

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OF JOB PROVERBS ECCLESIASTES, Week 4**KEY STATEMENTS**

God's purpose in dealing with those who love Him
 is that they may gain Him
 to the fullest extent, surpassing the loss
 of all that they have other than Him,
 so that He might be expressed through them
 for the fulfillment of His purpose in creating man.

Job was a good man, expressing himself
 in his perfection, uprightness, and integrity,
 but God's intention was that Job would be reduced
 to nothing, be maintained in his existence,
 have God imparted into him, and become
 a God-man, expressing the divine attributes.

God's purpose in dealing with His holy people is
 that they would be emptied of everything
 and receive only God as their gain;
 the desire of God's heart
 is that they would gain Him in full as life,
 as the life supply, and as everything to their being.

When God's chosen and redeemed people
 experience Christ as wisdom to them from God
 and partake of and enjoy the riches of Christ,
 these riches will constitute them the church,
 through which the multifarious wisdom of God
 is made known to the angelic rulers and authorities in the heavenlies.

Job and the Two Trees

Scripture Reading: Gen. 2:9, 17; Rev. 22:1-2, 14; Job 1:1; 2:3; 4:7-8; 42:1-6; Rom. 8:5-6

- Genesis 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**.
- Genesis 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.
- Revelation 22:1 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.
- Revelation 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.
- Revelation 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 4:7 Remember now, who, being innocent, has ever perished? And where have the upright ever been cut off?
 Job 4:8 According to what I have seen, those who plow iniquity And those who sow trouble reap the same.
- Job 42:1 Then Job answered Jehovah and said,
 Job 42:2 I know that You can do all things And that no purpose of Yours can be restrained.
 Job 42:3 Who 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.
 Job 42:4 Hear now, and I will speak; I will ask of You, and You shall inform me.
 Job 42:5 I had heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye has seen You;
 Job 42:6 Therefore I abhor myself, and I repent In dust and ashes.
- Romance 8:5 For those who are according to the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but those who are according to the spirit, the things of the Spirit.
 Romance 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

Day 1

I. According to the divine revelation in the Scriptures, there are **two trees, two sources, two ways, two principles, and two consummations**:

- A. The **tree of life** signifies the **Triune God as life to man** in man's relationship with Him; 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. 2:9, 17; Psa. 36:9a.
 B. The **tree of life** is the **source of men who seek God** as life for their supply and enjoyment; 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—John 1:4; 15:1; 8:44.

Day 2

- C. 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; 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. 7:13-14; Acts 9:2; 1 John 3:10a.
 D. The first principle is the **principle of life**—the principle of **dependence on God**; the second principle is the **principle of death and of good and evil**—the principle of **independence from God**—Gen. 4:3-4; Jer. 17:5-8; John 15:5.
 E. The two consummations are the final outcome of the two trees, the two sources, the two ways, and the two principles:
 1. The **consummation of God's way of life** is a city of water of life, the **New Jerusalem**—Rev. 21:2, 9-11; 22:1-2.
 2. The **consummation of the way of death and of good and evil** is a **lake of fire**—19:20; 20:10, 14-15.

THE MEANING OF THE TREE OF LIFE

God's intention is to plant Himself into you as the tree of life. This planting is grafting. This thought is implied in Romans 6:5. Has God been planted in you? Are you a garden with God as a dear little plant growing in you? Is this plant, called the tree of life, growing in you? Are you growing, or is He growing? May God be merciful to you and grace you, that you may grow together with Him and that He may grow together with you.

Colossians 2:19 says that we should grow with the growth of God. As God is growing in us, we must grow with Him. If we are growing by ourselves, improving ourselves so that we are more patient, humble, or loving, we may be disciples of Plato or Confucius, but we are not disciples of Christ. A disciple of Christ, a Christian, must be **growing together with God**. Such a tree has been planted into us.

THE MEANING OF THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE

After Satan got into man, God came. Adam's satanic nature came forth. Instead of confessing his sin, he blamed God. "The woman whom You gave" (v. 12) was the cause of the trouble. If God had not given him a wife, there would have been no problem. When God then spoke to Eve, she did not take the blame either: "The serpent deceived me, and I ate" (v. 13). God, she implied, allowed the serpent to be there. This way of talking is from the **satanic nature**. Even though Adam and Eve were new on the earth, from that time on they were old. They became the old man. In the second generation Cain hated his brother and killed him. Throughout the Bible two lines can be seen. One is of the tree of life; the other, of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (God's Eternal Intention and Satan's Counterplot, chapter 2)

Day 3

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; they were **devoid** of the divine revelation and of the experience of the divine life— 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:
 1. Neither Job nor his friends were in the line of the tree of life as God ordained man to be—Gen. 2:9.
 2. Their concept concerning man's relationship with God was built on good and evil, right and wrong, absolutely according to the **principle of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil** and absolutely according to the human, ethical concept of fallen man— Job 8:1-20.
- 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.
- 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.

TWO ORGANS AND THREE PERSONS

Man has two organs: the **body** as an outward organ and the **spirit** as an inward organ. In between these two organs is our being, that is, the human soul. Our soul is our self, our being. The body is the outward organ for us to contact the material things. Our spirit is the inward organ for us to contact God. Through the fall the devil, Satan, came into the outward organ, the human body. But in our **regeneration the Lord Jesus came into our inward organ**, our human **spirit**.

We also need to realize that as Christians, we have three persons. The first person is **ourselves** in our **soul**, our being. The second person is **Satan** in our **flesh**. And the third person is **Christ** in our **spirit**. This kind of truth has been fully missed today. Most of the teachings and sermons are in the ethical and moral realm, not in the realm that Paul taught in the book of Romans. In the book of Romans there is not the ethical and moral concept but the concept that our spirit today has Jesus Christ, the Spirit, and the very grace of God within it. God does not want us to be merely ethical and moral, but God surely wants us to **walk according to this wonderful compound spirit**. God wants us to live in this compound spirit and have our being every minute according to this compound spirit. (*The Flesh and the Spirit, chapter 2*)

Day 4

III. We need a vision of the tree of life—Gen. 2:9; Rev. 22:1-2, 14:

- 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.
- 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.
- C. The New Testament reveals that **Christ is the fulfillment of the figure of the tree of life**— John 1:4; 15:5.
- 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.
- E. The enjoyment of the tree of life will be the **eternal portion** of all of God's redeemed—Rev. 22:1-2, 14:
 1. The **tree of life fulfills for eternity** what God intended for man from the beginning—Gen. 1:26; 2:9.
 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.

The Tree of Life

Genesis 2:9 says, “*Out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.*” Here the **tree of life** is not a type but a figure signifying **God in Christ as our life**. God’s desire to be our life cannot easily be expressed in plain words. Therefore, in Genesis 2:9 He uses a figure—the tree of life—to signify this desire. The tree of life signifies the Triune God in Christ to dispense Himself into His chosen people as their generating life. In Genesis 2 we have the figure, but in the New Testament we have the **fulfillment of this figure**.

Concerning Christ as the fulfillment of the figure of the tree of life in Genesis 2:9, Revelation 2:7 says, “*To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.*” It was God’s original intention that man should eat of the tree of life. Due to the fall, the tree of life was closed to man. Through the **redemption of Christ, the way to touch the tree of life, which is God Himself in Christ as life to man, has been opened again**. However, in the church’s degradation religion crept in with its knowledge to distract the believers in Christ from eating Him as the tree of life. Hence, in Revelation 2:7 the Lord promises to grant the overcomers to eat of Himself as the tree of life. The word for “tree” in Revelation 2:7, as in 1 Peter 2:24, is “wood” in Greek, not the usual word used for tree. We have seen that the tree of life refers to Christ as the embodiment of the Triune God to be our life in the form of **food**. Here in Revelation 2:7 this expression refers to the crucified (implied in the tree as a piece of wood—1 Peter 2:24) and resurrected (implied in the zoe life—John 11:25) Christ who is in the church today, the consummation of which will be the New Jerusalem, in which the crucified and resurrected Christ will be the tree of life for the enjoyment of all God’s redeemed people for eternity. **The eating of the tree of life not only was God’s original intention concerning man; it will also be the eternal issue of Christ’s redemption**. For eternity God’s redeemed people will enjoy the tree of life as their portion. (*The Conclusion of the New Testament (Msgs. 034-049), chapter 41*)

Day 5

IV. The two trees in Genesis 2:9—the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—represent **two principles of living**:

- A. The two trees show that a Christian can live according to two different principles—the **principle of right and wrong** or the **principle of life**—1 Cor. 8:1.
- B. Job and his friends pursued something in the realm of ethics, but we, the believers in Christ, should pursue something in the realm of God—15:28; Eph. 3:16-21.
- C. Being a **Christian** is not a matter of the principle of right and wrong, the principle of good and evil, but is a **matter of life**— 1 John 5:11-13, 20:
 1. When we received the Lord Jesus and gained a new life, we obtained another principle of living—the **principle of life**; if we do not know this principle, we will set the principle of life aside and follow the principle of right and wrong.
 2. 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.
 3. 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.
 4. In order to live according to the principle of the tree of life, we need to **follow the inner sense of life**—v. 6; Eph. 4:18-19; Isa. 40:31:
 - a. The sense of life on the negative side is the **feeling of death**—Rom. 8:6a.
 - b. The sense of life on the positive side is the **feeling of life and peace**, with a consciousness of **strength, satisfaction, rest, brightness, and comfort**—v. 6b.
 5. When we live according to the principle of the tree of life, we will care not for good and evil but for life, and we will discern matters not according to right and wrong but **according to life and death**—Gen. 2:9, 16-17; 2 Cor. 11:3.

Day 6

V. Every genuine believer in Christ is a **miniature garden of Eden, with God as the tree of life in his spirit and Satan as the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in his flesh—Gen. 2:9; Rom. 8:2, 5-6:**

- A. We are a miniature garden of Eden because the triangular situation involving God, man, and Satan is now within us—Gen. 1:27-29; 2:9, 16-17:
 1. Before man fell, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life were outside of man—vv. 9, 16-17.
 2. Through the **fall** the **tree of the knowledge of good and evil is in us**, and through **regeneration** the **tree of life is now in us**.
 3. Our **spirit is mingled with the Triune God**, and our body, which has become the **flesh, is mixed with the sinful element of Satan** (1 Cor. 6:17; Rom. 5:12; 6:6, 12); this makes the Christian a miniature garden of Eden.
- B. As those who were represented by Adam in Genesis 2, we have the tree of life in our spirit and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in our flesh—v. 9; Rev. 2:7b; 22:14:
 1. Whenever we contact the **tree of the knowledge of good and evil**, we become **dead**; whenever we contact the **tree of life**, we gain **life**—Rom. 8:5-6, 10.
 2. If we stand on the side of the **tree of the knowledge of good and evil** and contact Satan, we will **live out the life of Satan**, the devil, and the **result will be death**—2 Cor. 11:3; Rom. 3:23; 1 John 3:4.
 3. If we stand on the side of the **tree of life and contact God**, we will **live out God**, and the **result will be life**—John 11:25; 14:6; 15:1, 4-5.
- C. Romans 8:5-6 shows a miniature garden of Eden, with the flesh and death on one side, the spirit and life on the other side, and the mind in the middle:
 1. We learn from Romans 8 that we need to **turn our being to the living One** who dwells in our spirit and stay one with Him—v. 6b; 1 Cor. 6:17.
 2. When we **set our mind on the spirit**, we have **life, peace, light, comfort**, and **strength**; our **thirst is quenched**, and our **hunger is satisfied**—Rom. 8:5, 6b; John 4:14; 7:37-38; Matt. 5:6.
 3. When we set our mind on the spirit, our **mind is full of life and peace**—Rom. 8:6b:
 - a. We have peace because there is **no discord** between our outward behavior and our inner being—v. 6b; Isa. 9:6-7; 26:3.
 - b. When we speak with our mind set on the spirit, life is embodied in our words because **we are one spirit with the Lord**—Prov. 18:21; John 6:63; Eph. 4:29.

The Nature and Condition of the Three Lives

When the life of God enters into us, we become more complicated within than the worldly people. We have the upright **life of man**, the **evil life of Satan**, and the **divinely good life of God**. This means that we have man, Satan, and God. The tripartite situation of man, God, and Satan, which existed on that day in the garden of Eden, exists also in us today. We can say that inside of us is a miniature garden of Eden with man, God, and Satan—all three—there. Therefore, Satan's struggle with God for man in the garden of Eden is also occurring in us today. **Satan moves within us today**, desiring that we cooperate with him so that he can **fulfill his evil intention of possessing us**; **God also moves within us**, desiring that we cooperate with Him to **accomplish His good pleasure**. If we live according to the life of Satan within us, we will live out the evils of Satan and thus enable him to fulfill his evil intention upon us. If we live according to the life of God within us, we **will live out the divine goodness of God and thus enable Him to accomplish His good pleasure in us**. Although sometimes it seems that we can be **independent** and live neither according to the life of Satan nor according to the life of God but only according to our human life, actually, we cannot be independent; either we live according to the life of God, or we live according to the life of Satan. (*The Knowledge of Life, chapter 9*)