

The Holy Word for Morning Revival

2013 Winter Training

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OF GENESIS 2

Index

- [Message 1](#)-Knowing and Experiencing the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob to Become the Israel of God
- [Message 2](#)-Living by Faith—Being Today's River Crossers to Live the Life of the Altar and the Tent
- [Message 3](#)-The Seed for the Fulfillment of God's Purpose
- [Message 4](#)-The Land for the Fulfillment of God's Purpose
- [Message 5](#)-Enjoying Christ in His Heavenly Ministry by Fighting for the Brother
- [Message 6](#)-The Allegory of the Two Women
- [Message 7](#)-Living in Fellowship with God
- [Message 8](#)-The God of Abraham Seen in His Dealings with Abraham
- [Message 9](#)-Living a Grace-enjoying Life for God's Good Pleasure
- [Message 10](#)-Two Wells—Two Sources of Living
- [Message 11](#)-The Offering of Isaac and Experiencing God as the One Who Gives Life to the Dead
- [Message 12](#)-A Practical Living in Oneness with the Lord and a Type of Christ Marrying the Church

PREFACE

1. This book is intended as an aid to believers in developing a daily time of morning revival with the Lord in His word. At the same time, it provides a limited review of the winter training held December 23-28, 2013, in Anaheim, California, on the continuation of the “Crystallization-study of Genesis.” Through intimate contact with the Lord in His word, the believers can be constituted with life and truth and thereby equipped to prophesy in the meetings of the church unto the building up of the Body of Christ.

2. The book is divided into weeks. One training message is covered per week. Each week presents first the message outline, followed by six daily portions, a hymn, and then some space for writing. The training outline has been divided into days, corresponding to the six daily portions. Each daily portion covers certain points and begins with a section entitled “Morning Nourishment.” This section contains selected verses and a short reading that can provide rich spiritual nourishment through intimate fellowship with the Lord. The “Morning Nourishment” is followed by a section entitled “Today's Reading,” a longer portion of ministry related to the day's main points. Each day's portion concludes with a short list of references for further reading and some space for the saints to make notes concerning their spiritual inspiration, enlightenment, and enjoyment to serve as a reminder of what they have received of the Lord that day.

3. We recommend the use of the reader annotation function (on devices where it is supported) for composing a short prophesy. This prophecy can be composed by considering all of our daily notes, the “harvest” of our inspirations during the week, and preparing a main point with some sub-points to be spoken in the church meetings for the organic building up of the Body of Christ.

4. The content of this book is taken primarily from Crystallization-study Outlines: Genesis (2), the text and footnotes of the Recovery Version of the Bible, selections from the writings of Witness Lee and Watchman Nee, and Hymns, all of which are published by Living Stream Ministry.

5. Crystallization-study Outlines: Genesis (2) was compiled by Living Stream Ministry from the writings of Witness Lee and Watchman Nee. The outlines, footnotes, and cross-references in the Recovery Version of the Bible are by Witness Lee. Unless otherwise noted, the references cited in this publication are by Witness Lee.

6. For the sake of space, references to The Collected Works of Watchman Nee and The Collected Works of Witness Lee are abbreviated to CWWN and CWWL, respectively.

Winter Training

(December 23-28, 2013)

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OF GENESIS 2

Banners:

**We need to know and experience
the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob
to become the Israel of God, the church in the Triune God.**

**If we would walk in the steps of Abraham's faith,
we must be those who live the life of the altar and the tent,
taking Christ as our life and the church as our living
to live a life of being transfused by God,
consecrating our all to God,
and taking His presence as our road map.**

**The God of Abraham is the God of speaking
in His appearing, with calling, in a vision, and in the human friendship,
to unveil to His intimate friend on the earth what He aspired for him to be and
what He wanted him to do according to His heart's desire
for the accomplishment of the eternal economy for the Divine Trinity.**

**After we offer to God
what we have received of Him and what He has wrought into us,
He will return it to us in resurrection,
and we will believe in and experience God as the God of resurrection
for the fulfillment of His purpose.**

WEEK 1 — OUTLINE

Knowing and Experiencing the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob to Become the Israel of God

Scripture Reading: Gen. 28:13; 33:20; Exo. 3:6, 14-15; Acts 3:13; Gal. 6:16; 1 Thes. 1:1

DAY 1

I. Our God is the God of three particular persons—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; this implies that He is the Triune God (Exo. 3:15; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14):

- A. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are the foundations of the nation of Israel; without them there would not be the nation of Israel (Exo. 3:15-16):
 - 1. God's people became His people through the experiences of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; their experiences culminated in Israel, the people of God.
 - 2. We all need to have the elements of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; without these elements we cannot be the people of God, the Israel of God.
- B. In the book of Genesis the records of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob overlap; Genesis does not portray them as three separate individuals but as constituents of one corporate person:
 - 1. The experience of Abraham signifies the experience of God the Father, the unique source, in His calling man, justifying man, and equipping man to live by faith and to live in fellowship with Him (12:1; 15:6; chs. 17—18; 19:29; 21:1-13; 22:1-18).
 - 2. The experience of Isaac signifies the experience of God the Son in His redeeming man and His blessing man with the inheritance of all His riches, with a life of the enjoyment of His abundance, and with a life in peace (vv. 1-14; 25:5; 26:3-4, 12-33).
 - 3. The experience of Jacob (with Joseph) signifies the experience of God the Father in His loving man and choosing man (Mal. 1:2; Rom. 9:10-13) and of God the Spirit in His causing all things to work together for the good of those who love Him, in His transforming man, and in His making man mature in the divine life so that man may be able to bless all the people, rule over all the earth, and satisfy all the people with God the Son as the life supply (Gen. 27:41; 28:1—35:12; chs. 37; 39—49; Rom. 8:28-29).

DAY 2

II. We need to know and experience the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob:

- A. Abraham believed in God as the unique source, as the One who “calls the

things not being as being” (4:17):

1. God's goal must be achieved according to God's time and through God's power (Gen. 17:17, 19, 21).
 2. God did a special work on Abraham in order to show him what it means for God to be the Father (Eph. 4:6):
 - a. To know God as the Father is to know that He is the source, the unique Initiator, and that everything originates from Him (Matt. 15:13).
 - b. We all need to know that God is the Father and that everything proceeds from Him (Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 3:14-16).
- B. In Isaac, the best figure of the Son, we see that everything comes from the Father (Gen. 24:36; 25:5):
1. According to the picture in Genesis 22, Isaac typifies Christ in a detailed way.

DAY 3

2. The principle of Isaac is the principle of receiving (25:5; 1 Cor. 4:7):
 - a. The significance of God the Son is that everything is received and that nothing is initiated by Him (John 16:15; 17:10; 5:19, 30).
 - b. In Isaac we see that everything comes from the Father and that our place is to receive (Gen. 26:12-13; Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 4:7):
 - (1) Isaac's relationship with Abraham was one of receiving; to know the God of Isaac is to know God as the Supplier (Gen. 24:36).
 - (2) God is the Father, and everything proceeds from Him; we are sons, and everything we have is from Him (1 Cor. 8:6; 11:12b).
- C. Jacob speaks to us of the Holy Spirit; his experiences represent the work of the Holy Spirit, and his history is a type of the discipline of the Holy Spirit:
1. Jacob's life is a life that represents God's dealings, and the God of Jacob is the God of dealings (Gen. 31:38-41):
 - a. The title the God of Jacob implies how the Holy Spirit disciplined Jacob, dealt with his natural life, constituted Christ into him, and bore the fruit of the Spirit in him (Gal. 5:22-23; Heb. 12:11).
 - b. If we would know the God of Jacob, we need to allow the Spirit to perform His work in us, dealing with our natural life and constituting Christ into us.

DAY 4

2. Jacob's history is a picture of the discipline of the Holy Spirit (Gen. 47:9; 48:15-16a; Heb. 12:9-11):
 - a. The discipline of the Holy Spirit refers to what the Holy Spirit is doing in our outward environment—to His arranging of all people, things, and happenings—

through which we are being disciplined (Rom. 8:28).

- b. Through the discipline of the Holy Spirit, God completely tears down the element of the old creation in us so that the element of the new creation may be built up in us.
 3. God deals with our natural life through the discipline of the Holy Spirit so that Christ may be wrought into us, constituted into us, and formed in us for the corporate expression of the Triune God (Gal. 4:19; Eph. 3:16-21).
- D. The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob is Jehovah, Elohim—the self-existing and ever-existing Triune God, the eternal great I Am (Exo. 3:6, 14; Rev. 1:4).
- E. The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob is the God of resurrection (Exo. 3:6, 15; Matt. 22:23-33; Acts 3:13).
- F. The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob is the God of the tabernacle; Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob each lived in a tent; while they were living in tents, they were eagerly waiting for the eternal tabernacle of God, the city of New Jerusalem (Exo. 40:34-35; Gen. 12:8; 13:18; 26:17, 25; 33:18; 35:21; Heb. 11:9-10; Rev. 21:2-3).
- G. The God of Abraham is the God of justification (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:2-3), the God of Isaac is the God of grace (2 Cor. 13:14), and the God of Jacob is the God of transformation through divine discipline (3:18; Heb. 12:5-11); eventually, the God of Jacob became the God of Israel (Gen. 33:20; Exo. 5:1), the God of the transformed Jacob.

DAY 5

III. The issue of experiencing the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob is the Israel of God, the church in the Triune God (Gen. 35:10; 33:20; Gal. 6:16; 1 Thes. 1:1; Matt. 28:19):

- A. The Israel of God is the real Israel (Rom. 9:6b; 2:28-29; Phil. 3:3), including all the Gentile and Jewish believers in Christ, who are the true sons of Abraham, who are the household of the faith, and who are those in the new creation (Gal. 3:7, 29; 6:10, 15-16):
1. The real Israel, the spiritual Israel, is the church (v. 16; Matt. 16:18).
 2. In God's New Testament economy we have been made both the sons of God and the Israel of God; our destiny is to be sons of God expressing God and also kings reigning in the kingdom of God (Gal. 3:26; 6:10, 16; Rev. 5:10; 21:7; 22:5b; 12:5a).
 3. As the Israel of God, we represent God, exercise His authority, and carry out His administration on earth for the fulfillment of His purpose (Gen. 1:26, 28; Luke 10:19; Rev. 12:5, 7-11).

DAY 6

B. The Israel of God is the church in the Triune God (1 Thes. 1:1; Matt. 28:19):

1. When Paul speaks of the church in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, he actually means that the church is in the Triune God (1 Thes. 1:1; 1 Cor. 1:2; 12:4-6):
 - a. The expressions God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ both imply the Spirit; therefore, in 1 Thessalonians 1:1 the Spirit is implied and understood, and we may speak of the church being in the Triune God.
 - b. According to the Bible, there is no such thing as the church being merely in God; rather, the church is in the processed Triune God (Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14).
 - c. For the church to be in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ means that the church is in the processed Triune God—the One who has become the life-giving Spirit with the Father and the Son (Matt. 28:19; Eph. 4:4-6; John 14:20).
2. If we see the vision of the church in the Triune God, this vision will control our thinking, our activities, and our entire life (Prov. 29:18a; Acts 26:19).

Morning Nourishment

Exo. 3:15-16 "...Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial from generation to generation. Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me..."

The book of Genesis reveals the complete Triune God of the three sections of the life of a corporate person. Genesis does not consider Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as three separate persons but as one complete corporate person with three sections.

Our God is the God of three particular persons—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. (The History of God in His Union with Man, p. 133)

Today's Reading

The first beginning [that God's people had] was with Abraham because God's selection and calling began with Abraham. The other beginning was with the nation of Israel....In between these two beginnings, God gained three persons, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob....From that point on, the nation of Israel became the people of God, and God had a people of His own....Without Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, there would not be the nation of Israel, and without Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, there would not be a people of God.

The dealings which these three received before God and the experiences they went through culminated in a people of God. Hence, the total experiences of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are the experiences that all of God's people should have. The attainments of these three should be the attainments of all the people of God....All the people of God should have the element of Abraham, the element of Isaac, and the element of Jacob in them. Without these elements, we cannot become God's people. (CWWN, vol. 35, pp. 5-7)

As you read the book of Genesis, you will notice that the records of Adam, Abel, Enoch, and Noah are quite distinct one from another. The records of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, however, overlap. Genesis, speaking of them, considers them as one corporate man....The significance of this overlapping is that, according to the experience of life, these three persons are one man, a corporate man. (Life-study of Genesis, p. 516)

In the section of Abraham, we see God the Father who calls man, justifies man, and equips man to live by faith and live in fellowship with Him (Gen. 12:1; 15:6; ch. 17; ch. 18; 19:29; 21:1-13; 22:1-18). Genesis 12:1 shows us the Father's calling and 15:6 reveals His justification. Chapter 17 shows us how God equipped Abraham to live a life by faith. Then chapter 18 reveals how God made Abraham to live a life in fellowship with Him. It is a chapter of fellowship between God and His human friend, Abraham.

The section of Isaac represents God the Son, the second of the Triune God, who blesses man with the inheritance of all His riches, with a life of the enjoyment of His abundance, and with a life in peace (Gen. 25:5; 26:3-4, 12-33).

We see God the Father loving man and choosing man in the section of Jacob....Jacob is the last of the three, yet he is used by God to signify the Father in His loving and choosing man. Malachi 1:2 says that God loved Jacob, and Romans 9:10-13 says that God selected Jacob, choosing him even before he was born.

In the section of the life of Jacob with Joseph, we see God the Spirit who works in all things for the good of His lovers [cf. Rom. 8:28]....In the life of Jacob with Joseph, we see that the Spirit transforms man and makes man mature in the divine life that man may be able to bless all the people, to rule over all the earth, and to satisfy all the people with God the Son as the life supply (Gen. 27:41; 28:1—35:10; chs. 37; 39—49; Rom. 8:28-29). (The History of God in His Union with Man, pp. 134, 133, 134-135)

Further Reading: The History of God in His Union with Man, ch. 10; CWWN, vol. 35, "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," ch. 1

Morning Nourishment

Rom. 4:17 "(As it is written, "I have appointed you a father of many nations") in the sight of God whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls the things not being as being."

11:36 "Because out from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen."

In order to bring a group of people to come under His name, and in order to make them His people, God did a special work in three persons, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, respectively, and gave each one of them particular experiences. God gave Abraham the experience of knowing God as the Father, showing that everything comes from God. He gave Isaac the experience of knowing the enjoyment of the Son, showing that everything the Son has is from the Father. He gave Jacob the experience of the discipline of the Holy Spirit to deal with his natural life and constitute Christ into him. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are the beginning of the history of God's people. As such, their total experience should be the experience of all of God's people. (CWWN, vol. 35, "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," p. 3)

Today's Reading

Abraham believed God regarding two things: (1) the birth of Isaac, which is related to the God who "calls the things not being as being," and (2) the offering up and the gaining back of Isaac, which is related to the God who "gives life to the dead." Abraham believed such a God and applied Him to his situation. (Rom. 4:17, footnote 1)

The source of faith is God. He is the One who calls things not being as being and gives life to the dead (Rom. 4:17). (Crystallization-study of the Epistle to the Romans, p. 84)

God's goal must be achieved according to God's time and through God's power....God's emphasis is not on whether something has happened, but on what the source is. Often our attention is just on the correctness of the results and the forms. Whatever we think is correct is taken to be correct, and whatever we think is right is taken to be right. However, God is concerned with where something comes from and who is doing it.

God intended that Abraham be the father. Therefore, He did a special work on him in order to show him what it means for God to be the Father. For God to be the Father means that everything should issue from God. If Abraham did not see that everything issued from God and that He is the Father, he would not have been qualified to be the father of many nations. Yet the begetting of Ishmael issued from Abraham himself and was not from God.

God is the Father, and everything originates from Him. The day that God shows you that He is the Father will be a blessed day. On that day you will realize that you cannot do anything and that you are helpless. You will not have to try to hold yourself back from doing this thing or that thing. Instead you will ask, "Has God initiated this?" This is the experience of Abraham. His experience shows us that he had no thought of becoming God's people. Abraham did not initiate anything. It was God who initiated.

This was Abraham. God was the Initiator of everything for him; he had nothing to do with it. If you know that God is the Father, you will not be so confident and will not say that you can do whatever you want. You will only say, "If the Lord is willing, I will do this and that. Whatever the Lord says, I will do." This does not mean that you should be indecisive. It means that you truly do not know what to do and that you only know after the Father has revealed His will.

What is the lesson we learn from Isaac? Galatians 4 says that Isaac is the promised son (v. 23). In Isaac we see that everything comes from the Father. (CWWN, vol. 35, pp. 59, 54, 8-10)

Abraham's offering of his beloved and only son, Isaac, on the altar is a vivid picture of God the Father's offering of His beloved and only Son, Jesus Christ, on the cross. In this picture Isaac typifies Christ in a detailed way. (Gen. 22:2, footnote 1)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 35, "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," chs. 6-7; Life-study of Genesis, msg. 38

Morning Nourishment

Gen. 24:36 "And Sarah my master's wife bore a son to my master after she had become old. And he has given all that he has to him."

1 Cor. 4:7 "For who distinguishes you? And what do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though not having received it?"

Many people cannot be in the position of Abraham because they cannot be in the position of Isaac....It is impossible to have the experience of Abraham without the experience of Isaac. It is also impossible to have the experience of Isaac without the experience of Abraham. We have to see that God is the Father and that everything proceeds from Him. We also have to see that we are sons and that everything we have is from Him. The life of the Son which we inherit comes from Him. In the eyes of God we are only those who receive. Salvation is received, victory is received, justification is received, sanctification is received, forgiveness is received, and freedom is received. The principle of receiving is the principle of Isaac. We have to say, Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Everything we have is from God. (CWWN, vol. 35, p. 10)

Today's Reading

Not only do we have to know God as the Father, but we have to know Christ as the Son. What is the meaning of God as the Son? It means that everything is received and nothing is initiated by Him. In Abraham we see God's purpose. In Isaac we see God's power. In Abraham we see the standard which God requires of His people. In Isaac we see the life which enables God's people to reach that standard. Many Christians have one basic problem: They only see God's purpose but do not see God's provisions. They see God's standard but do not see God's life. They see God's demands, but do not see the power that meets these demands. This is why we have to consider Isaac as well as Abraham.

Abraham shows us that everything is of God; we cannot do anything by ourselves. Isaac shows us that everything comes from God, and our place is to receive.

We can see Isaac's characteristics. Throughout his entire life, everything he had was a matter of enjoyment and receiving....Knowing the God of Isaac means only one thing: knowing God as the Supplier and that everything comes from Him. If we want to know the Father, we have to know the Son. In order to know the God of Abraham, we have to know the God of Isaac. We are helpless if we only know the God of Abraham because He dwells in unapproachable light (1 Tim. 6:16). But thank the Lord that He is also the God of Isaac. This means that everything that Abraham had was Isaac's. It also means that everything comes by receiving.

What is the lesson we learn from Jacob? Abraham speaks to us of the Father, Isaac speaks to us of the Son, and Jacob speaks to us of the Holy Spirit. It does not mean that Jacob represents the Holy Spirit, but that his experiences represent the work of the Holy Spirit. Jacob's history is a type of the discipline of the Holy Spirit. (CWWN, vol. 35, pp. 91, 13, 93, 12)

Eventually, the Bible says that God is the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, and that this God is not the God of the dead but of the living (Matt. 22:32). My God is not only the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac; He is also the God of Jacob, the God of dealings who deals with me all day long. (Life-study of Genesis, pp. 896-897)

The title the God of Jacob implies how the Holy Spirit disciplined Jacob, how He dealt with Jacob's natural life, how He constituted Christ into Jacob, and how He bore the fruit of the Spirit in Jacob. If we want to know the God of Jacob, we have to know the constitution by the Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit. If we want to know the God of Jacob, we need to allow the Spirit to perform His work in us, to deal with our natural life, to constitute Christ into our inward being, and to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in us so that we can become the vessels of God's testimony. (CWWN, vol. 35, "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," p. 171)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 35, "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," chs. 4-5

Morning Nourishment

Heb. 12:11 "Now no discipline at the present time seems to be a matter of joy, but of grief; but afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been exercised by it."

Rom. 8:28 "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."

Some brothers and sisters are exceptionally clever, thoughtful, shrewd, calculating, and resourceful. But we must remember that we do not walk in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God (2 Cor. 1:12). Jacob experienced the continual discipline of the Holy Spirit. As a result, his cleverness was never able to have its way. (CWWN, vol. 35, "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," p. 12)

Today's Reading

The discipline of the Holy Spirit that we are now considering does not refer to the inward discipline of the Holy Spirit, for that is the function of the Holy Spirit within us as the anointing. The discipline of the Holy Spirit refers to what the Holy Spirit is doing in our outward environment; it refers to His arranging of all people, things, and happenings, through which we are being disciplined.

Normally, the more a person is disciplined by the Holy Spirit, the more he is terminated. The end result of the discipline of the Holy Spirit is always that we may be torn down, broken, and reduced to nothing. It is through the discipline of the Holy Spirit that God completely tears down our old creation so that the element of His new creation may be built up in us. (The Experience of Life, pp. 259, 266)

God has given Christ to the believers; this is the first step. But He wants to do a deeper work, which is to have Christ formed in us [Gal. 4:19]. God deals with our natural life so that Christ may be formed in us, that is, that Christ may be wrought into us and constituted in us. (CWWN, vol. 35, "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," pp. 173-174)

The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is Jehovah Elohim (Gen. 2:4-22; Exo. 3:15)....Elohim means "the faithful mighty One." God is faithful and mighty. Jehovah means "He who was, who is, and who is to be." Genesis 2:4-22 repeatedly mentions Jehovah Elohim, a divine title indicating God's relationship with His elect.

Jehovah as the great I Am is the self-existing and ever-existing Triune God (Exo. 3:13-14). He is self-existing, without beginning, and ever-existing, without ending. The beginning and ending in the whole universe is God [Rev. 22:13].

The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is the God of the tabernacle....Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob each lived in a tent (Gen. 12:8; 13:18; 18:1; 26:17, 25; 33:18; 35:21; Heb. 11:9). It is significant that the Bible does not say that Joseph lived in a tent. This shows that Joseph was a part of the life of Jacob. While Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were living in tents, they were eagerly waiting for the eternal tabernacle of God, the city of New Jerusalem (Heb. 11:10; Rev. 21:2-3). The tent in which they lived was a type of the New Jerusalem as the coming reality, the eternal tent. They were living in a type, eagerly waiting for the reality, the New Jerusalem. (The History of God in His Union with Man, pp. 132, 140)

When God first met Jacob, He said, "I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac" (Gen. 28:13). This implied that God was to be Jacob's God. We all have experienced the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac. Since the God of Abraham is the God of justification and the God of Isaac is the God of grace, this means that we have experienced the God of justification and the God of grace. Although we have experienced such a God, we also need to meet and experience the God of Jacob. This means that God will be to us the God of transformation, the God of dealings. (Life-study of Genesis, p. 896)

Further Reading: The History of God in His Union with Man, ch. 11; Life-study of Genesis, msg. 69; The Experience of Life, ch. 12

Morning Nourishment

Gal. 6:15-16 "For neither is circumcision anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creation is what matters. And as many as walk by this rule, peace be upon them and mercy, even upon the Israel of God."

The real Israel (Rom. 9:6b; 2:28-29; Phil. 3:3), [includes] all the Gentile and Jewish believers in Christ, who are the true sons of Abraham (Gal. 3:7, 29), who are the household of the faith (6:10), and who are those in the new creation. They walk by "this rule," express God's image, and execute God's authority, and are typified by Jacob, who was transformed into Israel, a prince of God and a victor (Gen. 32:27-28). (Gal. 6:16, footnote 4)

Today's Reading

Paul concludes Galatians 6:16 with the words even upon the Israel of God. The Greek word rendered "even" (kai) here is not connective but explicative, indicating that the apostle considers the many individual believers in Christ collectively the Israel of God.

As sons of God [3:26], we are His folks, members of His household. But God's New Testament economy is not only to make us His sons, but also to make us the Israel of God.

On the one hand we are sons of God, members of the divine family. On the other hand, we are kings-to-be, those destined to be kings. Kingship is related to the Israel of God....To be kings, the Israel of God, we need another kind of living, a particular walk by the Spirit. We need both the living of sons of God and that of the Israel of God.

We, the sons of God, are the true Israel, for we are God's household, His chosen people today. We may not be Israel outwardly, but we are Israel inwardly. This is why we say that we, the believers in Christ, are the true Israel. The outward nation of Israel has little concern for God. However, we have a genuine concern for God and speak of Him continually. We are indeed the Israel of God.

In a sense, the nation of Israel is the Israel of God and a testimony of God, even though many Israelites are rebellious and very sinful. However, the real Israel, the spiritual Israel, is the church. But because both the nation of Israel and the church are in a low condition, there is the need for the Lord to recover the real Israel of God. For such a recovery, we need two kinds of living, two kinds of walk. In the first walk we shall have such virtues as love, joy, peace, meekness, and longsuffering, all of which are the expression of the Christ who lives in us. We also need the second kind of walk so that we may be the Israel of God bearing God's kingship, representing Him with His authority, and executing His governmental administration.

These two kinds of walks are illustrated by our life as citizens of the United States. On the one hand, we are persons living in an ordinary way; on the other hand, we are citizens of this nation. As persons, we need to be loving, peaceful, joyful, faithful, and meek. However, in order for the United States to remain a strong nation, we also need to live as good citizens, fulfilling all the requirements of the government. As citizens, we need to pay taxes, serve in the army, and fulfill other obligations. Spiritually speaking, we are both the sons of God and the Israel of God. As sons of God, we need to be loving, joyful, peaceful, faithful, and meek. As the Israel of God, we must walk according to the elementary rules of God's New Testament economy.

Praise the Lord that we are now sons of God! As God's sons, we need a walk by the Spirit to express Christ in all His virtues. We also need another kind of walk by the Spirit, the walk according to certain rules or principles, leading toward the goal for the fulfillment of God's purpose. If we have the second kind of walk by the Spirit, we shall be not only sons of God, but also a new creation and the Israel of God. We need to live the new creation and as the new Israel of God. In order to live a new creation and live as the Israel of God, we need the second kind of walk. We need to walk orderly according to the elementary principles of God's economy. (Life-study of Galatians, pp. 269, 380-381, 269, 381-382, 373-374)

Further Reading: Life-study of Galatians, msgs. 30, 42-43

Morning Nourishment

1 Thes. 1:1 "Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace."

Matt. 28:19 "Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

When Paul speaks of the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, he actually means that the church of the Thessalonians is in the Triune God. Paul's word concerning the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ indicates or implies that God is triune. If God were not triune, how could He be the Father and the Son? It would be impossible. Furthermore, Paul's reference to the Father and Christ also implies the Holy Spirit....Elsewhere in this chapter Paul explicitly speaks of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, 1 Thessalonians 1 clearly shows the Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Both 1 Thessalonians 1:1 and 2 Thessalonians 1:1 reveal that the church is composed of a group of sinners who have been saved and regenerated and who are now in the Triune God. How wonderful! (Life-study of 1 Thessalonians, p. 46)

Today's Reading

Both in 1 and 2 Thessalonians the location of the church is not a city—it is God. Furthermore, the church is in the Triune God. This is indicated by the fact that Paul says “in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” The object of the preposition in is both God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. The Father and the Son are two and yet are one. For the church to be in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ means that the church is in the Triune God.

Be assured that the very God spoken of in 1 Thessalonians 1:1 is the Triune God. We know this by the fact that Paul first mentions the Father, the first of the Trinity. Whenever we have the first, we also have the second, the Son, and also the third, the Spirit. The very fact that Paul speaks of the Father is a strong indication that he is thinking of the Triune God....The expressions God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ both imply the Spirit. Therefore, in 1:1 the Spirit is implied and understood.

It is a rather simple matter to say that the church is of God or of Christ. But it is deeper and more profound to declare that the church is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ. For example, it is one thing to say that we are of a particular person. However, it is altogether another matter to claim to be in that person. Humanly speaking, it is possible to be of someone, but it is not possible to be literally in that one. Only in a way that is organic and of life can the church be in the Triune God. We do not adequately understand the way of life, but God does understand it in full. Furthermore, only God can do something in the way of life. In a way that is organic and of life, God has made it possible for the church to be in the Triune God.

Now we need to consider carefully the difference between God and the Triune God. To speak only of God is to regard Him as if He had not been processed. However, the Triune God denotes God in His process.

This Triune God is the processed God. He has passed through the process of incarnation, human living, crucifixion, and resurrection. In crucifixion, He accomplished redemption, the termination of the old creation, and the destruction of Satan and death. In resurrection, He germinated the new creation. Now He is the life-giving Spirit as the ultimate consummation of the Triune God. The church is in such a Triune God. The church is in the processed Triune God, the One who has become the life-giving Spirit with the Father and the Son.

I have the full assurance that if you see what is covered in these messages on the church in the Triune God, you will be different both in your concept and in your activity. These messages convey a vision, a vision that will control our thinking, our activities, and our entire life. (Life-study of 1 Thessalonians, pp. 22, 58-62, 68)

Further Reading: Life-study of 1 Thessalonians, msgs. 1, 3-5, 7-11

« WEEK 1 — HYMN

Hymns, #608

1

What mystery, the Father, Son, and Spirit,
In person three, in substance all are one.
How glorious, this God our being enters
To be our all, thru Spirit in the Son!
The Triune God has now become our all!
How wonderful! How glorious!
This Gift divine we never can exhaust!
How excellent! How marvelous!

2

How rich the source, the Father as the fountain,
And all this wealth He wants man to enjoy!
O blessed fact, this vast exhaustless portion
Is now for us forever to employ!

3

How wonderful, the Son is God's expression
Come in the flesh to dwell with all mankind!
Redemption's work, how perfectly effective,
That sinners we with God might oneness find.

4

The Spirit is the Son's transfiguration
Come into us as life the full supply.
Amazing fact, our spirit with the Spirit
Now mingles and in oneness joins thereby!

5

How real it is that God is now the Spirit
For us to touch, experience day by day!
Astounding fact, with God we are one spirit,
And differ not in life in any way!