

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES JOSHUA, JUDGES, RUTH, Week 12**Taking the Way of Life in the Lord's Recovery**

Scripture Reading: Ruth 1:16-17, 20-21; 2:10-16;
3:1, 7-13; 4:9-15; Matt. 7:13-14

- Ruth 1:16 But Ruth said, Do not entreat me to leave you and turn away from following after you. For wherever you go, I will go, and wherever you dwell, I will dwell; and your people will be my people, and your God will be my God.
- Ruth 1:17 Where you die, I will die; and there will I be buried. Jehovah do so to me, and more as well, if anything but death parts me from you.
- Ruth 1:20 And she said to them, Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara; for the All-sufficient One has dealt very bitterly with me.
- Ruth 1:21 I went out full, but Jehovah has brought me back empty. Why do you call me Naomi, when Jehovah has afflicted me and the All-sufficient One has dealt harshly with me?
- Ruth 2:10 And she fell upon her face and bowed herself to the ground, and she said to him, Why have I found favor in your sight that you regard me, though I am a foreigner?
- Ruth 2:11 And Boaz answered and said to her, All that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told me, as well as how you left your father and mother and the land of your birth, and came to a people whom you did not know before.
- Ruth 2:12 May Jehovah recompense your work, and may you have a full reward from Jehovah the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.
- Ruth 2:13 And she said, Let me find favor in your sight, my lord; for you have comforted me and have spoken kindly to your servant girl, though I am not like even one of your servant girls.
- Ruth 2:14 And Boaz said to her at mealtime, Come here and eat some food; and dip your morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers, and he extended some parched grain to her. And she ate and was satisfied, and she had some left.
- Ruth 2:15 And when she rose up to glean, Boaz charged his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her.
- Ruth 2:16 And also pull out some from the bundles for her, and leave it for her to glean; and do not rebuke her.
- Ruth 3:1 And Naomi, her mother-in-law, said to her, My daughter, I must seek some resting place for you, that it may go well with you.
- Ruth 3:7 And Boaz ate and drank, and his heart was merry. And he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. And she came in secretly and uncovered his feet and lay down.
- Ruth 3:8 Then at midnight the man was startled; and he turned over, and a woman was there, lying at his feet.
- Ruth 3:9 And he said, Who are you? And she said, I am Ruth, your female servant. Spread your cloak over your female servant, for you are a kinsman.
- Ruth 3:10 And he said, Blessed be you of Jehovah, my daughter. You have shown your latter kindness to be better than your first by not going after the choice young men, whether poor or rich.
- Ruth 3:11 And now, my daughter, do not fear. All that you say, I will do for you; for all the assembly of my people know that you are a worthy woman.
- Ruth 3:12 And now it is true that I am a kinsman, yet there is a kinsman closer than I.
- Ruth 3:13 Stay for the night; and in the morning if he will do the kinsman's duty, fine; let him do it. But if he is not willing to do the kinsman's duty for you, I will do it for you, as Jehovah lives. Lie down until morning.
- Ruth 4:9 - And Boaz said to the elders and all the people, You are witnesses today, that I buy from Naomi's hand all that was Elimelech's and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's.
- Ruth 4:10 - Furthermore Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, I acquire as my own wife so that I may raise up the dead man's name upon his inheritance and the dead man's name may not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his place. You are witnesses today.
- Ruth 4:11 - And all the people who were in the gate and the elders said, We are witnesses. May Jehovah make the woman who has come into your house like Rachel and like Leah, the two who built the house of Israel. And prosper in Ephrathah, and gain a name in Bethlehem.
- Ruth 4:12 - And may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, through the seed that Jehovah gives you by this young woman.
- Ruth 4:13 - So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife; and he went in unto her, and Jehovah made her conceive; and she bore a son.

- Ruth 4:14 - And the women said to Naomi, Blessed be Jehovah, who has not left you today without a kinsman; and may his name be famous in Israel.
- Ruth 4:15 - And he will be to you as a restorer of life and a sustainer in your old age; for your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons, has borne him.
- Matthew 7:13 - Enter in through the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it.
- Matthew 7:14 - Because narrow is the gate and constricted is the way that leads to life, and few are those who find it.

Day 1 & Day 2

Judges 13:25	And the Spirit of Jehovah began to move him at Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.
Acts 1:8	But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.
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.
Ruth 1:16	But Ruth said, Do not entreat me to leave you and turn away from following after you. For wherever you go, I will go, and wherever you dwell, I will dwell; and your people will be my people, and your God will be my God.
Matthew 1:18	Now the origin of Jesus Christ was in this way: His mother, Mary, after she had been engaged to Joseph, before they came together, was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit.

- I. The three books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth present a clear picture of the two aspects of God's move: His move in His economical Spirit, the Spirit of power, and His move in His essential Spirit, the Spirit of life— Judg. 13:25; 14:6; John 20:22; Acts 1:8; Rom. 8:2:**
- With Joshua, Caleb, and all the judges we see the **move of God in power**, illustrated by Samson as one who moved in the **Spirit of power** but **not** in the Spirit of life— Judg. 14:6.
 - In contrast, the book of Ruth is a **book of life**; the purpose of this book is not to tell us anything about power but to **reveal the things of life to the uttermost**, using Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz as examples—1:16-17, 20-21; 2:10-16; 3:1, 7-13; 4:9-15.
 - In the Lord's recovery we should not take the way of the judges to be powerful and to do a great work; if we take the way of power instead of the way of life, **whatever we accomplish will mean nothing**.
 - It is crucial for us to see that **only life can bring forth Christ**— Luke 1:35:
 - Only life** can bring God into humanity, produce Christ, minister Christ, and supply the entire human race with Christ— Matt. 1:18, 20-21.
 - This was accomplished by Ruth and Boaz, persons of life, **who took the way of life**.
- II. According to the divine and eternal nature of the life of God, God's life is the unique life; only the life of God can be counted as life— John 1:4; 10:10b; 11:25; 14:6:**
- Life is mysterious, for **life is God Himself**—1:1, 14; 5:26; Eph. 4:18:
 - The divine life may be considered the **first and the basic attribute of God**—v. 18; John 5:26; 1 John 5:11-12; Rom. 8:2.
 - Life is the content of God and the flowing out of God**; God's content is God's being, and God's flowing out is the impartation of Himself as life to us—Eph. 4:18; Rev. 22:1.
 - Life is Christ**, and life is Christ living in us and lived out from us— John 14:6; Col. 3:4; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:21a.
 - Life is the Holy Spirit**—John 14:16-17; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 8:2; 2 Cor. 3:6.
 - Life is the processed and consummated Triune God dispensed into us and living in us**— John 1:14; 7:37-39; 20:22; Rom. 8:10, 6, 11.
 - God's purpose in the creation of man in His image and according to His likeness was that **man would receive Him as life so that man might become a man of life, a God-man, expressing God in His attributes**—Gen. 1:26; 2:9.

Day 3

2 Corinthians 11:3	But I fear lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your thoughts would be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity toward Christ.
Romans 8:6	For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

III. We need to know the significance of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and **turn absolutely from this tree to the tree of life**—vv. 9, 16-17:

- 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**—v. 9.
- B. The New Testament reveals that **Christ is the fulfillment of the figure of the tree of life**—John 1:1, 4, 14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1, 5:
 1. Speaking of Christ, John 1:4 says, “In Him was life”; this refers to the **life signified by the tree of life**.
 2. The life portrayed in Genesis 2 is the **life incarnated in Christ**—1 John 5:11-12; John 1:1, 4, 14.
 3. If we put together John 1:4 and 15:5, we will realize that Christ, **who Himself is life and also a vine tree, is the tree of life**.
- C. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil signifies **Satan as the source of death to man**—Heb. 2:14:
 1. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil also signifies **all things apart from God**.
 2. Anything that is not God Himself, **including good things and even scriptural and religious things, can be utilized by Satan, the subtle one, to bring death into the church**—Matt. 16:18; Prov. 16:25; 18:21.
- D. In John 4, 8, 9, and 11 are four cases that illustrate the **principle of life versus good and evil**:
 1. **We should care** not for good and evil but **for life**—4:10-14, 20-21, 23-24; 8:3-9; 9:1-3; 11:20-27.
 2. The best way to discern a matter is to discern **according to life or death**, not according to right and wrong, good and evil—Rom. 8:6; 2 Cor. 11:3.

Day 4

Matthew 7:13-14	Enter in through the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it. Because narrow is the gate and constricted is the way that leads to life, and few are those who find it.
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IV. **Christ is our life**—Col. 3:4:

- A. The **life of God is the life of Christ**, and the **life of Christ has become our life**—v. 4; John 5:26:
 1. For Christ to be our life means that **He is subjective to us to the uttermost**—1:4; 14:6a; 10:10b; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 8:10, 6, 11.
 2. It is impossible to separate a person from the life of that person, for a person's life is the person himself; thus, to say that Christ is our life means that **Christ has become us and that we have one life and living with Him**—John 14:6a; Phil. 1:21a.
- B. The truth that Christ is our life is a strong indication that **we are to take Him as life and live Him in our daily life**—Col. 3:4; John 6:57:
 1. Christ must be our life in a practical and experiential way; **day by day we need to be saved in His life**—Col. 3:4; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 5:10.
 2. The **new man** is the **spontaneous issue of our taking Christ as our life and living Him**—Col. 3:3-4, 10-11.

V. **There are two possible ways of our life and work before God—the way that leads to life and the way that leads to destruction**—Matt. 7:13-14:

- A. In order to take the way that leads to life, we need to enter in through the **narrow gate** and then walk on the **constricted way**—vv. 13-14:
 1. The **narrow gate** deals not only with outward conduct but also with inward motive.
 2. The old man, the self, the flesh, the human concept, and the world with its glory are all excluded; **only that which**

corresponds with God's will can enter in—v. 21; 12:50.

3. First, we need to enter in through the narrow gate and then walk on the constricted way, a way that is **lifelong and leads to life**—7:14.
 4. The word life in Matthew 7:14 refers to the ever-blessed condition of the kingdom, which is filled with the eternal life of God; this life is in the reality of the kingdom today and will be in the manifestation of the kingdom in the coming age—19:29; Luke 18:30.
- B. The **broad way** is according to the **worldly systems, satisfying the natural tastes**, to **get the crowd**, to **maintain a career of man**, and to **achieve man's enterprise**; the destruction to which the broad way leads refers not to the perishing of a person but to the **destruction** of a person's deeds and works—1 Cor. 3:15; Matt. 13:31-33; Rev. 2:13, 20; 17:4-5.
- C. The way of the **Lord's recovery** is the **way of life** that leads to a **living reward in life** in the manifestation of the kingdom of the heavens in the coming age—Psa. 16:11; Jer. 21:8; Matt. 19:29; Luke 18:30; 1 Cor. 3:13-15; 15:58.

First, we need to enter in through the narrow gate and then walk on the constricted way, **a way that is lifelong and leads to life**. This is a lifelong way; there are no retirements, vacations, or reprieves from taking this way. **The way of life needs to be taken twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week**. This is a lifelong constriction, but **it leads to life**, the **kingdom**, the **wedding feast**, becoming a part of the bride, and being a co-king with Christ for a thousand years. Entering into the Lord's recovery was a wonderful choice. It was in the same principle as Moses taking the stand of being a Hebrew and not an Egyptian. He was willing to give up everything in the world to stand with God's suffering people. After his eightieth term of full-time training in the wilderness, his function for God became manifested starting at the age of eighty. Therefore, do not fear turning eighty; at eighty you may be entering into the best stage of your life. It is the narrowest but still the best.

The **broad way** is according to the **worldly systems, satisfying the natural tastes**, to **get the crowd**, to **maintain a career of man**, and to **achieve man's enterprise**; the destruction to which the broad way leads refers not to the **perishing** of a person but to the **destruction** of a person's deeds and works. I remember a dear saint who made a decision to pursue his career. Only the Lord will determine the outcome of that decision. Only the Lord is the Judge; we are not. In my mentality there is no concept of having a career. To have a career means that we want to achieve something in the world—to be great, rich, and prominent. Having a career is distinct from advancing in one's profession or trade like Daniel did as a government employee at a high level. Daniel lived for God and took the constricted way even to the extent of being willing to sacrifice his life if necessary. (*The Ministry of the Word, Vol. 25, No. 04: Crystallization-study of Joshua, Judges, Ruth*)

Day 5

Matthew 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;

VI. We need to live by the **sense of life**—the **feeling**, the **consciousness**, of the **divine life within us**—Rom. 8:6; Eph. 4:18-19:

- A. The source of the **sense of life** is the **divine life**, the **law of life**, the **Holy Spirit**, **Christ abiding in us**, and **God operating in us**—Rom. 8:2, 10-11; Phil. 2:13.
- B. The divine life is the **highest life**, with the **richest**, **strongest**, and **keenest feeling**; this feeling is the sense of life—Eph. 4:18.
- C. The sense of life **guides** us, **governs** us, **controls** us, and **directs** us, causing us to know whether we are living in the divine life or in the natural life and whether we are living in the flesh or in the spirit—Rom. 8:6.

VII. We need to be **victorious over the attack of death upon the church** and **build up the Body of Christ in the resurrection life of Christ**—Matt. 16:18; John 11:25; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:16:

- A. By the **resurrection life** of Christ in our spirit, we can be victorious over the attack of death upon the church—Matt. 16:18; Acts 2:24; 2 Tim. 1:10:
 1. From Eden onward, God's controversy with Satan has been on the issue of death and life—Rom. 8:6, 10-11; Heb. 2:15.
 2. Matthew 16:18 shows us from what source the attack upon the church will come—"the gates of Hades," that is, death; **Satan's special object is to spread death within the church**, and his greatest fear with regard to the church is her **resistance to his power of death**—Rev. 2:8, 10-11.

We need to live by the **sense of life**—the **feeling**, the **consciousness, of the divine life within us**. The sense of life is a basic truth concerning the experience and knowledge of life. We all need to examine ourselves before the Lord and ask, “In my daily living, am I inwardly clear concerning the difference between the sense of life in my spirit and the feelings in my emotion?” It may be easier to determine whether our mind is set on the spirit or on the flesh. Discerning between our feelings in our emotions and the sense of life is much more difficult. Some are misled to think that whatever feeling they have must be from the Lord. That feeling may or may not be from the Lord. What gives us confidence that an inward feeling we have is from the Lord? **The Body will have a sense of whether a feeling is the sense of life or one’s own emotions**. A brother or sister may share their feeling in a fellowship. If what they share is simply their emotion, the Body will have a conflicting sense. However, if such a one decides that they must follow their feeling, then the Body may remain silent. The Body can discern whether it is your natural life or the sense of life. However, the Body’s portion is not to judge; only the Head can judge. Therefore, **we need to be cautious when we feel confident about our feelings**. We should carefully study this matter in the book *The Knowledge of Life*, and we need to learn how to fellowship in the Body to be clear whether we are following the sense of life or merely following our emotions. The teaching concerning the sense of life is elementary; however, being clear concerning the experience of it is very advanced. (*The Ministry of the Word, Vol. 25, No. 04: Crystallization-study of Joshua, Judges, Ruth*)

- B. We should be **exercised in spirit** to build up the Body of Christ in the resurrection life of Christ—Eph. 2:6, 21-22; 4:16; Rev. 1:18; 2:8; Phil. 3:10:
1. The nature of the church as the Body of Christ is **resurrection**, and the reality of resurrection is **Christ as the life-giving Spirit**—John 11:25; Acts 2:24; Eph. 1:19-23; 1 Cor. 15:45b.\
 2. When we **live by the divine life within us**, we are **living a life in resurrection** for the building up of the Body of Christ—Phil. 3:10-11; Eph. 4:15-16; Col. 2:19; 3:15.

Day 6

- 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.
- John 5:24** Truly, truly, I say to you, He who hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life, and does not come into judgment but has passed out of death into life.

VIII. “We know that we have passed out of death into life because **we love the brothers**”—1 John 3:14a:

- A. **Death** is of the devil, God’s enemy, Satan, signified by the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which **brings death**—Gen. 2:9, 17.
- B. **Life** is of God, the source of life, signified by the tree of life, which **issues in life**—vv. 9, 16-17.
- C. Death and life are not only of two sources, Satan and God; they are also two essences, two elements, and two spheres—John 5:24.
- D. To **pass out of death into life** is to pass out of the source, the essence, the element, and the sphere of death **into the source, the essence, the element, and the sphere of life**; this took place at the time of our regeneration—1 John 3:14a; John 3:3, 5, 15.
- E. We know—have the inner consciousness—that we have passed out of death into life because **we love the brothers**; love (**the love of God**) toward the brothers is strong evidence of this—1 John 3:14a:
 1. **Faith** in the Lord is the **way for us to pass out of death into life**; **love toward the brothers** is the **evidence that we have passed out of death into life**—John 5:24; 1 John 3:14a.
 2. To have **faith** is to **receive the eternal life**; to **love** is to **live by the eternal life and express it**—John 3:15, 36; 1 John 3:11, 14-18; 4:7-12, 16, 19-21.

To pass out of death into life is to **pass out** of the source, the essence, the element, and the sphere of death **into the source, the essence, the element, and the sphere of life**; this took place at the time of our regeneration. When we were regenerated, we were transferred out of the realm of death and into the realm of life. However, John’s emphasis in this portion is not on our past but on our actual, present situation in relation to all the brothers and sisters. **We need to have the assurance that we have passed out of death into life by having the present and actual condition of loving the other brothers and sisters**. As we are about to partake of the Lord’s table, we should have within us the reality of Christ as our peace offering. There should be the inward witnessing in our conscience that we are at peace with every saint in the Lord’s recovery. **Because we love all the brothers and sisters with an equal love, we can now partake of the bread and the cup**. Our partaking of the Lord’s table also testifies of our passing out of death and into life by being at peace and loving all the brothers and sisters. (*The Ministry of the Word, Vol. 25, No. 04: Crystallization-study of Joshua, Judges, Ruth*)