts of the new covenant effective in our experience—8:2.
- e. As the **great Shepherd of the sheep**, Christ, by His **shepherding**, is consummating the New Jerusalem according to God's eternal covenant—13:20.

Day 6

- D. If we would **receive** the application of all the blessings in the new covenant, we need to be those who **respond** to Christ's heavenly ministry—12:1-2; Col. 3:1:
 - 1. Christ's ministry in heaven to execute the new covenant **requires our response**—Heb. 7:25; 4:16; 10:19, 22:
 - a. For centuries Christ has tried without adequate success to gain a group of people to respond to His ministry in the heavens.
 - b. By the Lord's mercy and grace, there is on earth today a group of people in the Lord's recovery responding to the heavenly ministry of Christ.
 - c. As the Head is in heaven interceding for us and ministering to us, we, the **Body**, are on earth **responding to Christ's heavenly ministry**, corresponding to and reflecting what He is doing to execute the new covenant—Eph. 1:22-23; 4:15-16; Acts 6:4.
 - 2. Our **eyes must be opened** to see the heavenly vision of the new testament, the new covenant, the will, with all its bequests—Eph. 1:17-18; Acts 26:18-19:
 - a. The **Father promised everything**, and the **Lord Jesus accomplished everything**; now all the accomplished facts have been itemized in the will as our **bequests**—Luke 22:20; Heb. 9:16-17.
 - b. If we have the heavenly vision to see that all of God's blessings are bequests in the will, we will pray not as poor beggars but as **glorious inheritors**, receiving the bequests by faith—Rom. 8:17; Eph. 3:6; Heb. 6:17; 1:14.
 - c. If we have the heavenly view of the new testament, the new covenant, our concept will be changed, we will be radically revolutionized, and we will be beside ourselves with praise to the Lord—2 Cor. 5:13; Rev. 5:6-13.
- E. We need all twenty-seven books of the New Testament to define Jeremiah 31:31-34:
 - 1. If we understand this portion in the light of the entire New Testament, we will see that in this **new covenant** we have the **church**, the **kingdom of God**, **God's household**, the **house of God** as God's dwelling place in our spirit, the **new man**, and the **Body of Christ** as the fullness of the processed and consummated Triune God.
 - 2. Eventually, this new covenant will bring in the millennium; ultimately and consummately, it will bring in the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth for eternity.

The Father promised everything, and the Lord Jesus accomplished everything; now all the accomplished facts have been itemized in the will as **our bequests** (Luke 22:20 ; Heb. 9:16-17). It is wonderful that everything in the will is in the Holy Bible. The reality of the will is in the New Testament, and the Old Testament is a picture of this reality. **Thus, the contents of the whole Bible are God's will to us.** This is why we need to pray these things back to Him so that what is in this Bible, in this will, **becomes our reality**. If we pray according to His will, He must answer our prayer, because His will is His testament, His covenant. (*Excerpt from The Ministry of the Word, Crystallization-Study of Jeremiah and Lamentations Vol. 24, No.6, page 182*)