

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES FIRST AND SECOND SAMUEL, Week 9

**The Organic Building Up of the Church as the Body of Christ
through the Process of Spiritual Metabolism
according to the Believers' Inner Experience of the Indwelling Christ**

Scripture Reading: 2 Sam. 7:12-14a; Eph. 3:16-21

- 2 Samuel 7:12 When your days are fulfilled and you sleep with your fathers, I will raise up your seed after you, which will come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.
- 2 Samuel 7:13 It is he who will build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.
- 2 Samuel 7:14 I will be his Father, and he will be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the stripes of the sons of men;
- Ephesians 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
- Ephesians 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
- Ephesians 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are
- Ephesians 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.
- Ephesians 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,
- Ephesians 3:21 To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

Day 1

- 2 Samuel 7:12-14** When your days are fulfilled and you sleep with your fathers, I will raise up your seed after you, which will come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. It is he who will build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he will be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the stripes of the sons of men;
- 1 John 4:13** In this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, that He has given to us of His Spirit.

I. Second Samuel 7:12-14a is the unveiling of a prophecy through typology showing us that **we need God to build Christ into our intrinsic constitution so that our entire being will be reconstituted with Christ—Matt. 16:18:**

- A. God's eternal economy according to His heart's desire is to **build Himself into man and to build man into Him** (Eph. 3:16-17a); this mutual abode is the reality of the Body of Christ consummating in the New Jerusalem (John 15:4-5a; 1 John 2:27-28; 3:24; 4:13, 15-16; Rev. 21:3, 22).
- B. God's intention in His economy is to **build Himself in Christ into our being**—2 Sam. 7:12-14a; Eph. 3:17a; John 14:20; Gal. 4:19:
1. **God desires to work Himself in Christ into us**; everything that Christ is and everything that Christ has accomplished are for this one thing—Phil. 2:13; Eph. 3:17a; Col. 3:10-11.
 2. We need God to **build Himself in Christ into our humanity**, working Himself in Christ into us as our **life**, our **nature**, and our **person**—Eph. 3:17a.

Day 2

- John 14:23** Jesus answered and said to him, If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make an abode with him.
- Matthew 13:3** And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, Behold, the sower went out to sow.
- Matthew 13:23** But the one sown on the good earth, this is he who hears the word and understands, who by all means bears fruit and produces, one a hundredfold, and one sixtyfold, and one thirtyfold.

II. Ephesians 3:16-21 reveals that the Triune God has come into us to do a **building work with Himself as the element and also with something from us as the material; this is illustrated by the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:**

- A. The Lord **sows Himself as the seed of life** into men's hearts, the soil, so that He might **grow and live in them and be expressed from within them**—v. 3.
- B. The seed is sown into the soil to grow with the nutrients of the soil; as a result, the **produce is a composition of elements from both the seed and the soil**—v. 23.
- C. We have within us **certain nutrients created by God as a preparation for His coming into us to grow in us**; God has created the human spirit with the human nutrients along with the human heart as the soil for the growth of the divine seed within us— 1 John 3:9; 1 Pet. 1:23; Col. 2:19:
 - 1. The rate at which we grow in life depends not on the divine seed but on **how many nutrients we afford this seed**; the **more nutrients we supply, the faster the seed will grow and the more it will flourish**—Psa. 78:8; Matt. 5:3, 8:
 - a. If we remain in our soul, in our **natural man**, **there will not be any nutrients** for the growth of the divine seed; but if we are strengthened into our **inner man** and if we pay attention to our spirit and exercise our spirit, the **nutrients will be supplied and Christ will make His home in our heart**—Eph. 3:16-17; Rom. 8:6; 1 Tim. 4:7.
 - b. If we are going to have the Lord as the seed of life grow within us to be our full enjoyment, we have to **open to the Lord absolutely** and **cooperate with Him** to deal thoroughly with our heart—Matt. 13:3-9, 19-23.
 - 2. On the one hand, **God strengthens us with Himself as the element**, and on the other hand, **we afford the nutrients**; through these two God in Christ carries out His intrinsic building— the building of His home—in our entire being.
- D. According to the Bible, **growth equals building**; the Lord Jesus declared, “I will build My church” (Matt. 16:18); this building takes place by the growth of the divine seed within us (1 John 3:9; Eph. 4:15-16; Col. 2:19; Eph. 2:21-22; 1 Cor. 3:1, 6-9, 12; 16:13).

Day 3

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.

2 Corinthians 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

- E. God's economy is to work Himself into us so that we may experience a metabolic process of **spiritual digestion and assimilation that produces transformation** as a gradual and intrinsic metabolic change in our natural life; this is for the building up of the Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem—2 Cor. 3:18:
 - 1. In order for God's building to take place, we need to **receive, digest, and assimilate the organic, pneumatic Christ**, who is the life-giving Spirit, as our spiritual food, drink, and breath— John 6:51, 57; 7:37-39; 20:22.
 - 2. When we enjoy Christ by eating, drinking, and breathing Him, a metabolic process, a spiritual digestion and metabolism, takes place within us, and Christ is constituted into our being; this **inner metabolism is transformation**, and **transformation is the building**—Rom. 12:2; Phil. 1:20-21; cf. Rev. 21:18; 4:3.
- F. The organic building up of the church as the Body of Christ through the process of spiritual metabolism is actually what Jehovah prophesied to David in the way of typology in 2 Samuel 7:12-14a.

We have seen that the Lord's intention is to **sow Himself as the seed of life into us**. We are the living earth, the living soil, the living ground. The spirit is enclosed by the heart, so if the Lord is going to come into us, our heart has to be opened. We can open our heart to the Lord by **repenting and confessing**. The word repent in the Greek language means to have a change of mind or a turn of mind. Our mind was originally not toward the Lord but toward something else, and our mind was fixed. Now we have to repent, which means that we have to have a change of mind, and we have to turn our mind. This means that the **mind is open to the Lord**. Following our repentance, we will always confess. We need to **confess all our failures, sins, and shortcomings to the Lord**. Confession is the exercise of the conscience. When we repent by turning our mind, we will immediately confess by exercising our conscience. Then there is an opening of the heart. When we mean business to repent to the Lord and confess all our failures before God, our **emotion will immediately be moved and touched**. We will tell the Lord, “Lord Jesus, I love You.” When our emotion is moved, our will makes a decision for the Lord. We will say, “Lord, from today I want nothing besides You. I want You to be my aim, my goal, and my one desire. I only want to seek after You.” The mind of the heart turns, the conscience of the heart is opened, and the emotion and will of the heart follow. Thus, the whole heart is open to the Lord, and the Lord has a way to come into our heart. **It is by repenting and confessing that we open our heart to the Lord**. This is revealed in the Scriptures and proven by our experience. (*The Tree of Life, chapter 13*)

If we deal with the Lord in this way, **all our preoccupations will be rid from our being**. The rocks and the thorns in our heart will be **dealt with**. Then our heart will be **good and pure**. The enemy is always looking for opportunities to make our heart the wayside. Many times we allow things to tread on the soil of our heart which make our heart **hardened**. We may be preoccupied by our wife, our children, or our parents. Sometimes we may be in a meeting listening to the word of God, but God's word cannot penetrate us. This is because our heart is **preoccupied**. Our heart can be preoccupied with earthly things, with things other than Christ Himself. We may feel that a brother or sister is really for the Lord, but we may not realize that their heart contains some hidden rocks, thus making it impossible for the seed of life to take root within them. Also, the thorns, which are the **anxieties of the age**, the **deceitfulness of riches**, and the **lusts for other things**, can grow together with the seed and choke the growth. The Lord is **ready and available**, but our heart is not so available. Our heart is not pure. This is why we have to deal with our heart. The heart has to be purified. (*The Tree of Life, chapter 13*)

Day 4

Ephesians 3:16-17 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

III. In Ephesians 3:16-21 Paul prayed concerning the believers' **inner experience of the indwelling Christ** for the organic building up of the church as the Body of Christ— 4:12, 16; 2:21-22:

- A. Paul prayed to the Father that we would be strengthened through His Spirit into the inner man with the result that Christ could **make His home in our heart and thereby occupy, possess, permeate, and saturate our whole inner being with Himself**—3:16-17a.
- B. The Triune God may be likened to a big machine, of which Paul was the operator; we have to learn one lesson, that is, that there is a high principle in the entire universe; this principle is that God wants to do something, but He will only be the "machine," and **He needs someone to be the operator**:
 1. When Paul prayed the prayer in Ephesians 3:16-21, he was a representative of the entire Body of Christ.
 2. The Father, the Son, and the Spirit are the three "parts" of this universal "machine," and the **Body is the operator**; when we pray this prayer as the operator, the Father works through His Spirit as a channel to strengthen every part of our inner being into the inner man so that the goal, the aim, the Son, might make His home within all the parts of our heart.
- C. To say that we need to be strengthened with power into the inner man indicates that we are not in the inner man, that **we live mostly in the outer man**—v. 16; 1:19-22; 3:20.

Day 5

Ephesians 3:17-18 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are.

- D. Christ has the desire to **occupy every room of our heart**:
 1. The phrase make His home is only one word in the Greek, katoikeo, which basically means **to settle down in a dwelling**, to make a **dwelling place**, and the prefix of this word, kata, means "down"—v. 17a.
 2. As Christ makes His home deep down in our hearts, we are being **rooted in love for God's farm and grounded in love for God's building**—v. 17.
 3. As He makes His home in our hearts, we will be **full of strength to apprehend** with all the saints the immeasurable Christ, whose dimensions are the dimensions of the universe—v. 18:
 - a. **Our experience of Christ in the church must be three-dimensional**, like a cube (the breadth, length, height, and depth), and must not be one-dimensional, like a line.
 - b. Both in the tabernacle and the temple, the Holy of Holies was a cube—Exo. 26:2-8; 1 Kings 6:20.
 - c. Eventually, the New Jerusalem, God's building, will be an **eternal cube**, the Holy of Holies, twelve thousand stadia in three dimensions—Rev. 21:16.
 4. Christ's making His home in our hearts causes us to know the **knowledge-surpassing love of Christ** that we may be filled unto all the fullness of the Triune God for His corporate expression, His glorification—Eph. 3:19-21; cf. Gen. 24:47, 53, 61-67.

Day 6

Ephesians 3:19-21

And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God. But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

- E. Christ builds the church by building Himself into us, that is, by **entering into our spirit and spreading Himself from our spirit into our mind, emotion, and will to occupy our entire being**—2 Tim. 4:22; 1 Cor. 6:17; Eph. 3:17a:
1. Since our heart is the totality of our inward parts, the center of our inward being, and our representative with regard to our inclination, affection, delight, and desire, when Christ makes His home in our heart, **He controls our entire inward being and supplies and strengthens every inward part with Himself.**
 2. The more Christ spreads within us, **the more He settles down in us and makes His home in us**, occupying every part of our inner being, possessing all these parts, and saturating them with Himself.
 3. In order for Christ's word in Matthew 16:18 concerning the building up of the church to be fulfilled, the church must enter into a state where many saints will **allow Christ to make His home deep in their heart, possessing, occupying, and saturating their entire inner being.**
 4. The more Christ occupies our inner being, the **more we will be able to be built up with others in the Body**—Eph. 2:21-22; 4:12, 16.
 5. Ephesians 3:17 speaks of being rooted and grounded in love; our being **rooted indicates that we are plants that need to grow, and our being grounded means that we need to be built up.**
 6. According to verse 18, we are eventually full of strength to apprehend the universal dimensions of Christ—the breadth, the length, the height, and the depth—not by ourselves individually but **“with all the saints,”** that is, **corporately and jointly; this reveals that we need to be built together.**
 7. When Christ makes His home in our hearts, **we will be filled unto all the fullness of God**; this fullness is the church, the Body of Christ, as the **corporate expression of the Triune God**—v. 19.
 8. God's glory is wrought into the church, and He is **expressed through the church above all that we ask or think**; hence, God is glorified in the church—vv. 20-21.
- F. Ephesians 3:16-21 shows Paul's **spirit, attitude, prayer, and faith**:
1. By revelation the mystery of Christ was made known to Paul (vv. 3-6); thus, his spirit and attitude—what he saw, what he said, and what he cared about in his heart—**were related to the vision of the building up of the church as the Body of Christ through the inner experience of the indwelling Christ.**
 2. Paul was obsessed with this vision, and it became his spirit and attitude; therefore, he had such a prayer (in the sphere and element of faith) recorded in Ephesians 3:16-21; if we have seen the vision of how Christ builds up the church as the Body of Christ through the inner experience of the indwelling Christ, we will have Paul's spirit, attitude, prayer, and faith when we serve God in the church.

We are the containers made by God; therefore, He **purposely created a spirit within us in order to receive Him, to keep Him, and to express Him.** God in Christ as the Holy Spirit **spreads Himself outward from our spirit to all the parts of our being.** God does not work from the outside, in an inward direction into man, but from man's spirit He spreads Himself outward in order to permeate and saturate all of man's inward parts. He will saturate the conscience, the mind, the emotion, the will, and eventually our whole being. When God came into our spirit, we received the birth of life; and by His spreading from our spirit through our whole being, we will obtain the growth of life to full maturity. Even the body will be transfigured at the time of the full sonship. It is through this that we all will be brought into order as a corporate man under the headship of Christ. Within this corporate man, God in Christ is the Head and, as sons, we are the Body brought into order under His headship. Then, through this Body, Christ as the Head will head up all things.

However, we must see the **subtlety of the enemy** in distracting man away from God's eternal purpose. Upon the earth today there are three classes of people—the Gentiles, who are the unbelievers; God's chosen people, the Jews; and the Christians, the members of the church. All three classes have been distracted from God's economy by the enemy, Satan.

In order for man to exist, God prepared many material things, including food, water, clothing, housing, and many other things. But today, all the unbelievers have been **distracted** by these material things. They pay their full attention to food, shelter, and clothing, along with their material way of life. All the Gentiles are distracted from God's central mark by the material things; they are fully drawn to the material things. Whether they are poor or rich, high or low, all of them have been distracted to material things which God prepared for their existence only that they might fulfill His purpose. All of these material things should be simply a means for man to fulfill God's purpose, but Satan has utilized them to distract the unbelievers from God's purpose. (*The Way to Build Up the Church, chapter 1*)