

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OF JOB PROVERBS ECCLESIASTES, Week 6

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.

Gaining God to Be Transformed by God for the Purpose of God

Scripture Reading: Job 42:1-6; 2 Cor. 3:8-9; 4:10-12, 16-18; 5:18-20

- 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.
- 2 Corinthians 3:8 How shall the ministry of the Spirit not be more in glory?
2 Corinthians 3:9 For if there is glory with the ministry of condemnation, much more the ministry of righteousness abounds with glory.
- 2 Corinthians 4:10 Always bearing about in the body the putting to death of Jesus that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.
2 Corinthians 4:11 For we who are alive are always being delivered unto death for Jesus' sake that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.
2 Corinthians 4:12 So then death operates in us, but life in you.

- 2 Corinthians 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart; but though our outer man is decaying, **yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.**
- 2 Corinthians 4:17 For our **momentary lightness of affliction works out for us**, more and more surpassingly, an **eternal weight of glory**,
- 2 Corinthians 4:18 Because we do not regard the things which are seen but the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.
- 2 Corinthians 5:18 But all things are out from God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Christ and has given to us the **ministry of reconciliation**;
- 2 Corinthians 5:19 Namely, that God in Christ was reconciling the world to Himself, not accounting their offenses to them, and has **put in us the word of reconciliation.**
- 2 Corinthians 5:20 On behalf of Christ then we are ambassadors, as God entreats you through us; we beseech you on behalf of Christ, **Be reconciled to God.**

JOB GAINING GOD IN HIS PERSONAL EXPERIENCE AND ABHORRING HIMSELF

"I had heard of You by the hearing of the ear./But now my eye has seen You;/Therefore I abhor myself, and I repent /In dust and ashes" (vv. 5-6). This indicates that Job **gained God in his personal experience** (in addition to knowing God in his vain knowledge by tradition) and that he abhorred himself.

Seeing God equals gaining God. To gain God is to receive God in His element, in His life, and in His nature. Eventually, this not only makes us one with God—it even makes us a part of God. I prefer not to use the phrase "one with" in describing our relationship with God because to be made a part of God, to be constituted with God in His life and nature, is more than being one with God. **We see God that we may be constituted with God**, yet we do not have any share in the Godhead.

All God's redeemed, regenerated, sanctified, transformed, conformed, and glorified people **will see God's face**. Seeing God transforms us, because **in seeing God we receive His element into us**. As we receive God, a new element comes into us, and the old element is discharged. This metabolic process is transformation. To see God is to be transformed into the glorious image of God. This makes us a part of God that we may express God in His life and represent Him in His authority.

Job said not only that He saw God but also that he abhorred himself. According to our experience, the more we see God and love God, the more we abhor ourselves. The more we know God, the more we deny ourselves. (*Life-Study of Job, chapter 30*)

Day 1

I. God's intention with Job was for him to become a person who lived in the **heavenly vision** and the **reality of God's economy**:

- A. Job's experience was a step taken by God in His divine economy to carry out the consuming and stripping of the contented Job in order to tear Job down that God might have a way to **rebuild him** with God Himself and to usher him into a deeper seeking after God so that he might **gain God** instead of His blessings and his attainments in his perfection and integrity—Phil. 3:10-14; 1 Cor. 2:9; 8:3; Exo. 20:6; 1 Chron. 16:10-11; 22:19a; 2 Chron. 12:14; 26:3-5; 34:1-3a; Psa. 24:6; 27:4, 8; 105:4; 119:2, 10; Heb. 11:6.
- B. The one who does not care for God may gain many things and may seem to prosper (Psa. 73:1-15); however, the one who cares for God will be restricted by God and even stripped by God of many things; God's intention with His seekers is that they may **find everything in Him** and **not be distracted** from the absolute enjoyment of Himself (vv. 16-28).
- C. God's purpose in dealing with His holy people is that they would be **emptied of everything** and **receive only God** as their gain (Phil. 3:8; cf. Psa. 73:25-26); the desire of God's heart is that we would gain Him in full as life, as the life supply, and as everything to our being (Rom. 8:10, 6, 11; cf. Col. 1:17b, 18b).
- D. In order to live in the reality of God's economy with His divine dispensing, we need God to **build Himself into our intrinsic constitution** so that our entire being will be reconstituted with Christ:
 1. As unveiled in Paul's Epistles, God's purpose in dealing with us is to strip us of all things and to consume us so that we may gain God more and more—2 Cor. 4:16-18.
 2. The building up of the church is by Christ's **making His home in our hearts**, that is, by His building Himself into us, making our heart, our intrinsic constitution, His home—Eph. 3:16-21.
- E. In Christ God was constituted into man, man was constituted into God, and God and man were mingled together to be one entity, the God-man; this implies that God's intention in His economy is to **make Himself man in order to make man God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead**—2 Sam. 7:12-14a; Rom. 1:3-4; Matt. 22:41-45; John 14:6a; 10:10b; 1 Cor. 15:45b; John 6:63; 2 Cor. 3:6; 1 John 5:16a.

Day 2

II. God's economy is God becoming a man in the flesh through incarnation that man might become God in the Spirit through transformation for the building of God into man and man into God to gain a corporate God-man:

- A. The most marvelous, excellent, mysterious, and all-inclusive transformations of the eternal and Triune God in His becoming a man are **God's move in man** for the accomplishment of His eternal economy—Micah 5:2; John 1:14, 29; 3:14; 12:24; Acts 13:33; 1 Pet. 1:3; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Acts 2:36; 5:31; Heb. 4:14; 9:15; 7:22; 8:2:
1. These transformations are the processes through which the Triune God passed in His becoming a God-man, bringing divinity into humanity and mingling divinity with humanity as a prototype for the mass reproduction of many **God-men**; He became the embodiment of the Triune God, bringing God to man and making God contactable, touchable, receivable, experienceable, enterable, and enjoyable—John 1:14; Col. 2:9; Rom. 8:28-29.

Day 3

2. God speaks of these transformations in Hosea 11:4 by saying, "I drew them with cords of a man, / With bands of love"; the phrase with cords of a man, with bands of love indicates that **God loves us with His divine love** not on the level of divinity but on the level of humanity; God's love is divine, but it reaches us in the cords of a man, that is, through Christ's humanity:
 - a. The cords (the transformations, the processes) through which God draws us include Christ's incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension; it is by all these steps of Christ in His humanity that **God's love in His salvation reaches us**—Jer. 31:3; John 3:14, 16; 6:44; 12:32; Rom. 5:5, 8; 1 John 4:8-10, 16, 19.
 - b. Apart from Christ, God's everlasting love, His unchanging, subduing love, could not be prevailing in relation to us; God's unchanging love is prevailing because it is a **love in Christ, with Christ, by Christ, and for Christ**.
 - c. God's everlasting love is always victorious; eventually, in spite of our failures and mistakes, God's love will gain the victory—Rom. 8:35-39.

Day 4

- B. The transformation of the tripartite man is **God's move to deify man**, to constitute man with the processed and consummated Triune God; in God's appearing to him, Job saw God in order to gain God to be transformed by God for the purpose of God—Job 38:1-3; 42:1-6; 2 Cor. 3:16-18; Heb. 12:1-2a:
1. **Seeing God** issues in the **transformation** of our being into God's image; hence, the more we look at Him as the consummated Spirit in our spirit, the more we receive all His ingredients into our being as the divine element to discharge our old element so that our whole being becomes new; our Christian life is not a matter of changing outwardly but of being transformed from within—2 Cor. 3:18; Psa. 27:4; Gal. 6:15-16.
 2. We can remain in the daily process of transformation by **turning our heart to the Lord** so that we can behold and reflect Him with an unveiled face; an unveiled face is a heart that turns to the Lord—2 Cor. 3:16, 18:
 - a. To turn our heart to the Lord is to **love the Lord**; the more we love the Lord, the more our heart will be open to the Lord, and He will have a way to spread out from our spirit into all the parts of our heart.
 - b. To turn our heart to the Lord, to **open our heart to the Lord**, is the key to our growing in life; we can open our heart to the Lord simply by telling the Lord, "O Lord, I love You; I want to please You."
 - c. As we **behold the Lord** day after day in all our situations (Psa. 27:4), we will reflect the Lord's glory and be transformed into His image from glory to glory.
 - d. Many Christians are not joyful because the Spirit within them is not joyful (Eph. 4:30; cf. Psa. 16:11; 43:4; Acts 3:19-20; Exo. 33:11, 14-17; Heb. 1:9; Jer. 15:16; John 15:9-11; 1 John 1:3-4; 2 John 12; Phil. 4:4); if we do not turn our heart to the Lord to let the Spirit of the Lord spread out of our spirit into our heart, we will feel **restrained and depressed**.
 - e. **Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom** (2 Cor. 3:17); if someone says that a meeting is boring, we must realize that it is he himself who is bored within; but when we turn our heart to the Lord, we enjoy the Spirit as our freedom.
 - f. Once the liberating Spirit has the way to spread into all the parts of our heart, we are released, transcendent, and free; this freedom is glory, which is the **presence of God** and the **expression of God**; we feel noble, honorable, and glorious because we are being transformed into His image— v. 18; Gen. 1:26.

Day 5

- C. Transformation transfers us from one form, the form of the old man, to another form, the form of the new man; the Lord accomplishes this transformation work by the **killing of Christ's death**—2 Cor. 4:10-12, 16-18:
1. In 2 Corinthians 4:10 Paul says that we are always bearing about in our body the putting to death of Jesus; putting to death means killing; the **death of Christ kills us**—1 Cor. 15:31, 36; John 12:24-26; 2 Cor. 1:8-9.
 2. The death of Christ is in the compound Spirit; the Spirit is the application of the death of Christ and its effectiveness—Exo. 30:22-25; Rom. 8:13.
 3. The Christian life is a life that is all the time under the killing by the compound Spirit; this daily killing is carried out by the **indwelling Spirit** with the **environment** as the killing weapon.
 4. Under God's divine and sovereign arrangement, **everything works for our good**, for our **transformation**, through the killing of Christ's death; the "good" in Romans 8:28 is not related to physical persons, matters, or things; only One is good—God—

Luke 18:19:

- a. All persons, all matters, and all things related to us are the **means of the Holy Spirit** to work good for us so that we can be loaded with good (Psa. 68:19a), with the Triune God Himself (cf. Gen. 45:5; 50:20).
 - b. All persons and all situations related to us are **arranged by the Spirit of God** to match His work within us so that we may be transformed and conformed to the image of the firstborn Son of God—cf. Matt. 10:29-31.
- D. Transformation is carried out in us as we **experience the discipline of the Holy Spirit**—Rom. 8:2, 28-29; Heb. 12:5-14:
1. The work of the **Spirit within** us is to **constitute a new being for us**, but the work of the **Spirit without** is to **tear down every aspect of our natural being** through our environment—cf. Jer. 48:11.
 2. We should **cooperate** with the inner operating Spirit and **accept** the environment that God has arranged for us—Phil. 4:12; Eph. 3:1; 4:1; 6:20; 1 Cor. 7:24.

COOPERATING WITH THE OPERATING SPIRIT AND ACCEPTING THE ENVIRONMENT IN OUR SPIRIT, SOUL, AND BODY

We should **cooperate with the operating Spirit** and **accept the environment in our spirit, soul, and body**. In every part of our being, we must be **willing** to cooperate with the indwelling Spirit and to accept the outward environment. Then we are acting under the killing of Christ. This killing is carried out by the indwelling Spirit with the environment as the killing weapon.

In order to cooperate with the operating Spirit and accept the outward environment, we need to recognize that **we have been crucified with Christ**. We also need to crucify our flesh with its passions and its lusts. In one sense we cannot crucify ourselves. But in another sense we can crucify our flesh with its passions and lusts because we have the new man. The new man crucifies the flesh. This is why we need to exercise our spirit, the new man, to crucify our flesh, our outer man.

We also need to **put to death**, by the Spirit, the **practices of our body**. To put to death means to kill. We need to kill the practices of our body. Whatever our body of sin does, needs to be killed. To gossip on the telephone is a practice of the body that needs to be killed.

In the church life we cannot avoid being killed. Every saint in the church is a “knife” to kill our outer man. **The longer we stay in the church, the more we experience the killing, the working of death, the working of the cross**. We need to remain under the killing, the working of death, the working of the cross, that we may live in resurrection. This is glorious. Even this is our happiness, our joy. We need to experience the Lord’s killing, His putting to death, every day. Then we will daily have the **victory and joy in Christ’s resurrection**. (The Christian, chapter 7)

Day 6

III. Ministry is the issue of revelation plus suffering—what we see is wrought into us through suffering; hence, what we minister is what we are:

- A. Although the ministers are many, they have only one ministry—the ministry of the new covenant for the accomplishing of God’s New Testament economy; our working together with Christ is to carry out this unique ministry, the **ministering of Christ to people for the building up of His Body**—Acts 1:17; Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Tim. 1:12; 2 Cor. 4:1; 6:1a.
- B. As a **whole**, the Body has **one, unique corporate ministry**, but because this ministry is the service of the Body of Christ and because the Body has many members, all the members have their own ministry for the carrying out of the unique ministry—Acts 20:24; 21:19; 2 Tim. 4:5; Col. 4:17.
- C. The **ministry** is for **ministering the Christ** whom we have experienced, and it is constituted with, and produced and formed by, the experiences of the riches of Christ gained through sufferings, consuming pressures, and the killing work of the cross— Acts 9:15-16; Col. 1:24; Phil. 3:10; 1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Cor. 1:4-6, 8-9, 12; 3:3, 6:
 1. The **ministry of the Spirit** is for us to **arrive at the high peak of the divine revelation** by our ministering Christ as the **Spirit**, who gives life—vv. 8-9, 6, 3; Rev. 22:17a.
 2. The **ministry of righteousness** is for us to **enter into the God- man living** by our ministering Christ not only as our **objective righteousness** but also as our **subjective and lived-out righteousness** for the genuine expression of Christ—Rom. 5:17; Phil. 3:9; Rev. 19:8.
 3. The **ministry of reconciliation** is for us to **shepherd people according to God** (in oneness with Christ in His heavenly ministry of shepherding) by our ministering Christ as the **word of reconciliation** so that we can bring God’s people into their spirit as the Holy of Holies for them to become persons in the spirit— 2 Cor. 5:18-20; John 21:15-17; 1 Pet. 5:2-4; 2:25; Rev. 1:12-13; Heb. 10:19, 22; 1 Cor. 2:15.
 4. By our fully entering into such a wonderful ministry in its three aspects, the Lord will have a way to bring the churches into a new revival.

- D. **Tribulation** is the sweet visitation and incarnation of grace with all the riches of Christ; grace visits us mainly in the form of tribulation—2 Cor. 12:7-10:
1. Through tribulations the killing effect of the cross of Christ on our natural being is **applied to us by the Holy Spirit**, making the way for the God of resurrection to add Himself into us—1:8-9; 4:16-18.
 2. **Tribulation produces endurance**, which brings forth the quality of approvedness—an approved quality or attribute resulting from the enduring and experiencing of tribulation and testing—Rom. 5:3-4.
- E. God poured out Himself **as love in our hearts with the Holy Spirit**, who has been given to us, as the **motivating power within us**, that we may more than conquer in all our tribulations; therefore, when we endure any kind of tribulation, we are not put to shame but live Christ for His magnification—v. 5; 8:31-39; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; Phil. 1:19-21a.

MINISTRY ISSUING FROM REVELATION PLUS SUFFERING

Ministry is the issue of revelation plus suffering. Without revelation one cannot have ministry because he has nothing to minister. But though one may have revelation, if he lacks suffering, he still has no ministry. He may have some sort of teaching or gift, but this is not ministry. There is a difference between teaching and ministry. Ministry is something **higher** and **deeper**. Gift is superficial and costs little, while ministry is weighty and costly. If you have received revelation from God, **He will put you into suffering in order that you may have ministry.**

From the writings of the apostle Paul, we can see that before he endured suffering, he received **revelation**. When he received the revelation, he did not immediately go out to pass it on as teaching or knowledge. To do so would not have been ministry; it would have been a sort of teaching or an exercise of gift. But after receiving the revelation, **the Lord put him into some suffering**. Hence, in all his Epistles we have this sequence: first, the revelation; second, the sufferings; and third, the ministry which came out of the first two. To receive revelation is one thing; to have that revelation wrought into our being is something else.

The measure of life, the amount of reality, and the riches of Christ we are able to minister to others depend entirely upon two elements: **how much revelation we have received** and **how much suffering we have undergone** regarding that which has been revealed to us. When suffering is added to revelation, we have ministry.

Paul said, "Therefore having this ministry..." (2 Cor. 4:1). He did not say that he had a certain teaching or a gift, but a ministry. Again he said, "I Paul became a minister" (Col. 1:23). He did not say that he was made a speaker or a teacher, but a minister. We are not referring to today's "minister." The word "minister" has been spoiled and misused in today's Christianity. A minister is a person who has a real ministry, a ministry which issues from these two things—**revelation plus suffering**. (*Watchman Nee—A Seer of the Divine Revelation in the Present Age, chapter 22*)