

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

FIRST AND SECOND SAMUEL

KEY STATEMENTS

In 1 and 2 Samuel we can see that the Triune God
with His embodiment and redemption
was fully involved with bringing forth Samuel and David
so that the kingdom of God might be brought in;
it is crucial for us to see that the Triune God is involved with us today,
operating in us to accomplish His will, fulfill His purpose,
and satisfy the desire of His heart.

There is no other way to reach the high peak of God's eternal economy,
the reality of the Body of Christ, except by praying;
our becoming the overcomers as the reality of the Body of Christ
to be the bride of Christ will close this age, the age of the church,
and will bring Christ as the King of glory back
to take, possess, and rule over this earth
with His overcomers in the kingdom age.

Through His incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection,
Christ, who was already the Son of God,
became the Son of God in a new way—the firstborn Son—
designated as the Son of God with humanity;
in Romans 1:3-4 Christ, the Son of God, is the prototype,
whereas in 8:29 the many brothers are those
who have been “mass-produced” from the prototype
and, by being saved in life, will be conformed
to the image of the firstborn Son.

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 with the divine life;

this is for the building up of the Body of Christ
to consummate the New Jerusalem.

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CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

FIRST AND SECOND SAMUEL

Message One

The Central Thought of and the Divine Trinity as Revealed in 1 and 2 Samuel

Scripture Reading: 1 Sam. 1:3, 7, 10-11, 19-24; 2:11, 35; 3:9-11, 21;
7:3-6; 8:4-22; 16:1-3, 13; 2 Sam. 23:1-3; 24:25

I. The central thought of 1 and 2 Samuel is that the fulfillment of God's economy needs man's cooperation—the principle of incarnation:

- A. The principle of incarnation is that God enters into man and mingles Himself with man to make man one with Himself; thus, God is in man and man is in God, having one life and one living—John 15:4-5; Gal. 2:20.
- B. We need to be deeply impressed with the fact that the fulfillment of God's economy requires our cooperation; to cooperate with God means to be bound together with God—1 Cor. 6:17; John 15:4-5; 2 Cor. 6:1; 1 Cor. 3:9; 16:10, 16.
- C. In 1 and 2 Samuel cooperation with God is illustrated by the history of Samuel's mother, Hannah, of Samuel, and of David, in the positive sense, and by the history of Eli and Saul, in the negative sense.
- D. Cooperation with God through the principle of incarnation is related to the personal enjoyment of the good land, which typifies the all-inclusive and all-extensive Christ—Deut. 8:7-10:
 - 1. First and 2 Samuel, as a continuation of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth, give the details concerning the enjoyment of the God-given good land.
 - 2. The types in 1 and 2 Samuel show us how the New Testament believers can and should enjoy Christ as their God-allotted portion for the establishing of God's kingdom, which is the church—Col. 1:12; Matt. 16:18-19; Rom. 14:17:
 - a. In 1 and 2 Samuel the good land enjoyed by those who cooperated with God became the kingdom of God.
 - b. In our cooperation with God we need to enjoy Christ to such an extent that our enjoyment of Christ becomes the kingdom of God, in which we reign in life with Christ—Rom. 5:17; 14:17.

II. We need to see the Divine Trinity as it is revealed in 1 and 2 Samuel:

- A. God's purpose for His chosen people was not merely to defeat the enemies and take full possession of the good land but for them to set up a kingdom in the land:
 - 1. In order for God to fulfill His intention to have an expression, He needs to have a kingdom, a sphere in which He is expressed—1 Sam. 10:25; Matt. 6:10; Luke 1:33.
 - 2. The children of Israel were brought out of Egypt and through the wilderness, where they built the tabernacle for God; then they entered into the good land, and every tribe was allotted a portion of the land so that God might have a kingdom on earth—Josh. 13:1—22:34.
 - 3. First and 2 Samuel are crucial for the bringing in of the kingdom—1 Sam. 8:4-22; 10:25; 13:14; 15:28; 16:1-3, 13.
- B. Because of the miserable situation in the book of Judges, there was an urgent and desperate

need for one like Samuel—1 Sam. 2:35; 3:21:

1. Samuel was a Nazarite, a priest, a prophet, and a judge; this fourfold status qualified Samuel to be the one who could bring in the king and set up the kingdom.
 2. For Samuel to be a priest, a prophet, and a judge was not God's goal; God's intention was to set up a kingdom with a king—8:7; 13:14.
- C. First and 2 Samuel reveal that the bringing in of the king and the setting up of the kingdom depended on the involvement of the Divine Trinity with His people:
1. In order for such a one as Samuel to be raised up and carry out his commission, there was a need of the Divine Trinity—1 Sam. 1:10-11, 20; 10:1, 6; 16:1-3.
 2. For this reason, in 1 and 2 Samuel there is a detailed, fine revelation of the Divine Trinity; the crucial point in the history recorded in 1 and 2 Samuel is that there was the need of the Divine Trinity—2 Sam. 22:1-3; 23:1-3; 24:25.
- D. The Divine Trinity and the sovereign hand of the Lord are revealed in 1 Samuel 1:
1. In the midst of the chaos of degraded Israel, Elkanah and Hannah remained on the way of life ordained by God for His eternal purpose—vv. 1-5, 10-11, 20, 24.
 2. Every year Elkanah went with his family to the house of God, the tabernacle, which was in Shiloh at that time, to worship and make offerings to Jehovah—vv. 3, 21-24:
 - a. In verses 3-7, 10-11, 20, and 24 the sacrifices typify Christ as all the offerings; the bulls, flour, and wine signify the Christ whom we experience and bring to the house of God to offer to Him.
 - b. Jehovah is the great I Am, and the house of Jehovah is Christ as the embodiment of God to be God's dwelling place among His people—vv. 10-11.
 - c. This section mainly shows us the house of God as the embodiment of the Triune God and the offerings as the means for us to enter into the embodiment of God, that is, redemption; therefore, in these verses we see God's embodiment and God's full redemption—cf. John 1:14, 29; Luke 1:68; 2:38; Eph. 1:7.
 3. Because Jehovah had shut up Hannah's womb, she was forced to pray a desperate, consecrated, and consecrating prayer; motivated by God sovereignly and secretly, she prayed for a male child who would be absolute for the Lord—1 Sam. 1:5, 10-12, 15.
- E. In 1 and 2 Samuel we can see that the Triune God with His embodiment and redemption was fully involved with bringing forth Samuel and David so that the kingdom of God might be brought in:
1. The Divine Trinity is revealed in the anointing of David to be king—1 Sam. 16:1-3, 13:
 - a. In these verses we see the Triune God as Jehovah and the Spirit of the Triune God as the Spirit of Jehovah—v. 13.
 - b. The oil typifies the Spirit of God, and the sacrificed heifer typifies Christ as the offering; thus, the Divine Trinity was involved in the anointing of David, making him the king over Israel—Psa. 89:20.
 2. The words of David's song to Jehovah in 2 Samuel 22:1-3 mention Jehovah as his crag, fortress, Deliverer, rock, and shield and horn of salvation; in verse 47 David declares, "Jehovah lives; and blessed be my rock,/ And exalted be God, the rock of my salvation."
 3. In 2 Samuel 23:1-3—David's last words—the Spirit of Jehovah spoke through him, and the Rock of Israel spoke to him—vv. 2-3:
 - a. In these verses the Rock is Christ as the ground for God to grace His people.
 - b. The Spirit of Jehovah is the Spirit of the Triune God—1 Sam. 10:6; 16:13.
 - c. In these verses *God* in Hebrew is *Elohim*, indicating the Triune God.

4. In 2 Samuel 24:25 the burnt offerings typify Christ for God's satisfaction, and the peace offerings typify Christ for the peace between God and His people.

III. Our present situation and God's need today are the same in principle as the situation and the need in the time of Samuel—1 Sam. 8:4-22:

- A. There is an urgent need for some to pray prevailing prayers for God's goal, as Hannah did, and for qualified ones to be like Samuel—a Nazarite, a priest, a prophet, and the last judge—who was used by God to terminate the confused situation among God's people and bring in the king and the kingdom—2:35:
 1. In order for us to pray to meet God's need today, we need Christ as the embodiment of the Triune God and the reality of all the offerings, and we need the fulfillment of the Tent of Meeting, which is the church as God's dwelling place—Col. 2:9-10; Eph. 2:21-22; Heb. 8:1-2; 10:8-10.
 2. In a sense, Christ our King is not here yet, and we are still in a confused situation, as in the age of the judges—Judg. 21:25.
 3. The fulfillment of God's kingdom is the coming of the kingdom, which will be brought in by the Lord Jesus, but there is a need for some like Samuel to cooperate with the Divine Trinity by bringing in the kingdom—Matt. 6:33; 1 Cor. 6:17; 16:10; 2 Cor. 6:1.
 4. We need to realize how greatly the Divine Trinity is needed to pray prevailing prayers and to bring in the kingdom—Matt. 6:10, 13; Rev. 1:4-7; 8:3-5.
- B. The Triune God, with His embodiment, His redemption, and His Spirit, is constituting us into useful persons for His coming and His kingdom—2 Cor. 13:14.
- C. It is crucial for us to see that the Triune God is involved with us today, operating in us to accomplish His will, fulfill His purpose, and satisfy the desire of His heart—Phil. 2:13; Heb. 13:21; Eph. 1:5, 9, 11; 5:17; Col. 1:9; Rom. 12:2; Rev. 4:11:
 1. If we see this vision, it will revolutionize our concept about what it means to be a Christian—Acts 26:19; Rom. 12:7-8; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; Eph. 3:16-17.
 2. Our natural, religious, cultural, moral, and ethical concepts concerning the Christian life need to be replaced with a vision of the fully involved Triune God—Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 4:4-6; Rev. 1:4-7.

Message Two

The Hannah Ministry

Scripture Reading: 1 Sam. 1:1—2:11, 18-21, 26

I. We have to realize what the Lord's recovery is; the Lord's recovery is to build up Zion, which typifies the overcomers as the reality of the Body of Christ to consummate the holy city, the New Jerusalem:

- A. Zion was the city of King David (2 Sam. 5:7), the center of the city of Jerusalem, where the temple as God's dwelling place on earth was built (Psa. 48:2; 9:11; 74:2; 76:2b; 135:21; Isa. 8:18).
- B. In the Old Testament there was the city of Jerusalem with Zion as the center; in typology the church life is today's Jerusalem; within the church life there must be a group of overcomers, who are the perfected and matured God-men, and these overcomers are today's Zion—cf. Rev. 14:1-5.
- C. As the highlight and beauty of the holy city Jerusalem (Psa. 48:2; 50:2), Zion typifies the overcomers as the high peak, the center, the uplifting, the strengthening, the enriching, the beauty, and the reality of the church (48:2, 11-12; 20:2; 53:6a; 87:2).
- D. The characteristics, the life, the blessing, and the establishment of Jerusalem come from Zion—1 Kings 8:1; Psa. 51:18; 102:21; 128:5; 135:21; Isa. 41:27; Joel 3:17.
- E. The overcomers as Zion are the reality of the Body of Christ and consummate the building up of the Body in the local churches to bring in the consummated holy city, New Jerusalem, the ultimate Holy of Holies as God's dwelling place in eternity (Rev. 21:16; cf. Exo. 26:2-8; 1 Kings 6:20); in the new heaven and new earth the entire New Jerusalem will become Zion, with all the believers as the overcomers (Rev. 21:1-3, 7, 16, 22).
- F. In the book of Revelation what the Lord wants and what the Lord will build up is Zion, the overcomers; this is the intrinsic reality of the spiritual revelation in the holy Word of God; we surely need to be desperate to pray at any cost and to pay the cost just as the apostle Paul did—Eph. 6:17-18; Col. 4:2; Phil. 3:8-14.
- G. Our response to the Lord's calling of the overcomers in this age is for us to be vitalized; to be vital is to be living and active in oneness with our living and acting God; God's move on the earth for the accomplishment of His eternal economy is ultimately through the overcomers.
- H. On this usurped earth there is the mountain of Jehovah, Mount Zion, which is absolutely open to the Lord and absolutely possessed by Him; the overcomers, who are typified by Zion, are the beachhead through which the Lord as the King of glory will return to possess the whole earth as His kingdom—Psa. 24:1-3, 7-10; Dan. 2:34-35; 7:13-14; Joel 3:11; Rev. 11:15; 19:13-14.
- I. There is no other way to reach the high peak of God's eternal economy, the reality of the Body of Christ, except by praying; our becoming the overcomers as the reality of the Body of Christ to be the bride of Christ will close this age, the age of the church, and will bring Christ as the King of glory back to take, possess, and rule over this earth with His overcomers in the kingdom age—vv. 7-9; 20:4-6; Psa. 24:7-10.

II. The first book of Samuel shows us in typology the bringing in of Christ as the King (typified by David) with His kingdom:

- A. Under Eli the old Aaronic priesthood had become stale and waning (2:12-29), and God

desired to have a new beginning for the accomplishing of His eternal economy:

1. The content of Judges consists of the children of Israel trusting in God, forsaking God, being defeated by their enemies, and repenting to God in their misery; when they turned to the Lord, He raised up a judge who delivered them from the hand of their oppressors, yet when the judge died, they returned to their evil ways and again became corrupted (1:1-2; 2:11—3:11); this became a cycle repeated seven times in Judges.
 2. For many years the church has just been repeating the history of Israel under the judges, but today God wants Samuels, overcoming Nazarites (Num. 6:1-9 and footnotes), who will bring in Christ, the real David, as the reigning King with His kingdom of one thousand years, in which the overcomers will “shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their Father” (Matt. 13:43).
 3. Today we need to look to the Lord for something new, a new revival that will turn this age from the age of the church in the midst of the satanic chaos to the age of the King with His kingdom of one thousand years.
- B. For Samuel’s birth God initiated things behind the scenes; on the one hand, He shut up Hannah’s womb; on the other hand, He prepared Peninnah to provoke Hannah “bitterly to irritate her, because Jehovah had shut up her womb” (1 Sam. 1:5-6); year after year, when Hannah went up to the house of Jehovah, Peninnah provoked her to the extent that she wept and would not eat (v. 7).
- C. This forced Hannah to pray that the Lord would give her a male child; Hannah’s prayer, in which she made a vow to God, was initiated not by Hannah but by God; God was pleased with Hannah’s prayer and her promise, and He opened her womb (vv. 10-11, 20); Hannah conceived, bore a child, and named him Samuel (meaning “heard of God,” or “asked for of God”).
- D. God could motivate Hannah as a person who was one with Him in the line of life; the line of life is a line that brings forth Christ for the enjoyment of God’s people so that on earth God may have His kingdom, which is the church as the Body of Christ (Matt. 16:18-19; Rom. 14:17-18; Eph. 1:22-23), the very organism of the Triune God; as long as God can gain such a person who is one with Him on the line of life, He has a way on earth (1 Sam. 1:1—2:11, 18-21, 26).
- E. Actually, no human being was the origin of Samuel; God was the real origin, who motivated His people sovereignly and secretly; Hannah’s prayer was an echo, a speaking out, of the heart’s desire of God; it was a human cooperation with the divine move for the carrying out of God’s eternal economy:
1. Hannah’s prayer indicates that God’s move with His answer to her prayer was to produce a Nazarite, an overcomer, who was absolute for the fulfilling of God’s desire—1:10-20.
 2. A Nazarite is one who is consecrated to God absolutely, one who takes God as his King, Lord, Head, and Husband, and one who has no interest in the enjoyment of worldly pleasures; even before he was born, Samuel was consecrated by his mother to be such a person.

III. The first book of Samuel stands for a ministry that brings in the King with His kingdom; we may call this “the Hannah ministry”:

- A. Peninnah and Hannah represent two fundamentally different principles and two fundamentally different ministries (1:2, 4, 7); Hannah’s ministry was just to bring in the King, not to have many children; Peninnah’s ministry was to have many children, that is, a

ministry with much result; Peninnah and her children represent the majority of God's people, but none of them has anything to do with turning the age to bring Christ back as the King of glory (Psa. 24:1-3, 7-10).

- B. Hannah's way was not an easy way, and it was made even more difficult because of Peninnah's comparisons and tauntings; those who want to be Hannahs must prepare themselves for persecution, scorn, weeping, and fasting.
- C. It is not merely a matter of how many we can save but a matter of God getting His company of overcomers; God wants to get a people who are able to pray and bring in the kingdom with Christ as the King and His overcomers as the co-kings.
- D. Hannah's prayer was the means for the birth of Samuel; our prayers should result in the bringing forth of overcomers; we need to pray in oneness with the ascended Christ in His heavenly ministry in the stage of intensification for the producing of the overcomers—Rev. 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6; 2:7, 11, 17, 26-29; 3:5-6, 12-13, 21-22.
- E. Hannah came to the point where she could not go on without a son; she came to a point where she had to have a son; the son in 1 Samuel 1 typifies the overcoming, corporate man-child in Revelation 12, the one who turns the age to bring in the King with His kingdom:
 - 1. God's most important dispensational move is seen with the man-child in Revelation 12 composed of Christ as the leading Overcomer and us as the following overcomers; because God wants to end this age and bring in the age of the King with His kingdom, He needs the overcoming, corporate man-child as His dispensational instrument.
 - 2. The rapture of the man-child brings an end to the church age and brings in the kingdom age; after this rapture there is a "loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ"—v. 10.

IV. Hannah's experience shows that we need to pour out our soul before the Lord in the midst of our bitterness (1 Sam. 1:6, 10, 15-16); in Exodus 15 the children of Israel came to the bitter waters of Marah; when the people murmured against Moses, he "cried out to Jehovah, and Jehovah showed him a tree; and he cast it into the waters, and the waters became sweet" (vv. 22-25):

- A. The tree that the Lord showed Moses signifies the tree of life; Revelation 2:7 speaks of "the tree of life"; in Greek the word for *tree* here is the same word used for *tree* in 1 Peter 2:24:
 - 1. The tree of life in Revelation 2:7 signifies the crucified (implied in the tree as a piece of wood—1 Pet. 2:24) and resurrected (implied in the life of God—John 11:25) Christ; thus, we may say that the tree that Moses cast into the bitter waters was the crucified and resurrected Christ as the tree of life.
 - 2. When we cry out to the Lord in prayer, He shows us a vision of the crucified and resurrected Christ as the tree of life; through our prayer by pouring out our soul before the Lord, we are casting this tree into the bitter waters of our being; then these bitter waters are changed into the sweet waters of His presence.
- B. Hannah's prayer came out of her bitter circumstances and her bitter being (1 Sam. 1:6, 10); she told Eli, "I am a woman oppressed in spirit...I have been pouring out my soul before Jehovah...Out of the greatness of my anxiety and provocation I have been speaking all this time" (vv. 15-16); Psalm 62:8 says, "Trust in Him at all times, O people; / Pour out your heart before Him; / God is a refuge to us. Selah"; such prayer to contact God consists of words spoken genuinely from the heart.

- C. Whenever we are in bitter circumstances and are bitter in our being, we need to pour out our soul with our heart to the Lord by being real and honest with Him; such prayer produces the overcomers, who will bring in the King with the kingdom.
- D. When we come to “bitter waters,” we have to realize that God is sovereignly and secretly motivating us to pray in a desperate way not only for our inner healing (Exo. 15:26) but even more for the producing of overcoming Nazarites, who will cooperate with Him to bring in the King with His kingdom—when the name of God will be excellent in all the earth (Psa. 8:1), and the kingdom of the world will “become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever” (Rev. 11:15).

Message Three
**Spiritual Principles, Life Lessons, and Holy Warnings
Seen in the History of Samuel**

Scripture Reading: 1 Sam. 1:10-11, 18-20, 27-28;
2:30, 35-36; 3:1-21; 4:11-22; 7:3-17; 12:23

I. Samuel was of the tribe of Levi (1 Chron. 6:33-38) but was not of the house of Aaron, the family of the priests ordained by God; Samuel ministered to the Lord as one who was a priest not by birth but by the Nazarite vow:

- A. God's move with His answer to Hannah's prayer was to produce an overcoming Nazarite who was absolute for the fulfilling of God's desire; even before he was born, Samuel was consecrated by his mother to be such a person—1 Sam. 1:10-11, 18-20.
- B. God desires that all His people be Nazarites; to be a Nazarite is to be sanctified, separated, absolutely and ultimately to God, that is, to be for nothing other than God and for nothing other than His satisfaction—the testimony of Jesus, which is the testifying church as the testimony and the expression of Christ—Num. 6:1-2; Psa. 73:25-26; Rev. 1:2, 9-13; 19:10; cf. Exo. 38:21:
 - 1. For a Nazarite to abstain from wine and anything related to its source signifies abstaining from all kinds of earthly enjoyment and pleasure and taking and experiencing Christ as his enjoyment and pleasure; eating the tree of life, that is, enjoying Christ as our life supply, should be the primary matter in the church life—Num. 6:3-4; Rev. 2:7; Judg. 9:12-13.
 - 2. For a Nazarite to not shave his head signifies not rejecting but being absolutely subject to the headship of the Lord as well as to all deputy authorities appointed by God—Num. 6:5; Rom. 13:1-2a; Eph. 5:21, 23; 6:1; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:5.
 - 3. For a Nazarite to not be defiled by the death of his blood relatives, but remain in his separation to be holy to God, signifies that a Nazarite overcomes natural affection—Num. 6:7.
 - 4. For a Nazarite to not come near a dead person or to not be defiled by the sudden death of one beside him signifies that a Nazarite is separated from death—vv. 6-9; Rev. 3:4; Lev. 11:31; 5:2; cf. 1 John 5:16.

II. At the time of Samuel, the priesthood of the house of Aaron was utterly fallen; God, however, foresaw the situation; besides His ordaining the house of Aaron to be the priests, He made a supplement—the Nazarite vow in Numbers 6—in case there should be an inadequacy in the ordained priests:

- A. When the house of Aaron fell, this supplement was put into practical use; Samuel became a priest by being consecrated, separated, and lent to the Lord—1 Sam. 1:11, 27-28.
- B. At the time of Eli, God was poor as far as the priesthood was concerned, so Hannah lent Samuel to the Lord; when the situation is abnormal, the Lord becomes poor with respect to His administration, and there is the need for someone to voluntarily lend himself to the Lord.
- C. After she presented Samuel to Eli, Hannah praised God for His salvation accomplished through His marvelous deeds; her prayer was related to God's move in His economy and indicated that she realized something concerning God's economy—2:1-10.

III. Samuel grew up under the custody of Eli; in his youth Samuel ministered to Jehovah before Eli (vv. 11b, 18-19), being taught by Eli the way to minister to God:

- A. God called Samuel three times; “then Eli perceived that it was Jehovah calling the boy. And Eli said to Samuel, Go and lie down, and if He calls you, you shall say, Speak, O Jehovah; for Your servant is listening...Then Jehovah came and stood by and called as at the other times, Samuel! Samuel! And Samuel said, Speak, for Your servant is listening”—3:1-10:
 - 1. This was something completely positive that Samuel learned from Eli; as the Lord’s servants, we need to maintain our fellowship with Him, always listening to Him—Luke 1:34-38; 10:38-42.
 - 2. Our lives depend on the Lord’s words, and our work depends on His commands (Rev. 2:7; 1 Sam. 3:9-10; cf. Isa. 50:4-5; Exo. 21:6); the life of the believers hinges totally upon the Lord’s speaking (Eph. 5:26-27).
 - 3. The Lord’s speaking enables us to fulfill the goal of His eternal economy to have a bride as His counterpart—Rev. 2:7; Eph. 5:26-27; S. S. 8:13-14.
- B. While Samuel was learning, he observed the deterioration of the degraded Aaronic priesthood:
 - 1. He saw the Ark of God being usurped by the elders of the people and captured by the Philistines with the glory of God departing from Israel; he realized God’s severe judgment on the house of Eli, which included the deaths of Eli and his two evil sons, Hophni and Phinehas—1 Sam. 2:12-36; 4:11-22.
 - 2. God’s severe judgment on the house of Eli was prophesied by a man of God (2:27-36); then, this severe judgment was confirmed by the word of Jehovah spoken through Samuel (3:11-18).
 - 3. God’s purpose in telling Eli through Samuel of the coming judgment might have been to make an unforgettable impression on this young priestly boy; this was God’s wisdom—vv. 17-18.
 - 4. This did not weaken Samuel in his future Nazarite priesthood; rather, it became a constant warning to him throughout his priestly service that helped him to remain pure in his service to God for his entire life.

IV. Samuel was one who turned the age into the age of the kingdom with the kingship; this was a great thing not only in the history of Israel but even in the history of mankind:

- A. Samuel did not rebel against the house of Aaron, and he did not usurp anything of the house of Aaron; as Samuel was growing, God arranged the environment to perfect him and to build up his capacity to do everything that was needed for God to change the age into the age of the king with the kingdom.
- B. As a priest Samuel replaced and, in a sense, terminated the stale Aaronic priesthood; God used Samuel to change the age not through rebellion or revolution but through the way of divine revelation to bring in the kingship.
- C. Samuel was a man of revelation, and he did everything according to what he saw; “Jehovah revealed Himself to Samuel...by the word of Jehovah” (v. 21); furthermore, Samuel was a man according to God’s heart—a copy, a duplicate, of God’s heart; as such a person, he would never do anything rebellious.

V. Samuel’s whole being and person, not just his doing, living, and work, were

according to God; Samuel's being and God's heart were one; for this reason we may say that Samuel, a man according to God, was the acting God on earth:

- A. God's mind was Samuel's consideration; he had no other thought, consideration, or thinking; his living and working were for the carrying out of whatever was in God's heart.
- B. Samuel anointed Saul and David to be kings (10:1; 16:1, 13); this was according to God's ordination that Samuel should go before His anointed continually (2:35) to supervise the king, observing what the king was doing.
- C. This indicates that Samuel, the acting God on earth, was greater than the king; Samuel could be qualified to such an extent because for many years God had been perfecting him uniquely for His economy:
 - 1. Samuel could be used by God to carry out His economy because he was a man according to God and God's heart, having no self-seeking nor any thought of self-gain—cf. Matt. 16:24-26; Luke 9:23-25.
 - 2. He had no heart for anything besides God's heart and God's elect; his heart was a reflection of God's heart—cf. Phil. 2:19-22; 2 Cor. 3:16-18.
 - 3. Samuel considered that not praying for God's people, who are His personal treasure and possession, was a sin against Jehovah—1 Sam. 12:23; Exo. 19:5.
- D. Although it was not easy for Samuel to stand for God in his particular environment, he cared for God's interest and turned the age; according to the Old Testament, Samuel is ranked with Moses in being for God and for God's interest—Jer. 15:1.
- E. "Samuel told the people the practice of the kingdom, and he wrote it in a book and laid it before Jehovah"—1 Sam. 10:25a:
 - 1. Moses gave the law to the children of Israel, but before Samuel came they did not have a set of bylaws, a constitution.
 - 2. Samuel taught the people the bylaws, the constitution, the practice, the customs, the manners, the ordinances, and the rules of how to practice the kingdom of God on earth.

VI. God began a new age in raising up Samuel, a young Nazarite, as a faithful priest to replace the degraded priesthood—2:35:

- A. Samuel was established by God to speak the word of God to replace the teaching of the word of God by the old priesthood; in the priesthood the first thing that a priest should do is to speak for God.
- B. The breastplate and the Urim and the Thummim worn by the high priest were the means used by God to speak to His people (Exo. 28:30); in the degradation of the priesthood God's speaking was almost lost (1 Sam. 3:1, 3a).
- C. God ministered His word to His elect by establishing Samuel as a prophet in the uplifted prophethood (vv. 20-21), and He exercised His authority over His elect by raising up Samuel as a judge (7:15-17).
- D. Samuel, as the last judge, terminated the judgeship, and, as the new priest, brought in the kingship, which was strengthened by the uplifted prophethood.
- E. God needed to raise up a living person, a prophet, to speak for Him; in God's ordination Samuel is considered as the first prophet because he brought in the prophethood for God's speaking—Acts 3:24; 13:20; Heb. 11:32.

VII. Samuel was one with God on earth; as the acting God on earth, the

representative of the very God in heaven to rule over His people on earth, Samuel ministered in five statuses—1 Sam. 7:3:

- A. Samuel ministered as a Nazarite, consecrated to God absolutely for God's fulfillment of His economy—1:11, 28a.
- B. Samuel ministered as a God-honoring, God-pleasing priest to replace the stale and degraded priesthood, and he was faithful to act on behalf of God, even to appoint and establish kings for the divine government on earth—2:30, 35-36; 7:3-17; Judg. 9:9, 13.
- C. Samuel ministered as a prophet established by God (1 Sam. 3:20) to speak the word of God to replace the teaching of the old priesthood at a time when the word of Jehovah was rare and visions were not widespread (vv. 1-10, 19-21).
- D. Samuel ministered as a judge in the reality of the kingship to replace the judging of the people by the old and stale priesthood—7:15-17.
- E. Samuel ministered as a man of prayer who prayed for God's elect so that they would be kept in the way of God, would be one with God, would not be ensnared by the idols of the nations, and would enjoy God as Ebenezer (meaning "the stone of help"—v. 12) in order that God's desire in His will regarding them might be fulfilled (vv. 3-17; 8:6; 12:19-25; 15:11b).

Message Four

The History of the Ark and the Tabernacle

Scripture Reading: 1 Sam. 4:1—7:2

- I. Christ has gained us so that we might gain Him in order for God to be built into us and for us to be built into Him to become a corporate God-man, the reality of the church as the tabernacle of God, which is the house of the living God, the mutual abode of God and man—Phil. 3:8, 12-14; John 1:14; Rev. 21:2-3; 7:15; 1 Tim. 3:15; John 14:2, 23.**

- II. In order to enter into the reality of the Body of Christ, we must see the intrinsic significance of the Ark:**
 - A. The Ark typifies Christ as the presence of the Triune God with His people for the carrying out of His economy to establish His kingdom on earth—Matt. 1:23.
 - B. The Ark was the center and content of the tabernacle, signifying Christ as the center and content of the church; the Ark being the first item mentioned in the vision of the tabernacle indicates that Christ occupies the place of preeminence in the church—Exo. 25:22; Col. 1:17b, 18b:
 - 1. The Ark contained the tablets of the law as the testimony of God, the expression and revelation of who God is—Exo. 25:16; 31:18.
 - 2. The Ark in the Holy of Holies signifies Christ as the center of God's dwelling place, the church (Eph. 2:21-22), and the contents of the church as the house of God (1 Tim. 3:15-16; cf. 1 Sam. 4:22; Rev. 3:20).
 - C. The Ark of acacia wood overlaid with gold signifies the pneumatic Christ as the embodiment of God and as the mingling of divinity with humanity, the building of God with man, dwelling in our spirit for us to contact God and enjoy God—2 Tim. 4:22; 2 Cor. 3:17; Col. 2:9; Heb. 9:4:
 - 1. Acacia wood signifies Christ's humanity, strong in character and high in standard, as the basic substance for expressing God—Exo. 25:10; Matt. 3:16; 4:4; 8:20; 9:12-13; 11:29; 12:19-20; 17:27; 20:28; 27:12, 14; Mark 1:35; 6:39-41; John 6:12; 7:6; cf. Acts 16:7.
 - 2. The acacia wood being overlaid with gold both inside and outside signifies the divine nature penetrating the human nature and resting on the human nature so that it may be expressed through the human nature—Exo. 25:11; Rev. 3:18a; 2 Pet. 1:4; cf. Rev. 17:4.
 - D. The propitiatory cover of the Ark signifies Christ as the meeting place of God and His redeemed people—Exo. 25:17-22:
 - 1. Christ is the One who propitiates (Heb. 2:17), the One who appeases the relationship between God and us, the One who reconciles us to God by satisfying God's demand through Himself as the propitiatory sacrifice (1 John 2:2; 4:10).
 - 2. Christ is also the propitiatory cover with the shining of His divinity and the redeeming of His humanity, the place where we enjoy propitiation before God and where we can meet and fellowship with our righteous, holy, and glorious God to receive Him as grace—Rom. 3:25; Heb. 4:16:
 - a. The two cherubim of gold on the propitiatory cover indicate that God's glory shines out from Christ (Exo. 25:18-20); the blood of the propitiatory sacrifice

being sprinkled on the propitiatory cover of the Ark signifies that because of the blood of Christ's redemption, we can have fellowship with the righteous God in the midst of His glory (Lev. 16:14-15).

- b. The more God meets with us and speaks with us, and the more we meet with God and listen to His speaking, the more of the testimony of God there will be in our experience.

III. The history of the Ark and the tabernacle portrays the desire of God's heart, the desolation of the church, and the recovery of the church for God's testimony, God's expression—Exo. 25:9-10; 26:26-30; 40:38:

- A. As the center and content of the tabernacle, the Ark signifies Christ as the center and content of the church as God's tabernacle, God's house, for God's corporate expression—25:22; 40:21; Col. 2:9; Eph. 2:21-22; 1 Tim. 3:15.
- B. In the first stage of its history, the Ark was in the tabernacle; this signifies that the normal church was the expression of Christ, and Christ was the content of the church; however, the Ark eventually was separated from the tabernacle; this signifies that the church became degraded and lost the reality and presence of Christ—Exo. 40:34-35; 1 Sam. 4:1—7:2.
- C. The Ark typifies Christ as the embodiment of God and as the presence of the Triune God with His people for the carrying out of His economy to establish His kingdom on earth (Josh. 3:3, 10-17); to bring out the Ark was to bring out the presence of God (Num. 10:33-36; 1 Sam. 4:3-4).
- D. The move of the Ark was a picture of God's move on the earth in Christ as His embodiment (Psa. 68:1-18); however, during Israel's fighting with the Philistines, God did not intend to move.
- E. The children of Israel had no thought of or concern for God's economy, and their bringing out the Ark to battle the Philistines indicated that they were usurping God, even forcing Him to go out with them for their safety, peace, rest, and profit.
- F. In principle, we do the same thing whenever we pray for our prosperity without any consideration of God's economy; instead of usurping God, we should pray, live, and be persons, like Samuel, according to God's heart and for His economy.
- G. Today men are replacing God's testimony with man's need; when man's need replaces God's testimony, degradation begins and problems arise; the Ark was not only the Ark of God (1 Sam. 4:11, 13, 17-19, 21-22) but also the Ark of the Testimony (Exo. 25:22; 40:21).
- H. Israel should have repented, made a thorough confession, returned to God from their idols, and inquired of God as to what He wanted them to do.
- I. Instead, having no heart for God's desire or for His eternal economy, they exercised their superstition to trust in the Ark based on their past victories that they had experienced through the move of the Ark.
- J. Due to Israel's degradation, the Ark was captured by the Philistines and was separated from the tabernacle, leaving the tabernacle an empty vessel with no reality, no proper content (1 Sam. 4:11—6:1); this signifies that in the second stage of its history, the church became degraded and lost the reality and presence of Christ (chs. 3—4; Rev. 3:20).
- K. In their degradation Israel was foolish because they did not trust in God directly; rather, they trusted in the systems ordained by God; before bringing the Ark of God out of the tabernacle, they should have checked with God as Joshua did at Jericho (Josh. 6:2-4; cf. 9:14).
- L. From the depths of our spirit we should say to the Lord, "Lord, I am not here on earth for my health, my prosperity, my safety, my peace, my rest, or my profit; because I want to be a

true overcoming Nazarite cooperating with You for the fulfillment of Your economy, I ask You what is on Your heart concerning me”—1 Sam. 2:30b, 35; Num. 6:1-9; cf. 1 Kings 8:48; Jer. 32:39.

- M. In their degradation the children of Israel offended God to the uttermost, and God left them; eventually, instead of the Ark saving Israel, the Ark itself was captured, and the glory of God departed from Israel (1 Sam. 2:30, 34; 4:10-18, 22; Psalms 78:61); to be “Arkless” is to be “Christless,” and to be “Christless” means that there is “Ichabod,” meaning *No Glory* (1 Sam. 4:21-22; Rev. 3:20).

IV. Later, the Ark was recovered and brought first to the house of Abinadab at Kiriath-jearim, where it remained for twenty years (1 Sam. 6:2—7:2), and then to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite, where it stayed for three months (2 Sam. 6:1-11; cf. 1 Sam. 1:24; Josh. 18:1); this signifies that beginning from the second century a number of “Obed-edom” were raised up, who had the Lord’s presence (the Ark) but did not have the proper church life as the expression of Christ (the tabernacle).

V. David moved the Ark from Obed-edom’s house to a tent that he had prepared for it in his own city, at Mount Zion, the choicest place in Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:12-19; 1 Chron. 15:1—16:1); this was an improved situation, but the Ark was still in an improper place because it had not been returned to the tabernacle:

- A. This situation signifies that other believers who, like David, cared for God’s interests, attempted to practice the church life according to their own choice, not according to God’s revelation.
- B. These believers had Christ, but they had Him with an improper practice of the church life (typified by David’s tent in Jerusalem)—cf. 1 Kings 3:3-15.

VI. Finally, after Solomon finished the building of the temple in Jerusalem, the Ark was moved into the Holy of Holies in the temple for a full recovery of the normal situation; today in His recovery the Lord is working to restore the normal condition of Christ within the proper church as the reality of the Body of Christ for His expression—8:1-11, 48; Eph. 2:21-22; 3:16-21.

VII. The history of the Ark and the tabernacle is a prefigure of church history, giving us a full portrait of the course and situation of the church from the very beginning to the present time; there are five main aspects of this history:

- A. The first situation is that of the church with Christ in it; this is typified by the Ark in the tabernacle, with the Ark as the content and the tabernacle as its expression; this is a picture of the first stage of the church in an absolutely normal condition of Christ being the content of the church and the church being the expression of Christ—Exo. 40:34-38; Eph. 3:16-21.
- B. The second situation is that of the church without Christ in it; this is typified by the Ark being captured and separated from the tabernacle because of the failure of the people of God; the tabernacle becoming empty portrays the failures of the Christians that caused the church to lose the reality and presence of Christ—Rev. 2:4-5; 3:20.
- C. The third situation is that of Christ without the church; this is typified by the Ark being

without the tabernacle; first, in the house of Abinadab at Kiriath-jearim for twenty years (1 Sam. 7:1-2) and then in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite for three months (2 Sam. 6:10-12), the Ark was apart from the tabernacle; church history reveals that from the second century to the present time there have been many Obed-edoms.

- D. The fourth situation is that of Christ with an inadequate church; David had prepared a tent for the Ark in Jerusalem, but it was not according to the pattern revealed by God to Moses; many Christians have the Ark—Christ—with an inadequate church—v. 17; 1 Chron. 15:1; 2 Chron. 1:4; Exo. 25:9.
- E. The fifth situation is that of Christ with a proper church; this is typified by the Ark with the proper tabernacle that has been enlarged and increased to be the temple; it is in this situation—Christ as the reality with a proper church as His expression—that we feel completely at home—Psa. 90:1-2; 91:1-16; 92:12-15; 132:5, 8; 1 Chron. 28:11-20; 2 Chron. 3:1.

Message Five

War with the Amalekites

Scripture Reading: 1 Sam. 15; Exo. 17:8-13; Gal. 5:16-17, 24

I. First Samuel 15 is a record of Saul's disobedience in his conquest of the Amalekites:

- A. He conquered the enemy, yet he was altogether disobedient to God—vv. 7-9.
- B. Here Saul was absolutely and thoroughly exposed, and then he was given up by God and also by Samuel—vv. 14-26.
- C. This chapter contains an important lesson for us today.

II. In typology, the Amalekites signify the flesh—the fallen man—Exo. 17:8-16:

- A. Amalek, the flesh, is the leading enemy in frustrating us from going on with the Lord—v. 8; Deut. 25:17-18:
 - 1. The name Amalek means “warlike,” indicating that the flesh is warlike, destructive, and disturbing.
 - 2. The greatest destroyer of the Christian life is the flesh—1 Pet. 2:11.
 - 3. The fact that God has a continual war with Amalek reveals that God hates the flesh and desires to exterminate it—Exo. 17:16; Gal. 5:17.
- B. The flesh denotes the totality of the fallen old man, our entire fallen being—Gen. 6:3; Rom. 7:18a; Gal. 2:16:
 - 1. The flesh is the living out and the expression of the old man—Rom. 6:6.
 - 2. The flesh is enmity against God, the flesh is not subject to God's law, and the flesh is not able to subject itself to God's law—8:7.
- C. The flesh is the camp of God's enemy and the largest base for his work—Gal. 5:19-21:
 - 1. In the entire universe God's unique enemy, in a practical sense, is not Satan but the flesh—Rom. 8:7.
 - 2. The flesh, the fallen man, is absolutely one with Satan and is used by Satan to fight against God—Matt. 16:23; Gal. 5:17.
 - 3. The flesh is the first among our enemies, taking the lead over sin, the world, and Satan to fight against us—Rom. 8:3.
 - 4. God hates the flesh in the same manner that He hates Satan, and He wants to destroy the flesh in the same manner that He wants to destroy Satan—Exo. 17:16; Deut. 25:17-19; 1 Sam. 15:2-3.
- D. With Amalek there is a hand against the throne of the Lord—Exo. 17:16; 1 Sam. 15:22-23:
 - 1. Amalek tried to overthrow God's throne, just as Satan once tried to do—Exo. 17:8, 16.
 - 2. Like Satan himself, the flesh is against God's authority—Isa. 14:12-14:
 - a. The flesh is in rebellion against God and against His throne.
 - b. Whatever God does governmentally, the flesh opposes it.
 - 3. Our flesh is an enemy of God's authority and is in rebellion against God's governmental administration:
 - a. The flesh is most ugly because it is against the throne, the administration, and the plan of God—Rev. 4:2; 5:6; Eph. 3:11.
 - b. Every aspect of our flesh, whether good or evil, is an enemy of God's authority.
 - c. Whatever is of the flesh is against God's throne; it will be used by Satan, the

subtle one, the enemy of God, to hinder God's purpose—2 Cor. 2:11.

E. The flesh is versus kingship:

1. Where the flesh is, there can be no kingdom of God.
2. For this reason, the flesh must be thoroughly dealt with before the kingdom of God can come.

III. In 1 Samuel 15:2 Jehovah declared that He would punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel when they fought against Israel:

A. Amalek fought against the children of Israel as they were journeying to attain to God's goal—Exo. 17:8-16; 1 Sam. 15:2-3:

1. In the war with Amalek described in Exodus 17:8-16, Moses stood on the top of the hill with the staff of God in his hand, and Joshua went out with chosen men to fight against, and to defeat, Amalek.
2. While Joshua was fighting, Moses was praying.
3. After Joshua defeated Amalek, God declared that He would "have war with Amalek from generation to generation" (v. 16); this shows how seriously God regarded the frustration caused by the Amalekites.

B. Exodus 17:8-13 shows us how to fight against Amalek:

1. We fight against Amalek by the interceding Christ and the fighting Spirit—Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; Gal. 5:17:
 - a. Moses lifting up his hand on the mountaintop typifies the ascended Christ interceding in the heavens—Exo. 17:9, 11.
 - b. Joshua fighting against Amalek typifies the indwelling Spirit fighting against the flesh—vv. 9, 13.
 - c. We need to be in union with the interceding Christ in order to cooperate with the fighting Spirit—Col. 3:1-3, 5; Rom. 8:34, 13; Gal. 5:24, 17.
2. In the battle against Amalek, we need to cooperate with the Lord by praying and by putting the flesh to death—Luke 18:1; 1 Thes. 5:17; Rom. 8:13; Gal. 5:24:
 - a. When we pray, we are one with the interceding Christ—Rom. 8:34.
 - b. When we put the flesh to death, we are one with the fighting Spirit—Gal. 5:17.
 - c. On the one hand, we must pray with Christ; on the other hand, we must slay the flesh by the fighting Spirit—v. 24.
 - d. Crucifying the old man was God's responsibility; crucifying the flesh is our responsibility—Rom. 6:6; 8:13; Gal. 5:24.

IV. God commanded Saul to "strike the Amalekites" and to "utterly destroy all that they have" and not spare them, but he did not obey Jehovah's command—1 Sam. 15:3-9:

A. Saul killed the Amalekites, but he spared Agag the king and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good—vv. 7-9.

B. Saul and the people's sparing the best part of the things that they should have utterly destroyed portrays the fact that, experientially, we treasure the good aspects of our flesh, our natural life, and do not wish to destroy them:

1. Whatever we do apart from God's grace and apart from depending on Him and trusting in Him is of the flesh—Phil. 3:3-4.
2. Every aspect of the flesh, whether good or evil, is in opposition to grace and God's kingdom and keeps us from enjoying Christ; therefore, we must hate every aspect of the flesh and be absolute in destroying the flesh—Rom. 8:13; Gal. 3:3; 5:2-4.

- C. God did not want Saul to use the best of the cattle as a sacrifice to Him—1 Sam. 15:15:
 - 1. Anything presented and sacrificed to God that has its source in the flesh is evil in His sight—v. 19.
 - 2. To offer something to God according to our own will is presumptuous and is sinful—Gen. 4:5; Matt. 7:22-23.

V. Doing good according to our own will is actually an act of rebellion against God's throne and His economy—1 Sam. 15:22-23; Exo. 17:16:

- A. Saul's disobedience exposed him as being a rebel against God and an enemy of God—1 Sam. 22:17.
- B. Saul was utterly rebellious toward God; he had no subordination to God, nor did he take God as his King and Head.
- C. He was constituted with rebellion, which is as evil as the worship of idols—15:23.
- D. What Saul did was as evil as contacting an evil spirit for the purpose of carrying out the intention of that spirit, not God's intention—v. 23.
- E. All rebellion is a matter of presumption, a matter of daring to do things without God.

VI. Saul lost his kingship because he did not utterly destroy Amalek—vv. 26, 28:

- A. If we are not absolute in dealing with our flesh, we, like Saul, will lose our kingship—1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6; 5:10.
- B. The account of Saul's disobedience is a warning, indicating that we should not do anything in the kingdom of God by our flesh; in everything we must crucify our flesh and faithfully exercise our spirit to follow the Lord, who is the life-giving, consummated Spirit indwelling our spirit and who is one with us—1 Cor. 15:45; 6:17; 2 Tim. 4:22; Gal. 5:16, 25.
- C. When Amalek is dealt with, the kingdom of God immediately comes in—Exo. 18:1-26:
 - 1. The kingdom of God denotes the authority of God by which all things are made subject to God—Mark 1:15; John 3:3, 5; Rev. 11:15; 12:10; Dan. 2:44.
 - 2. Because the flesh is versus the kingship, the flesh must be thoroughly dealt with before the kingdom of God can come in—1 Cor. 6:9-10; Eph. 5:5.
- D. If we follow the Lord's word to utterly destroy the flesh and live and walk according to the spirit, we will have the kingship and will be in God's kingdom—Rom. 8:4; 14:17; Gal. 5:19-21; 2 Pet. 1:5-11.

Message Six
**Spiritual Principles, Life Lessons, and Holy Warnings
Seen in the History of David**

Scripture Reading: 1 Sam. 16:1—2 Sam. 24:25; Acts 13:22, 36

I. In the history of David (1 Sam. 16:1—2 Sam. 24:25), we need to see God's sovereignty and David's learning the lessons of the cross:

- A. Under God's sovereignty David was tested and approved in his trusting God and defeating Goliath—1 Sam. 17:1-58:
1. David's experience as a shepherd had trained him to trust in the Lord, so when he heard Goliath's defiance, he could say to Saul, "Your servant has been tending his father's sheep; and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the flock, I would go out after it and strike it and deliver the lamb from its mouth. And when it rose up against me, I would seize it by its beard and strike it and kill it...Jehovah, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine"—vv. 34-37.
 2. David told Goliath that "it is not by sword or spear that Jehovah saves, for the battle is Jehovah's and He will deliver you into our hand" (v. 47); David went forth to fight against Goliath (vv. 40-48) and killed him by slinging a stone into Goliath's forehead and beheading him with his own sword (vv. 49-54).
 3. David's victory over Goliath was a strong confirmation to God's choosing and anointing of him; from David's experience, we need to realize that because we are pursuing Christ today, every aspect of our environment is absolutely under God's sovereign hand—Matt. 10:29-31; Psalms 31:14-15a; 39:9; Romans 8:28-29; Isaiah 45:15.
- B. David, under God's sovereignty, was selected to be an attendant of Saul, the present king; by these two being put together, Saul was exposed as being a person who was opposite to God's will, and David was manifested to be a man according to God's heart—1 Sam. 18:6-11a:
1. For David to be tested in his relationship with Saul meant that David was continually put on the cross; on every mission that Saul sent him, David acted prudently, so Saul set him over the men of battle; once when David returned from striking the Philistines, the women came out of all the towns of Israel, and they sang to one another—"Saul has struck down his thousands; / But David, his ten thousands"—vv. 5-7.
 2. This praise did not affect David, but it affected Saul; Solomon said, "A man is tried by the praise given him" (Proverbs 27:21); Saul became very angry and envious of David, showing that he was a person fully in the flesh and absolutely for himself; from that day on, Saul decided to kill David, and David had no place to hide; Saul went from being envious of David to plotting how he might kill him without damaging his own name—1 Sam. 18:10—20:42.
 3. When Saul attempted to kill him, David did not fight or do anything to avenge himself; he only fled; avenging and fighting back are matters of the flesh, and those who practice the things of the flesh have no share in the kingdom of God—18:11; cf. Romans 12:19; Ephesians 4:26; Galatians 5:21, 24.
 4. David was one who knew God's authority from his heart; in 1 Samuel we see Saul chasing David in the wilderness in order to kill him; David had the opportunity to kill

Saul, but he feared God and did not dare to overthrow the divine order arranged by God—18:6—26:25.

5. If David had rebelled against Saul, he would have been to the people an example of rebellion against the God-ordained, appointed king; David's attitude was that of denying the self and submitting to God's authority.
6. Saul had been disobedient to God and was rejected by God, but this was something between Saul and God; as for David, he submitted to God's anointed, and this was his responsibility before God—24:4-6; 26:9, 11; 2 Sam. 1:9-16.
7. If some will pay the price to experience the breaking of the cross by living under the cross, know and deal with their natural life and disposition, put to death the flesh, and deny themselves before God, they will certainly know God's authority and be able to bring in God's authority—this is a basic principle.
8. According to the realization of the New Testament, David bore the cross every day under any kind of situation; Philippians 3:10 indicates that the strength for us to bear the cross is the power of Christ's resurrection; Christ has come into us to live in us and to bear the cross within us—cf. S. S. 2:8-9, 14.
9. As David was learning the lessons of the cross, he enjoyed God's provision with Jonathan and Michal; without them, David would not have had a way to escape from Saul—1 Sam. 20:1-42; 19:11-18.
10. Under God's sovereignty, David took the lessons of the cross, and eventually, he was not a loser but a gainer and a winner, not a sufferer but an enjoyer—Phil. 1:19; 3:8-9; 2 Cor. 4:7, 16-18; cf. 2:12-14.
11. David's life signifies a life of brokenness; the breaking of the outer man is the breaking of our natural disposition, our self; the goal of the discipline of the Holy Spirit is for us to be a broken man; God puts us in a place of total inability and helplessness so that He can have the free way to work Himself with all His unsearchable riches into us—1:8-9; 4:16-18; 12:9-10; Hosea 6:1-3; Rom. 8:28-29; cf. John 12:3.

II. David cared for God's habitation on earth, the habitation of the Ark of God—2 Sam. 6:1—7:29; Psalms 132:1-18:

- A. Although God did not want David to build the temple, he prepared the builder, the site, and the materials for the building of the temple; God also revealed to David by His Spirit the pattern of the temple, and before David died, he gave this pattern to Solomon his son; thus, David fulfilled his ministry and co-worked with God for the completion of the building of the temple—2 Sam. 8:11; 1 Kings 7:51; 1 Chron. 22:14-16; 29:1-5; 28:11-19; Acts 13:22, 36.
- B. David was zealous to build a temple for God (2 Sam. 7:1-3), but God rejected David's good intention; God sent Nathan the prophet to David to ask, "Is it you who will build Me a house for Me to dwell in?"—v. 5:
 1. This shows that all our work and service in the church must be initiated by God and must be according to His desire; anything that is initiated or started by man, regardless of how much it is for God, is a religious activity devoid of the presence of Christ.
 2. Our heart to serve God is acceptable, but our decision to do something for Him is not acceptable; God said to David, "Is it you...?"; God does not want us to decide anything on His behalf.
- C. Because David was one who feared God and cooperated with God, he did not react when God told him through Nathan to stop in his determination to be the one who would build

the temple; the act of David's stopping to carry out his desire to build the temple is a great matter; Sister M. E. Barber said, "Whoever cannot stop working for the sake of God cannot work for the sake of God" (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1953*, vol. 1, "Knowing Life and the Church," p. 283)—Luke 10:38-42.

- D. David's stopping established a twofold testimony in the universe: first, all the work in the universe should come from God, not from man; second, all that matters is what God does for man, not what man does for God—2 Sam. 7:11-14a, 18, 25.
- E. We must learn deep within that God wants only our cooperation; He does not need us to do anything for Him; we must stop all our opinions, decisions, and ideas; we need to let Him speak, let Him come in, and let Him command—Matt. 17:5.

III. The account of God's punishing judgment on David is written as a warning to us today (1 Cor. 10:11); God is not only loving and merciful, but He is also just and fearsome; God forgave David, but He also disciplined and chastised David according to His governmental righteousness (2 Sam. 12:10-14):

- A. After all the enemies of Israel were subdued and David was exalted as the king of Israel, David committed great sins while he was in a peaceful situation—adultery and murder; this indicates that whenever we are at ease in a peaceful situation, it is easy for us to be seduced to indulge our flesh—11:1-27; 1 Pet. 4:1 and footnote 4.
- B. David's sin was the issue of his indulging the lust of the eyes and the lust of the flesh (2 Sam. 11:2-3); David, abusing the power of his kingship (vv. 4-5), committed willful adultery by robbery.
- C. After committing such an act, David tried to cover his evil deed by means of a pretense (vv. 6-13); then he murdered Uriah, his faithful servant, by conspiring with Joab, so that he could take Uriah's wife (vv. 14-25; 12:9).
- D. By his one sin David broke the last five of the Ten Commandments (Exo. 20:13-17); his sin was a great insult and offense to God, and it nearly annulled all his attainments from the past.
- E. David, being a man according to God's heart (1 Sam. 13:14), afforded God the way to begin the age of the kingship for the establishment of His kingdom on earth for His coming Christ, but he failed in the matter of the indulgence of the lust of the flesh (1 Kings 15:5); in this matter David was loose, and he sacrificed his high attainment in his spiritual pursuit of God; this should be a warning to all of us.
- F. How regrettable it was that David, at a crucial time of the evil one's temptation, did not exercise strong control over his lust but indulged in it and committed a gross sin that offended God to the uttermost.
- G. God loved David, but because of his sin David lost his standing and position as well as eleven of the twelve tribes (2 Sam. 20:1-2); David's sin sowed the seed of Solomon's corruption (12:24), which issued in the dividing of the God-given kingdom (1 Kings 11:9-13; 12:1-17), and the seed of the corruption of Solomon's descendants in the kingship, which issued ultimately in the loss of the nation and of the holy land of their fathers, in the captivity of the holy people, and in their being scattered around the globe and having no peace up to the present time.
- H. We can see from the history of David that falling under God's governmental hand is a serious matter (2 Sam. 12:10-14); David restored his fellowship with God very quickly, but God's discipline continued even after his death (v. 15b—20:26).
- I. Through the confessing of his sins, David's fellowship with God was restored, as revealed

in Psalm 51, but he came under God's governmental hand; after his failure many evils, including incest, murder, and rebellion, took place among his family—2 Sam. 12:15b—20:26.

- J. God exercised a severe punishment upon David because his sin was very evil; the source of the unprecedented evil in David's family was David's indulgence in the lust of the flesh; this shows that God's chastisement and His governmental dealing with those who love Him may even affect their children.
- K. This should be a solemn alarm and warning to us in our relationship with Christ; what we are, what we desire, what we intend to do, and how we behave have very much to do with our remaining in Christ and participating in all of His unsearchable riches for our enjoyment; if we are not right with God in any of these matters, we will suffer the loss of Christ as our enjoyment.
- L. The all-inclusive Christ as our dwelling place, our all-inclusive good land, and everything we need for our enjoyment will vomit us out of Himself and not allow us to enjoy Him any longer if we are not proper in relation to Him—Lev. 18:25; Rev. 3:16.
- M. Eventually, David not only became old but also was fading away; David's life had a good beginning, like the bright sun rising, and his life with his career became like the sun shining at noon; however, his indulgence in lust (2 Sam. 11:1-27) spoiled his career and caused his bright life to fade like the sunset in the evening; in David's old age there was nothing bright, excellent, or splendid (1 Kings 1:1-4; cf. Deut. 34:7; Gen. 48:14-16; Prov. 4:18).
- N. The Christian life is a life of learning God's government; we reap what we sow; the more generous we are to others, the more generous God will be to us; if we are mean and severe to our brothers, God will be mean and severe toward us; when others are sick or in trouble, it is the time for us to help them, not the time for us to criticize them—Gal. 6:7; 1 Thes. 5:14-15; Luke 6:36-38; Matt. 7:1-2:
 - 1. We must learn to be generous and forgiving persons; if we are severe toward others, God will be severe toward us; we should avoid criticizing, condemning, or speaking about others in a light way; our criticism and careless comments about others often become a judgment upon ourselves—6:15; 18:23-35.
 - 2. There are many brothers who have fallen miserably today for one reason only—they have criticized others too severely in the past, and many of their weaknesses today are the very weaknesses that they criticized in the past.
 - 3. We have been called to bless others, so we, as a blessed people, should always bless others that we may inherit blessing; what we bless others with, we will inherit ourselves—1 Pet. 3:8-11; Matt. 10:13; cf. Num. 6:22-27.

Message Seven

**David Typifying Christ, the Real David—
the King of the Coming Kingdom of God**

Scripture Reading: 1 Sam. 21:1-6; 2 Sam. 7:16; 23:1-7;
Amos 9:11-12; Matt. 1:6; 12:1-4

I. David typifies Christ, the real David—1 Sam. 21:1-6; 2 Sam. 23:1-7; Matt. 12:1-4:

- A. David is the most thorough type of Christ revealed in the Old Testament, covering the longest period of time; the New Testament also clearly reveals that David typifies Christ—Matt. 12:3.
- B. In keeping with the principle seen in Matthew 12, that Christ is greater than all the types, greater than all things and persons in the Old Testament that typify Him, Christ is the greater David:
 - 1. The Lord's word in Matthew 12:3-4 implies that He is the real David:
 - a. David had followers, and Christ, the real David, also had disciples as His followers.
 - b. All of this implies that David and his followers were a type, a prefigure, of Christ and His disciples.
 - 2. The Lord's word in Matthew 12:3-4 also implies a dispensational change from the priesthood to the kingship:
 - a. The coming of David changed the dispensation from the age of the priests to the age of the kings, in which the kings were above the priests.
 - b. By the coming of Christ, the dispensation was also changed, this time from the age of the law to the age of grace, in which Christ is above all.
 - c. In Matthew 1:6 David is called "the king" because it was through him that the kingdom with the kingship was brought in; he was the landmark of two ages, the conclusion of one age and the beginning of another age.
- C. David's typifying the suffering Christ is revealed in Psalms 22, 109, and 110:
 - 1. In Psalm 22 we see the suffering David typifying the suffering Christ passing through His death—vv. 1a, 6-21.
 - 2. Psalm 109 is a prayer offered by David about his sufferings:
 - a. Here David is a type of Christ, and David's sufferings typify Christ's sufferings.
 - b. David's prayer concerning his sufferings typifies Christ's prayer.
 - 3. The prayer in Psalm 109 is answered in Psalm 110:
 - a. Since Psalm 110 is the answer to the prayer of David as a type of Christ in Psalm 109, Psalm 110 should be considered as an answer to Christ's prayer—Heb. 5:7.
 - b. God answered this prayer not only through the resurrection of Christ but also through Christ's ascension—Acts 2:23-24, 32-33; 5:31.
- D. David also typifies Christ in his last words—2 Sam. 23:1-7:
 - 1. David, a type of Christ, ruled among men righteously with the fear of God—v. 3b.
 - 2. David, a type of Christ, was like the light of the morning when the sun rises without clouds—v. 4a.
 - 3. When Christ rules among men righteously with the fear of God, He is like the light of the morning when the sun rises, "as when the tender grass sprouts up from the earth/

At the sun's shining after a rain"—v. 4b.

II. David the king typifies Christ the King—1 Sam. 16:12; 2 Sam. 16:5-6; Matt. 1:6; 2:2; 27:11; Rev. 19:16:

- A. King David typifies Christ—the King of the coming kingdom of God—as the king established by God, the warring king, and the king despised and rejected by men—1 Sam. 16:12; 2 Sam. 16:5-6:
 - 1. As typified by David, Christ is the fighting King, who has won the victory over all His enemies, who has gained the land, and who has prepared all the materials for building up the church as the temple of God—1 Chron. 21:22-25; 29:29.
 - 2. After Christ takes possession of the earth, He will reign over the earth as the King in the kingdom, ruling over the nations with His overcoming believers—Rev. 20:4, 6; 2:26-27.
 - 3. As the coming King, Christ will be the Head and the center of the coming kingdom of God in the millennium; this will be the fulfillment of Isaiah 32:1, Jeremiah 23:5, and Zechariah 14:9 and 17.
- B. The prophets spoke of David and Christ as one—Jer. 30:9; Ezek. 34:23-24; 37:24-25; Hosea 3:5; Amos 9:11:
 - 1. “They will serve Jehovah their God and David their King, whom I will raise up for them”—Jer. 30:9.
 - 2. This refers to Christ, who is the real David and who will be the King in the restoration, that is, the millennium—Isa. 32:1; Rev. 20:4, 6.
 - 3. “I will set up over them one Shepherd, My Servant David, and He will feed them; He will feed them, and He will be their Shepherd... And My Servant David will be a Prince among them”—Ezek. 34:23-24:
 - a. David typifies Christ, the real Shepherd of God's flock, feeding us and causing us to be filled and satisfied—John 10:11; Heb. 13:20; Isa. 9:7; Hosea 3:5; Micah 5:2; Luke 1:32-33.
 - b. When the Lord Jesus comes as the Shepherd to care for us, He comes also as the King to govern us; the issue of the Lord's caring for us as our Shepherd is that we obey Him as our King and come under His kingship and His throne within us.
 - 4. “My Servant David will be King over them, and they all will have one Shepherd”—Ezek. 37:24:
 - a. This refers to Christ our Shepherd, who is the real David.
 - b. In relation to Israel the prophecy given here will be fulfilled in the millennium, the age of restoration, and in eternity, in the new heaven and new earth.
 - 5. “Afterward the children of Israel will return and seek Jehovah their God and David their King, and they will come with fear to Jehovah and to His goodness in the last days”—Hosea 3:5:
 - a. David their King is Christ in the millennium.
 - b. *The last days* refers to the age of restoration—Matt. 19:28.
- C. In the Lord's upcoming reign God's authority and glory will be fully manifested, and the whole earth with its peoples will be brought into righteousness, peace, joy, and the full blessing of God's creation—6:13; Isa. 32:1, 16-18; 35:1-2, 5-7.

III. The kingdom of David typifies the coming kingdom of Christ—2 Sam. 7:12, 16; Mark 11:10; Rev. 11:15:

- A. Through the prophet Nathan, Jehovah spoke to David, saying, “Your house and your kingdom will be made sure forever before you; your throne will be established forever”—2 Sam. 7:16:
1. David’s house refers to Christ, David’s kingdom refers to Christ’s kingdom, and David’s throne refers to Christ’s throne—v. 16.
 2. The kingdom of David is Christ’s kingdom, and David and Christ have one throne—Isa. 9:7; 16:5; Luke 1:32; Acts 2:29-31.
 3. The word of God conveyed by the archangel Gabriel also confirmed that the covenant of David will be fulfilled in Christ—Luke 1:32-33.
 4. God’s promise to David that his house and kingdom would be made sure and that his throne would be established forever was fulfilled in Christ.
 5. Christ will inherit the throne of David according to the promise of God to David to reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end—vv. 32-33:
 - a. The earthly part of the millennial kingdom in the coming age will be the Messianic kingdom, which is called the kingdom of the Son of Man in Matthew 13:41 (Rev. 11:15).
 - b. This will be the restored kingdom of Israel (Acts 1:6), the tabernacle of David—the kingdom of David—which the Lord will rebuild (15:16; Mark 11:10).
- B. Amos prophesied that, as the King, Christ will raise up the “fallen tabernacle of David”—Amos 9:11:
1. The tabernacle of David is the kingdom of David and the royal family of David—2 Sam. 7:12, 16.
 2. That kingdom, that royal family, fell when Nebuchadnezzar came to capture the nation of Israel, devastate the land, burn the city, destroy the temple, and carry off the king—2 Kings 25:1-21.
 3. In Amos’s prophecy God promised that in a certain day the kingdom of David and the family of David would be restored, and all the nations would be called by the name of Jehovah—Amos 9:11-12.
 4. This prophecy indicates that Christ will come back to be the real David (Isa. 9:7; 16:5; Jer. 30:9; Ezek. 34:23-24; 37:24-25; Hosea 3:5) and will rebuild, that is, restore, the kingdom of His forefather David for the restoration of the entire universe.
 5. At that time the kingdom of David will become the kingdom of Christ and of God for eternity—Rev. 11:15.
 6. The Lord will sit on the throne of David and reign over Jacob, that is, the Jewish people (Luke 1:32-33), and He will rule over the nations on earth during the millennium (Psa. 2:8; 72:8; Dan. 7:14; 2:35).

Message Eight

The Seed of David Becoming the Son of God

Scripture Reading: 2 Sam. 7:12a, 14a; Matt. 22:41-45;
Acts 13:23, 33; Rom. 1:3-4; 8:29; Rev. 22:16

- I. “I will raise up your seed after you...I will be his Father, and he will be My son”—2 Sam. 7:12a, 14a:**
- A. *Your seed* here refers, literally, to Solomon, David’s son—1 Kings 5:5; 8:15-20.
 - B. According to Hebrews 1:5b, which quotes 2 Samuel 7:14a, David’s seed is actually Christ as God’s firstborn Son, who has both divinity and humanity—Heb. 1:5a, 6.
 - C. *Your seed* in 2 Samuel 7:12a and *My son* in verse 14a imply that the seed of David would become the Son of God, that is, that a human seed would become a divine Son—Rom. 1:3-4.
 - D. This word concerning the seed of David becoming the Son of God is continued and developed strongly in the New Testament—Matt. 22:41-45; Rev. 22:16.
- II. In Matthew 22:41-45 the Lord Jesus asked the greatest question in the universe: “What do you think concerning the Christ? Whose son is He?”—v. 42a:**
- A. The Pharisees said that the Christ was David’s son, and the Lord asked them how David could call the Christ Lord when the Christ was his son—vv. 43-45.
 - B. Christ can be known by us only in our spirit through God’s revelation—v. 43; Eph. 3:5.
 - C. Christ is God; in His divinity He is the Lord of David—Matt. 22:43.
 - D. Christ is also a man; in His humanity He is the son of David—vv. 42, 45.
- III. In Revelation 22:16 the Lord Jesus said, “I am the Root and the Offspring of David”:**
- A. In His divinity, Christ is the Root, the source, of David; in His humanity, Christ is the Offspring, the issue, of David.
 - B. Christ is the Lord as the Root of David, and He is also the son, the shoot, of David as the Offspring of David; just as *the Offspring of David* denotes that the Lord is man and that He came out of David, so also *the Root of David* denotes that He is God and that David came out of Him.
 - C. In Revelation 22:16 Christ Himself acknowledged that He is man as well as God, that He has both the human nature and the divine nature.
- IV. In Acts 13 Paul said that from David’s seed “God, according to promise, brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus” (v. 23), and that “God has fully fulfilled this promise...in raising up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, ‘You are My Son; this day have I begotten You’” (v. 33):**
- A. In verses 32 and 33 we see that Christ as the Firstborn of God was promised to the fathers, and God fulfilled this promise by raising up Jesus.
 - B. Resurrection was a birth to the man Jesus:
 - 1. He was begotten by God in His resurrection to be the firstborn Son of God among many brothers—Rom. 8:29.
 - 2. He was the only begotten Son of God from eternity—John 1:18; 3:16.

3. After His incarnation, through resurrection He was begotten by God in His humanity to be God's firstborn Son—Heb. 1:6.
- C. Paul was able to see the Lord's resurrection in Psalm 2:7: "You are My Son;/Today I have begotten You":
 1. Paul applied the word *today* to the day of the Lord's resurrection.
 2. This means that Christ's resurrection was His birth as the firstborn Son of God.
 3. Jesus, the Son of Man, was born to be the Son of God through being raised up from the dead; therefore, God's raising up Jesus from the dead was His begetting of Him to be His firstborn Son—Acts 13:33.
- D. Through incarnation God's only begotten Son put on humanity and became the God-man (John 1:14, 18; Luke 1:35); then in resurrection this God-man was born of God to be His Firstborn (Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:6; Rom. 8:29):
 1. Before incarnation God's only begotten Son did not have the human nature; He had only the divine nature.
 2. In resurrection God's firstborn Son has the human nature as well as the divine nature.
- E. Through His resurrection Christ was born to be the firstborn Son, and at the same time all His believers were born to be the many sons of God—1 Pet. 1:3; Heb. 2:10:
 1. Among these many sons, only the Firstborn is God's only begotten Son—John 1:18; 1 John 4:9.
 2. This only begotten Son of God, in His resurrected humanity, is also the firstborn Son of God—Rom. 8:29.
 3. The Firstborn has both divinity and humanity, and we, His believers as God's many sons, also possess both the human nature and the divine nature—2 Pet. 1:4.

V. We need to know Christ in His resurrection designated as the Son of God in power with His human nature—Rom. 1:3-4:

- A. Before His incarnation and resurrection, Christ was the Son of God, the only begotten Son—John 1:18; 3:16.
- B. Although Christ already was the Son of God before the incarnation, He still needed to be designated the Son of God out of resurrection because by incarnation He had put on the human nature, which had nothing to do with divinity—1:1, 14; Rom. 8:3:
 1. After the Son of God became incarnate, His divine nature was concealed by the flesh.
 2. Christ was already the Son of God in His divinity, but the part of Him that was Jesus with the human nature, born of Mary, was not the Son of God—Luke 1:31-32, 35.
 3. By His resurrection Christ sanctified and uplifted His human nature, His humanity, and He was designated out of resurrection as the Son of God with this human nature; in this sense He was begotten the Son of God in His resurrection—Rom. 1:3-4; Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5.
 4. This designation of the Son of God was "in power," the power of Christ's resurrection, the reality of which is the Spirit—Rom. 1:4; Phil. 3:10; Eph. 1:19-20.
- C. Through designation in resurrection the Christ who was already the Son of God before His incarnation became the Son of God in a new way—Rom. 1:4:
 1. Before His incarnation He was the Son of God only with divinity; through His resurrection He was designated the Son of God with both divinity and humanity—v. 4.
 2. If Christ had not put on human nature, there would have been no need for Him to be designated the Son of God, for in His divinity He was already the Son of God, even from eternity—John 1:18; 17:5.

3. Having put on humanity through incarnation, He was designated the Son of God with humanity in resurrection—1:14; Rom. 8:3; 1:3-4; Heb. 2:14:
 - a. As the designated Son of God, Christ has two natures, divinity and humanity; the humanity that He now has is not a natural humanity but a humanity uplifted in resurrection—Rom. 1:4.
 - b. Even Christ's human nature has been designated the Son of God, for He has been designated the Son of God with both divinity and humanity.
- D. The designation of Christ as the Son of God with humanity was “according to the Spirit of holiness”—v. 4:
 1. The Spirit of holiness is the life essence within the Lord Jesus; when He lived on earth in the flesh, He had this essence within Him—Matt. 1:18, 20; Luke 1:35.
 2. When the Lord Jesus was resurrected from among the dead, He was designated the Son of God in power by resurrection according to the Spirit of holiness that was in Him—Rom. 1:4.
 3. Now He is the Son of God in a way that is more wonderful than before, for now He has both the divine nature and the resurrected, transformed, uplifted, glorified, and designated human nature—6:4; Luke 24:26; John 17:5; Acts 3:13.
- E. We need to connect Romans 1:3-4 and 8:29:
 1. Through His incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection, Christ, the Son of God, became the firstborn Son, and the many sons, who are the brothers of Christ, are being conformed to His image—Heb. 2:10-11; Rom. 8:29.
 2. In Romans 1:3-4 Christ, the Son of God, is the prototype, whereas in 8:29 the many brothers are those who have been “mass-produced” from the prototype and, by being saved in life, will be conformed to the image of the firstborn Son.
 3. This brings us to the matter of deification and implies that God's intention in His economy is to make Himself man so that, in Christ, we, the believers in Christ and children of God, may become God in life, in nature, and in constitution (but not in the Godhead); such an implication is exceedingly great, and eventually, the Bible consummates with this matter—v. 29; 1:3-4; John 1:1-13; 1 John 3:1; Rev. 21:2, 10-11.

Message Nine
**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

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.

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).
- 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.

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.
- 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.
- 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.

Message Ten

David, Mephibosheth, and the Kindness of God

Scripture Reading: 2 Sam. 9:1-13; Rom. 2:4;
Eph. 2:7; 4:32; Titus 3:4-5; Col. 3:12

I. Second Samuel 9:1-13 is a record of David's showing kindness to Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan:

- A. David felt obliged to show kindness, for the sake of Jonathan, to any remaining descendant of the house of Saul and asked a servant of the house of Saul, saying, "Is there yet anyone at all of the house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God to him?"—v. 3a.
- B. The servant told David that there was still a son of Jonathan, Mephibosheth, who was crippled in his feet—v. 3b.
- C. David told Mephibosheth that he would show kindness to him for the sake of Jonathan his father and promised Mephibosheth that he would restore to him all the land of his grandfather and that he would eat at the king's table continually—vv. 7, 13.
- D. King David preserved his life, restored to him all his inheritance, and invited him to feast with him at the same table—vv. 7, 9.
- E. David gave to Mephibosheth all that belonged to Saul and to all his house; Mephibosheth ate at the king's table continually, and "he was crippled in both his feet"—vv. 9, 13.

II. Mephibosheth had no ground to receive grace, yet he received it; the same is true with regard to us and God:

- A. Mephibosheth had no position at all before David—vv. 1-6:
 - 1. He received kindness not because of himself but because of another person—v. 7.
 - 2. This is true for a sinner before God—Rom. 2:4.
- B. *Lo-debar*, the place where Mephibosheth lived, is a Hebrew word that means "a place without grass, without pasture"; the world today is a "Lo-debar"—2 Sam. 9:4:
 - 1. Mephibosheth, who ran away from David, was living in a place without grass, without any life supply—v. 4.
 - 2. A sinner far away from God is also living in a place without grass.
- C. Mephibosheth did not seek after David, but David sent men to fetch Mephibosheth—vv. 4-5.
- D. When David said, "Mephibosheth," there was a compassionate feeling in his heart, and there was a pleasant tone in his voice—vv. 6-7:
 - 1. Underneath this word was a heart that expressed God's heart—1 Sam. 16:7.
 - 2. David's heart was full of kindness and compassion—20:14-15.

III. Spiritually speaking, we all are like Mephibosheth, the grandson of King Saul (2 Sam. 4:4), who was crippled in his feet:

- A. Although Mephibosheth dined with the king often, his two feet still remained lame—9:7.
- B. After Mephibosheth received grace from David, he looked only at the riches on David's table; he did not look at his crippled feet underneath the table.
- C. Like Mephibosheth, we can dine at the King's table even though we are still crippled—v. 13:
 - 1. Our two feet are lame, but they are *under the table*.
 - 2. After we have been saved, we should forget about our "crippled feet" and sit at the

- table of our King, Jesus Christ, to enjoy Him—v. 7; Rom. 14:17; Neh. 8:10:
 - a. Whenever we look at ourselves, we discover that we are lame, and we become discouraged—cf. S. S. 2:8—3:5.
 - b. We should look only at the riches on the Lord's table and enjoy them—Eph. 3:8.
- 3. What God has spread out for us is wonderful, rich, and sweet; we simply need to eat—John 6:50-51, 53-57; Matt. 8:11; 22:2; Rev. 19:9.
- D. We need to turn away from self-introspection and look away unto the Lord—Heb. 12:2; 2:9.
- E. When we look only at the riches and the grace that God has spread before us, we will be peaceful, and our hearts will be satisfied—Matt. 5:6; 14:20.

IV. David's kindness to Mephibosheth signifies the kindness of God—2 Sam. 9:3; Rom. 2:4; Eph. 2:7; Titus 3:4-5:

- A. Kindness is a benevolent goodness that issues out of the mercy and love of God—Eph. 2:4, 7.
- B. It is the kindness and the love of our Savior God that saved us and made us different from others—Titus 3:4:
 - 1. The grace of God brings salvation to man; we have been saved by the grace of the Lord—2:11; 3:7.
 - 2. Titus 3:5 says that according to His mercy God saved us:
 - a. God's mercy reaches farther than His grace—Rom. 9:15-16, 18, 23; Heb. 4:16.
 - b. Our pitiful condition created a wide gap between us and God's grace.
 - c. It was God's mercy that bridged this gap and brought us to His salvation of grace—Rom. 2:4; 9:23.
 - 3. In Titus 3:4 and 5 Paul speaks not of grace but of kindness, love, and mercy:
 - a. Love is the source of grace; in 1 John we touch the love of God the Father as the source of grace—3:1; 4:9-10.
 - b. In the heart of God the Father there is love; when this love is expressed through the Son, it becomes grace—John 1:14, 16-17.
 - c. Kindness is God's attitude in giving us grace—Eph. 2:7.
 - d. When we have mercy, love, and kindness, we automatically have grace—Titus 3:4-5, 7.
 - e. Our God and Father has shown us love, mercy, and kindness; it is by this that He saves us—vv. 4-5.
- C. In the ages to come—the ages of the millennium and eternity future—God will display “the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus”—Eph. 2:7:
 - 1. It is in God's kindness that the grace of God is given to us—v. 8.
 - 2. The riches of God's grace in His kindness surpass every limit—v. 7:
 - a. These are the riches of God Himself for our enjoyment—3:8.
 - b. The riches of God's grace in kindness will be publicly displayed for eternity—2:7.
- D. One item of the fruit of the Spirit is kindness—Gal. 5:22:
 - 1. Having put on the new man (Col. 3:10), as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, we need to put on inward parts of compassion and kindness (v. 12).
 - 2. The apostle Paul was a minister of God in kindness, and he charged us to continue in the kindness of God—2 Cor. 6:4, 6; Rom. 11:22.
 - 3. Love is kind (1 Cor. 13:4), and we need to be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ also forgave us (Eph. 4:32).

Message Eleven
**David and Abigail Typifying
the Warring Christ and the Warring Church**

Scripture Reading: 1 Sam. 25:2-42; Eph. 5:25-27; 6:10-13;
Rev. 19:7-9, 11-21; Heb. 6:19; 10:19-20; 13:13

I. First Samuel 25:1b-44 is a record of David's dealing with Nabal and Abigail:

- A. In this chapter we see Abigail's wisdom in appeasing David—vv. 23-31.
- B. David responded to Abigail's appeal by blessing Jehovah, who sent her to meet him, and also by blessing her, who kept him from entering into bloodshed and from avenging himself by his own hand—vv. 32-35.
- C. Abigail's beauty and wisdom caught David, and after Nabal's death he took her as his wife, and she became his counterpart in warfare—vv. 36-44.

II. David typifies the warring Christ in the midst of sufferings—v. 28:

- A. David typifies the Lord Jesus as a man in His suffering on earth before His resurrection; David's suffering was for the conquering of the usurping enemies and the gaining of the good land, the ground for God's building—Psa. 69:1-9.
- B. David's being established by God is seen in his repeated victories over the Philistines; thus, he is a type of the warrior Christ—2 Sam. 5:17-25.
- C. Because Jehovah is the Warrior fighting the battle for us and triumphing over all our enemies, He is our triumph, our victory—Exo. 17:8-16.
- D. Psalm 110:5-6 reveals that in addition to being the King and the Priest, Christ is the Warrior:
 - 1. In the day of His anger at His coming back, Christ will be the greatest Victor, overcoming all the nations, shattering the kings and the head of the enemies, and executing judgment on all those who oppose Him—vv. 1-2, 5-6.
 - 2. According to Revelation 19:11-14, in His coming back Christ will be the fighting One:
 - a. The Lord will not fight alone against Antichrist and the armies of the nations.
 - b. Christ will come with His bride as His army, and with her He will fight against Antichrist and his armies—vv. 7-9.
- E. The Warrior Christ is the victorious Christ—John 12:31; Eph. 4:8; Heb. 2:14:
 - 1. In His earthly ministry the victorious Christ defeated the devil and destroyed his works—Matt. 4:1-11; 1 John 3:8.
 - 2. In His crucifixion the victorious Christ cast out the ruler of this world, destroyed the devil, caused the rulers and authorities to be stripped off, and nullified death—John 12:31; Matt. 27:51; Heb. 2:14; Col. 2:15; 2 Tim. 1:10.
 - 3. The resurrection of the victorious Christ declares that He is victorious over death—2:8.
 - 4. In His ascension the victorious Christ “led captive those taken captive”; He released us from the usurping hand of Satan and brought us to the highest place in the universe—Eph. 2:6; 4:8.
 - 5. The victorious Christ will come as the fighting General, the Warrior, with His army to fight Antichrist, the kings under him, and their armies at Armageddon—Rev. 19:11-21.

III. Abigail typifies the warring church in the midst of sufferings—1 Sam. 25:2-42:

- A. From 1 Samuel 25 onward, Abigail was always at the side of David the warrior and followed him in his wars—vv. 40-42:
 - 1. Abigail's marriage to David typifies the church enlisted as an army for warfare—Eph. 6:10-20.
 - 2. Abigail typifies the warring church, fighting for God's kingdom in the midst of sufferings—Rev. 1:9; 11:15; 12:10.
- B. The type of Abigail portrays our need to be one with Christ in His sufferings—Phil. 3:10; Col. 1:24; Rev. 1:9:
 - 1. The afflictions of Christ are of two categories: those for accomplishing redemption, which were completed by Christ Himself, and those for producing and building the church, which need to be filled up by the apostles and the believers—Col. 1:24.
 - 2. The fact that Paul mentions the afflictions of Christ in connection with the stewardship of God indicates that the stewardship can be carried out only through suffering—v. 25:
 - a. If we desire to share in the stewardship of God, we must be prepared to suffer—Rev. 1:9; 2 Cor. 1:3-6.
 - b. All those who participate in the service of the church or in the ministry must be ready to partake of the afflictions of a steward; this means that we must be willing to pay whatever price is necessary to fulfill our stewardship—4:10-12; John 12:24-26.
- C. The type of Abigail portrays the church's participation with the Lord Jesus in spiritual warfare—Eph. 6:10-20:
 - 1. The church as Christ's counterpart, His bride, is revealed in Ephesians 5:25-27, and this counterpart becomes the warrior, the fighter, in Ephesians 6:10-13:
 - a. Ephesians 5 and 6 will be fulfilled in Revelation 19.
 - b. The totality of the overcomers becomes the bride to be the counterpart of Christ (vv. 7-9), and this counterpart becomes Christ's army to defeat Antichrist at Armageddon (vv. 11-21).
 - 2. Not only must God's eternal purpose be fulfilled and the desire of His heart be satisfied, but God's enemy must be defeated; for this, the church must be a warrior—Eph. 1:11; 3:9-11; 6:10-12.
 - 3. Spiritual warfare is necessary because Satan's will is set against God's will—Matt. 6:10; 7:21; Isa. 14:12-14:
 - a. Spiritual warfare has its source in the conflict between the divine will and the satanic will.
 - b. As the church, our fighting is to subdue the satanic will and to defeat God's enemy—Rev. 12:11.
 - 4. Satan is terrified of the church as the Body of Christ, the corporate warrior fighting against him and his kingdom—S. S. 6:10; Eph. 6:10-20.
 - 5. Christ will marry the one who has been fighting the battle against God's enemy for years—Rev. 19:7-9, 11-16.
 - 6. The overcomers who constitute the bride of Christ fight the battle against all the enemies of God and defeat them in order to bring in the kingdom of God—2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; 11:15; 12:10.

IV. The type of Abigail portrays a believer who goes forth unto Jesus outside the camp, bearing His reproach—Heb. 13:13:

- A. Our Christian life has two aspects—an inward aspect and an outward aspect—Heb. 6:19-20; 13:13:
 1. The inward aspect is typified by the Shulammite, and the outward aspect is typified by Abigail—S. S. 6:4, 10, 13; Heb. 13:13.
 2. On the one hand, we are within the veil, in the Holy of Holies; on the other hand, we are outside the city, the camp, before men—Heb. 6:19-20; 13:13.
 - a. Inwardly, we enjoy the resurrected Christ, and outwardly, we follow Jesus—6:19; 13:13.
 - b. When we touch the Lord in the inner chamber, in the Holy of Holies, in the secret place, we can be likened to the Shulammite—10:19-20; S. S. 1:4; 4:10; 6:13.
 - c. When we testify for the Lord and work for the Lord in our outward living, we can be likened to Abigail wandering with David in the wilderness—1 Sam. 25:40-42.
- B. Every day we can experience these two aspects—Heb. 6:19-20; 10:19-20; 13:13:
 1. We are within the veil as the Shulammite, living in the Holy of Holies and enjoying the resurrected and glorified Christ, and we are outside the camp as Abigail, living in the world and following the lowly Jesus—6:19-20; 13:13.
 2. Like the Shulammite and Solomon, we remain in the palaces of ivory and fellowship with the Lord inwardly, and like Abigail, we outwardly live and work by following David to war and suffering—Psa. 45:8; 1 Sam. 25:40-42.
 3. The One within us is the resurrected Christ, and the One without is Jesus the Nazarene—Rev. 1:17-18; Matt. 2:23.
 4. Inwardly, we have the enjoyment of the Shulammite in the secret place, and outwardly, we have the public living of Abigail.
- C. When a believer in Christ comes out from within the veil, the inner chamber of fellowship, he is able to take the way of the cross and follow the suffering Jesus—Heb. 6:19; 10:19-20; 13:13:
 1. Only those who enter within the veil can go forth unto Jesus outside the camp and bear His reproach—6:19; 10:19-20; 13:13.
 2. It is the resurrected Christ in us who leads us to follow the suffering Jesus—v. 13.
 3. The Lord Jesus has walked the way of the cross and entered into resurrection, and now He is leading us, His Abigail, to take the way of the cross and follow Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach—v. 13.

Message Twelve

**Spiritual Principles, Life Lessons, and Holy Warnings
concerning the Enjoyment of the Good Land
Seen with Five Major Figures in 1 and 2 Samuel**

Scripture Reading: 1 Sam. 2:27-30, 35; 3:21; 12:3-5, 23; 18:1-4;
23:16-18; 9:1-2, 17; 13:13-14; 15:19, 23; 16:1, 12-13;
30:6b-10; 26:19b; 2 Sam. 11:1-27

I. Under Eli the old Aaronic priesthood had become stale and waning (1 Sam. 2:12-30), and God desired to have a new beginning for the accomplishing of His economy:

- A. We all need to reject anything of staleness, oldness, lukewarmness, and pride and keep ourselves empty, open, fresh, new, living, and young with the Lord; we need to be one with His desire for us to be one with Christ, filled with Christ, and occupied by Christ to live Christ for the organic building up of the Body of Christ—Rev. 3:15-22; Luke 18:17; Phil. 3:7-14; Gal. 1:15-16; 2:20; 4:19; Eph. 4:16.
- B. In the days of Eli the word of God was rare; God’s speaking was almost lost (1 Sam. 3:1); in the priesthood the first thing that a priest should do is to speak for God (Exo. 28:30); a priest must be a person who is intimate with God, who is one with God, who knows the heart of God, and who speaks forth the unique and healthy teaching of God’s eternal economy (1 Tim. 1:3-4; 6:3).
- C. Eli taught Samuel to say to the Lord, “Speak, O Jehovah; for Your servant is listening”; in order to speak for the Lord and be one with Him to carry out His eternal economy, we must first treasure and listen attentively to His speaking so that we may know His desire and preference—1 Sam. 3:9-10, 21; Isa. 50:4-5.
- D. Eli disregarded the priesthood in his loose disciplining of his two evil sons (1 Sam. 2:28-29); this caused the tragedy of the ending of his history, the termination of his enjoyment of the good land, and the fading of the priesthood in the divine revelation, that is, in the speaking for God; today we need to learn of Eli to have a high regard for what God has given us in His recovery.

II. Samuel was faithful to God in all his God-given statuses and offices:

- A. As a Levite, he served God his whole life; as a Nazarite, he kept his consecration without failure (v. 35); as a priest-prophet, he spoke for God honestly and initiated the prophethood to replace the fading priesthood in the divine revelation; as a judge, he was faithful to God and just to the people, terminating the judgeship and bringing in the kingship in order to change the age for the fulfillment of God’s economy.
- B. As one who worked together with God for the carrying out of His economy (John 5:17; 2 Cor. 6:1a), Samuel was established as a prophet of Jehovah to speak for Him by listening to His word (1 Sam. 3:9-10, 20-21); we need to continually exercise ourselves to have an ear to “hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (Rev. 2:7); furthermore, we need to follow the pattern of Mary, who “sat at the Lord’s feet and was listening to His word” (Luke 10:38-42):
 - 1. Mary sat at the feet of the Lord Jesus and not at the feet of anyone else; no method is better than coming to Him moment by moment, loving Him, worshipping Him, and unceasingly fellowshiping with Him and remaining in His presence.

2. Mary sat at the feet of the Lord; she put herself in a humble position in order to hear the Lord's speaking and receive His blessing; humility is not belittling ourselves; humility is ignoring ourselves, negating ourselves, and considering ourselves as nothing.
 3. She was sitting down; those who are busy to the point of being distracted from the Lord's presence have a wandering mind and vacillating thoughts; they must stop themselves in order to spend personal time with the Lord on a daily basis.
 4. She was listening to the Lord's word; the words that the Lord speaks to us are spirit and life (John 6:63); her listening to the Lord's word afforded the Lord the opportunity to communicate Himself to her and to dispense Himself into her so that she could gain the Lord Himself.
- C. Samuel enjoyed his portion of the good land to the fullest for his whole life; thus, in a New Testament sense, we can say that there was no defect in his enjoyment of Christ; the only defect in Samuel's history was that he appointed his two sons as judges among the children of Israel—1 Sam. 8:1-3:
1. The unjust ways of Samuel's sons were contrary to their father's pure and just way in his whole life (12:3-5, 23) and gave the people of Israel cause to ask Samuel to appoint a king to judge them like all the nations (8:1-7); hence, the sons of Samuel should not be reckoned judges among the people of Israel (Acts 13:20), and their father Samuel should be considered the last judge.
 2. Humanly, Samuel made a mistake in this matter, but this mistake helped God to manage the situation among His people by bringing in the kingship for the fulfillment of His economy.

III. Jonathan loved David, made a covenant with him, and predicted that David would become the king and that the kingdom would be his kingdom—1 Sam. 18:1-4; 19:1-7; 20:8, 14-17, 41-42; 23:16-18:

- A. Saul's intention was to preserve the kingdom for Jonathan; however, Jonathan was not willing to take the kingdom but recognized that David should be on the throne.
- B. Jonathan should have told his father about this and then should have left his father to be with David; in typology, for Jonathan to follow David would have signified our following Christ today and our giving Him the preeminence—Col. 1:18b; Rev. 2:4.
- C. Jonathan lost the proper and adequate enjoyment of his portion in the good land promised by God because of his failure in not following David according to God's will due to his natural affection for his father; although Jonathan realized that David would be king, he stayed with his father, and as a tragic result, he suffered the same fate as his father and died with him in battle—1 Sam. 31:2-6.
- D. Jonathan stood between Saul and David; he was one man standing between two ministries; he should have followed the second ministry, but because his relationship with the first ministry was too deep, he could not disentangle himself:
 1. In every age the Lord has special things that He wants to accomplish; He has His own recoveries and His own works to do; the particular recovery and work that He does in one age is the ministry of that age—cf. Gen. 6:13-14.
 2. David was a minister of his age with the ministry of that age (Acts 13:21-22, 36a); in the Old Testament, Noah had the ministry of that age to build the ark, Moses had the ministry of that age to build the tabernacle, and David and Solomon had the ministry of that age to build the temple.
 3. A minister of the age with the ministry of the age is different from the local ministers;

Luther was a minister of his age, and Darby was also a minister of his age; in order to catch up with the ministry of this present age, there is the need for us to see the vision; Michal was married to David, yet she did not see anything; she only saw David's outward condition, and she could not tolerate it; as a result, she was left behind—2 Sam. 6:16, 20-23.

4. In the New Testament, the ministry of the Lord Jesus is to build up the church as the Body of Christ (Matt. 16:18); the many gifted persons produced in the Lord's ascension have only one ministry, that is, to minister Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ, the church; this building up is not accomplished directly by the gifted ones but by the saints who have been perfected by the gifted ones (Eph. 4:11-12, 16).
5. In God's building ministry there are those who take the lead in that ministry in every age; may the Lord open our eyes to see that as long as we are human beings, we should be Christians; as long as we are Christians, we should enter into the Lord's ministry in this age.
6. It is God's mercy that a person can see and come into contact with the ministry of the age, yet it is altogether a different thing for a person to take up the courage to forsake past ministries and enter into God's present ministry—cf. 1 Sam. 14:1-46; 2 Sam. 6:16, 20-23.
7. The ministry of the age ministers the present truth to God's people; in 2 Peter 1:12 *the present truth* can also be rendered "the up-to-date truth"; every worker of the Lord should inquire before God as to what the present truth is—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:15-16; Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26-29; 3:5, 12, 21; Psa. 48:2; Rev. 19:7-9; 21:2.

IV. Saul was chosen by God and anointed by Samuel to be the king of Israel—1 Sam. 9:1-2, 17; 10:1, 24:

- A. Saul disobeyed God's word at least twice so that he lost his kingship and his kingdom (13:13-14; 15:19, 23; 28:17-19); when Saul disobeyed God in 1 Samuel 15, he actually rebelled against Him.
- B. In this chapter Samuel told Saul, "Rebellion is like the sin of divination, / And insubordination is like idolatry and teraphim" (v. 23a); to practice divination is to have contact with evil spirits; what Saul did in rebelling against God was like this sin of divination; he was not subordinate to God and in fact became an enemy to God; as a result, he lost his kingship.
- C. Saul's tragic end was altogether due to his not being properly related to God's economy; God, wanting to build up His kingdom among His chosen people, had brought Saul into His economy, but instead of participating in God's economy and cooperating with it, Saul was selfish and usurped God's kingdom to build up his own monarchy; he was filled with thoughts of the kingship, including thoughts about how his son would succeed him—20:31.
- D. In this, Saul was selfish and wrong to the uttermost; eventually, God gave Saul up and cut him off, tearing the kingdom away from him (15:28); because Saul was given up by God, he was left alone, like an orphan, having no provision of help when trouble came.
- E. Because of Saul's selfishness, the people of Israel suffered defeat and were slaughtered in the fight against the Philistines, and Saul and his sons were killed; Saul's ambition to have the kingdom for himself and for his son, with his jealousy of David, confiscated and ended his enjoyment of the good land promised by God—20:30-34.
- F. The collective death of Saul, his three sons, and his armor bearer was God's fair judgment on the one who had rebelled against Him, had usurped Him, and had become His enemy (1 Chron. 10:13-14); from Saul's tragic end we should learn the lesson of crucifying our flesh

and denying our selfishness—our self-interest and self-seeking (Gal. 5:24; Matt. 16:24; Phil. 2:3).

- G. The record of Saul's terrible end is a strong warning to all who serve in the kingdom of God not to do a separate work within the kingdom of God or to abuse anything in the kingdom; we should not be like Saul, trying to build up a "monarchy" for ourselves; rather, we should all do one unique work to build up the kingdom of God, the Body of Christ—1 Sam. 31:1-13.

V. David was chosen and anointed by God through Samuel to be the king of Israel—16:1, 12-13:

- A. After David slew Goliath, he was praised by the women of Israel as higher than Saul (18:7), but with David there is no hint that he was made proud or that he became ambitious for the kingship; when David was under the trial of Saul's persecution, he was approved to be the right one to carry out God's economy by establishing the kingdom of God on earth.
- B. When David was under Saul's persecution, he had two chances to destroy Saul, but David would not do this because of his fear of God in that Saul was God's anointed; this indicates that David maintained a good order in God's kingdom—chs. 24 and 26; cf. Rom. 12:3.
- C. No doubt, David learned a lot regarding not avenging himself but denying himself for the fulfilling of God's purpose, on the basis that he was a man according to God's heart—1 Sam. 13:14a.
- D. David is a typical model of a genuine child of Israel in the enjoyment of the good land promised and given by God to His chosen people; he trusted in God and walked with God according to His sovereignty and according to His leading and instruction in all his trials; David expected to remain in the good land, sharing in God's inheritance and serving Him—17:36-37; 23:14-16; 30:6b-10; 26:19b.
- E. David's sincere trust in God and his faithful walk with God qualified him fully to enjoy the good land to a high level, even up to the kingship according to God's heart with a kingdom that became the kingdom of God on the earth; David was one with God; what was his was God's, and what was God's was his; he and God had only one kingdom; such a one enjoyed the good land, typifying Christ, to the uttermost.
- F. After the death of Saul, "there was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David; but David became continually stronger, and the house of Saul became continually weaker" (2 Sam. 3:1); David was established by God as king with his kingdom exalted for the sake of God's people Israel (5:6-25); furthermore, "David became greater and greater; and Jehovah the God of hosts was with him" (v. 10); this indicates that David had God's presence.
- G. If in any matter we do not have the inner sense that the Lord is with us, we must be careful and reconsider our way (1 Sam. 16:14); in the Lord's recovery, whenever we do anything, we must take care of the sense of the Lord's presence; we all need to learn the lesson of caring for two things: the inward presence of God and the outward confirmation in our environment (cf. 2 Sam. 5:11-12).
- H. Furthermore, we all need to learn of David on the negative side as well as on the positive side; the lust of the flesh is a devastating element that can destroy us; if such a godly man as David could be seduced, how can we escape?—11:1-27; cf. 2 Tim. 2:22; 1 Cor. 6:13, 18:
 - 1. Regardless of our attainment in our spiritual pursuit, it is possible for any of us to commit such a sin; we should read this account seriously in the presence of God; this account warns us that the indulgence of the flesh is a serious thing; David was tempted simply by a glance, and then he failed to restrict himself.

2. All the saints, especially the young ones, should search their hearts and make a strong resolution of heart never to go the way of the indulgence of the flesh (Judg. 5:15-16); we need to say, “Lord Jesus, I love You, I need You, and I receive You”; if we say this, He will be our Savior and our dynamic salvation; as the pneumatic Christ, He will save us, preserve us, and protect us from the contamination of this age, so that we may keep the glory that we have attained.