

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OF JOB PROVERBS ECCLESIASTES, Week 10

Living a Godly Life

Scripture Reading: Prov. 29:18a; 23:23; 20:27; 4:23; 10:12b; 17:9

- Proverbs 29:18 Where there is no **vision**, the people cast off restraint; / But happy is he who keeps the law.
- Proverbs 23:23 Buy **truth**, and do not sell it; / Buy wisdom and instruction and understanding.
- Proverbs 20:27 The **spirit of man** is the lamp of Jehovah, / Searching all the innermost parts of the inner being.
- Proverbs 4:23 Keep your **heart** with all vigilance, / For from it are the issues of life.
- Proverbs 10:12 Hatred stirs up strife, / But **love** covers all transgressions.
- Proverbs 17:9 He who covers a transgression seeks **love**, / But he who repeats a matter separates close friends.

The Triune God Moving in His Divine Revelation and according to His Divine Revelation

Now consider the New Testament. Peter was a fisherman whom the Lord called and attracted. Then the Lord gradually gave him revelation so that he came to know what the Lord would do in the New Testament age. It was the same with the apostle Paul. What the Lord wants to do in the New Testament age is to save many sinners who were chosen by God to be the members of Christ, to have the church built, and to have the Body of Christ produced from the building up of the churches. This Body of Christ will consummate in the New Jerusalem, and the New Jerusalem will be God's eternal enlargement, expansion, and expression forever. This is the revelation of the entire New Testament.

Today we are at the end of the New Testament age. **We should do what God is doing according to His revelation. He is moving and working in His revelation.** This is why we have to know the Bible. Millions of Christians read the Bible, but they do not have the revelation or the vision. They do not know what God is doing today, so they establish things that are not in and according to the revelation of God. Thus, what they are doing is not in the move of God. Today we thank the Lord that we have seen the **vision of God's revelation**, and we know how God is moving. We must be in His move. (The Triune God's Revelation and His Move, chapter 1)

Day 1

Proverbs 29:18 Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint; / But happy is he who keeps the law.

Acts 26:19 Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,

I. "Where there is no **vision, the people cast off restraint"— Prov. 29:18a:**

- A. In the Bible vision denotes an **extraordinary scene**; it refers to a special kind of seeing—a **glorious, inward seeing**—and to the spiritual scenery that we see from God—Ezek. 1:1, 4-28; Dan. 7:1, 9-10, 13-14.
- B. In order to have a vision, we need **revelation, light, and sight**—Eph. 1:17-18a.
- C. **The heavenly vision governs us, restricts us, controls us, directs us, preserves us, revolutionizes us, keeps us in the genuine oneness, and gives us the boldness to go on**—Prov. 29:18a.
- D. When we see this vision, **our entire inner being has an inward turn**, and we are **changed** in thought, concept, and attitude.
- E. The heavenly vision **motivates us, energizes us, holds us, gives us endurance, brings us into the Lord's up-to-date move, and causes our life to be full of meaning and purpose**—Heb. 1:8; 12:1-2; Eph. 3:11; 2 Tim. 1:9; 3:10; Rev. 1:9; 3:10.
- F. Everyone who **serves** the Lord must be a **person with a vision**; the inner vision will **revolutionize the way we serve the Lord**—Acts 26:13-19; Rom. 1:9.
- G. Under the heavenly vision we are directed toward God's destination, and our life is controlled according to God's economy—Phil. 3:13-14; 1 Tim. 1:4.
- H. The governing vision of the Bible is the Triune God working Himself into His chosen and redeemed people in order to saturate their entire being with the Divine Trinity for the producing and building up of the Body of Christ consummating in the New Jerusalem—Eph. 4:4-6; Rev. 21:2, 9-10.

Day 2

Proverbs 23:23 Buy truth, and do not sell it; / Buy wisdom and instruction and understanding.

3 John 3 For I rejoiced greatly at the brothers' coming and testifying to your steadfastness in the truth, even as you walk in truth.

II. "Buy truth, and do not sell it"—Prov. 23:23a:

- A. Truth is something that we have to buy, something that has a price—v. 23a:
1. Buying requires the paying of a price.
 2. If we want to please the Lord and stand for the truth, we must pay the price—cf. Rev. 3:18.
 3. If our hearts are ready to receive the love of the truth and buy the truth at any price, we will be blessed—2 Thes. 2:10-11; Prov. 23:23.
- B. The divine truth is absolute, and we must be absolute for the truth and uphold the absoluteness of the truth—John 14:6; 18:37; 3 John 3-4, 8:
1. To be absolute for the truth means to set aside feelings, to ignore personal relationships, and to not stand for the self— Matt. 16:24-25; 1 Pet. 1:22.
 2. The truth is the unique standard, and we must stand on the side of the truth to oppose ourselves; upholding the absoluteness of the truth is possible only when we are delivered from ourselves— John 8:32; 2 John 2; 3 John 3-4.
 3. We should honor God's truth, take the way of the truth, and not compromise the truth in any way—2 Pet. 2:2.
- C. For the consummation of the divine economy, we need to be absolute for the present truth—1:12:
1. The present truth is the truth that is present with the believers, which they have already received and now possess—v. 12.
 2. The present truth includes the revelation concerning the eternal economy of God (Eph. 1:10; 3:9), the Divine Trinity (2 Cor. 13:14; Rev. 1:4-5), the person and work of the all-inclusive Christ (Col. 2:9, 16-17; 3:11), the consummated life-giving Spirit (John 7:39; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rev. 22:17), the eternal life of God (John 3:15-16), the church as the Body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23), and the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2, 10-11).
 3. The present truth includes the high peak of the divine revelation—the revelation that God became man so that man may become God in life and nature but not in the Godhead—to produce and build up the organic Body of Christ for the fulfillment of God's economy to close this age and bring Christ back to set up His kingdom— John 1:12-14; 1 John 3:1-2; Rom. 8:3; 1:3-4; 12:4-5; Rev. 11:15.

Day 3

Proverbs 20:27 The spirit of man is the lamp of Jehovah, / Searching all the innermost parts of the inner being.

Revelation 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

III. "The spirit of man is the lamp of Jehovah,/Searching all the innermost parts of the inner being"—Prov. 20:27:

- A. Man's spirit is God's lamp within man—Matt. 25:1:
1. The light shining within man's regenerated spirit is God Himself—1 John 1:5.
 2. Just as a lamp contains light and expresses it, man's spirit was created to contain God and express Him.
 3. In order for the divine light to shine into man's inward parts, God's Spirit as the oil must soak (mingle with) man's spirit as the wick and "burn" together with man's spirit—Rom. 8:16; 12:11.
 4. If we respond to the spirit's shining, we will walk according to the spirit—8:4.
- B. The Spirit of God is also a lamp, with a sevenfold intensity to His shining—Rev. 4:5:
1. Our regenerated spirit is a lamp indwelt by the Spirit of God, who is also a lamp.
 2. Man's spirit and God's spirit are both lamps, together enlightening the inward parts—Prov. 20:27; Rev. 4:5.
 3. The spirit wants to enlighten every part of our soul.

- C. When we **exercise our spirit** to pray properly, there is a lamp shining—Eph. 6:18; 1:17-18; 5:8-9:
1. As we pray, our spirit functions as a shining lamp, **searching all the parts of our soul**—Prov. 20:27.
 2. The more we exercise our spirit in prayer, the more we are enlightened—2 Cor. 4:6:
 - a. The lamp may **shine on our thoughts, emotions, and will**.
 - b. Our inward parts will be **thoroughly searched by the Lord**—Psa. 139:23-24.
 3. After such a time of prayer, we will feel **bright and transparent, filled with God**—Eph. 5:8-9.

ACCORDING TO THE SPIRIT

For the gold in you to increase, you must learn to **walk according to the spirit**. Again and again during the day you must turn to the spirit. “The mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace” (Rom. 8:6). If a problem arises with your spouse, or if a brother complains that your work is not satisfactory, do not reply in haste. A quick answer will open the door to Satan. Instead of replying, **pray**. Set your mind on the spirit. Call on the Lord. Then the words that come forth from your mouth will come from the spirit rather than from Satan. The Lord will be your **wisdom**, and gold will flow out instead of bitter water. You will sense from the Spirit of the Lord what you should say; in your speaking, He will be speaking.

As we thus become one spirit with the Lord, **He will become our living**. We will become men of gold, and the whole **church will be a golden lampstand, expressing the Triune God**. We will live and walk by the Spirit and have our mind set on the spirit. By the mingling of these two spirits, we can be watchful to keep ourselves in the spirit of prayer. Then what we live out will be “no longer I...but...Christ” (2:20). To us, to live will be Christ. This is the normal way for us to live. It is by this means that the church will become a golden lampstand. (*Life Messages, vol. 2, chapter 75*)

Day 4

Proverbs 4:23 Keep your heart with all vigilance, / For from it are the issues of life.

Matthew 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

IV. “Keep your **heart** with all vigilance,/For from it are the issues of life”—Prov. 4:23:

- A. The soul is the person himself, but the **heart is the person in action**—Luke 1:66; 2:19, 51; Acts 11:23; Eph. 3:17; 1 Thes. 3:13:
 1. We have something in our **inner being** that represents us, and this **representative is our heart**—Luke 6:45; John 16:22; 2 Cor. 3:16.
 2. **The relationship that we have with God first depends on our heart**, because the heart is the organ by which we express ourselves and by which we make decisions to receive or reject things—Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:9-10.
 3. Although our spirit is pure, what is expressed from our spirit **depends on our heart**—2 Thes. 2:17; 3:5.
- B. The heart is the **entrance and exit** to our whole being—Matt. 13:19; 15:18-19:
 1. It is through our heart that our real being comes out because the **traffic of our being is through our heart**—Luke 6:45.
 2. Our spirit is the source of our being, but our heart is the passage, the entrance and the exit, through which the **traffic in our being passes**—Matt. 12:34-35.
 3. In order to be a proper Christian, we need to **exercise our spirit** and guard our heart by **keeping it with all vigilance**—Prov. 4:23.

Day 5

Deuteronomy 10:12 And now, O Israel, what does Jehovah your God ask of you except that you fear Jehovah your God so that you would walk in all His ways and love Him and serve Jehovah your God with all your heart and with all your soul;

1 Thessalonians 3:13 So that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

- C. The Hebrew word rendered “**keep**” in Proverbs 4:23 means “**guard**”:
 1. We should **guard our heart** above all because out of it are the issues of life.
 2. **Issues** in Proverbs 4:23 implies sources and springs as well as issues:

- a. The issues of life are the **flowing out of life**—cf. John 4:14.
 - b. The **heart** is related to the sources of life, the springs of life, and the issues of life—cf. Isa. 12:3.
 - c. The fountain, the source, of what we are, of our real being, **flows out from our heart**—cf. John 7:37-38.
- D. We guard our heart by **caring for our heart** and having a **thorough dealing with our heart** before the Lord in the way of life; the more we deal with our heart, the more we guard our heart—Psa. 26:2; 139:23-24; Prov. 4:23; Rom. 8:27; Rev. 2:23; Matt. 13:18-23; 5:8.
- E. In order to **grow in life for God's building**, we need to **love the Lord**, take heed to our spirit, and guard our heart with all vigilance to **stay on the pathway of life**—1 Pet. 1:8; 2:2, 5; 3:4, 15; Prov. 21:2; 4:18-23; Deut. 10:12; Mark 12:30.

Out of the heart come all the issues of our daily life. As human beings, we have life, and this life **acts through our heart**. Using the illustration of electricity and a switch, we may say that the **heart is the switch of our inner being**, of our human life. As the flow of electricity depends on the switch, so our daily living is dependent on what our heart switches on and off. Our heart is the switch of our human life, of our daily life, of our being. The word "life" in Proverbs 4:23 implies an organic element, the element of life; it also implies our daily living and activities, in fact, our entire human life. Hence, the word life in this verse is inclusive. As human beings, we have a human life, and this human life has an organic element and also a daily living. The switch of this life is the heart. (*Life-Study of 1 & 2 Thessalonians*, Chapter 21)

Day 6

- Proverbs 10:12** Hatred stirs up strife, / But love covers all transgressions.
- Proverbs 17:9** He who covers a transgression seeks love, / But he who repeats a matter separates close friends.
- 1 Peter 4:8** Above all, have fervent love among yourselves, because love covers a multitude of sins.

V. "Love covers all transgressions"—Prov. 10:12b:

- A. "He who **covers** a transgression **seeks love**, / But he who **repeats** a matter **separates close friends**"—17:9.
- B. To **cover** is love; to **uncover** is not love— James 5:20.
- C. Covering brings in **blessing**, but uncovering brings in a **curse**— Gen. 9:22-27:
 1. Those who uncover others suffer the curse.
 2. Those who cover others' sins, defects, and shortcomings enjoy gain and receive blessing.
- D. "**Love covers all things**" (1 Cor. 13:7a), not only the good things but also the bad things:
 1. "The elders need to realize that in their **shepherding**, they have to **cover** others' sins, to not take account of others' evils"—The Vital Groups, p. 72:
 - a. "Whoever **uncovers** the defects, shortcomings, and sins of the members of the church is **disqualified from the eldership**"—p. 72.
 - b. "Our uncovering of the members under our eldership, our shepherding, annuls our qualification"—p. 72.
 2. We need to **shepherd others according to God**, with a love that covers all transgressions—1 Pet. 5:2; Prov. 10:12b.
- E. "Above all, have fervent love among yourselves, because **love covers a multitude of sins**"—1 Pet. 4:8.

LOVE BEING THE GREATEST

Love is not jealous, is not provoked, does not take account of evil, covers all things, endures all things, never falls away, and is the greatest (1 Cor. 13:4-8, 13).

The elders need to realize that in their shepherding, they have to **cover** others' sins, not to take account of others' evils. **Love covers all things**, not only the good things but also the bad things. Whoever uncovers the defects, shortcomings, and sins of the members of the church is disqualified from the eldership. Our uncovering of the members under our eldership, our shepherding, annuls our qualification. **Love also endures all things and never falls away**. First Corinthians 13 concludes by saying, "Now there abide faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love." (The Vital Groups, pp. 71, 72)