

## CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES JOSHUA, JUDGES, RUTH, Week 4

### The Need for God's People to Seek the Lord's Direction and Have the Lord's Presence to Display His Victory for the Building Up of His Body and the Spreading of His Kingdom

Scripture Reading: Matt. 1:5; Josh. 6:22-26; 7:1-6, 10-15, 20-21; 9:14

- Matthew 1:5 - And Salmon begot Boaz of Rahab, and Boaz begot Obed of Ruth, and Obed begot Jesse,
- Joshua 6:22 - And Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land, Go to the house of the harlot, and bring out from there the woman and all that belongs to her, as you swore to her.
- Joshua 6:23 - And the young men who had been spies went and brought out Rahab and her father and her mother and her brothers and all that belonged to her; all her family they brought out and set outside the camp of Israel.
- Joshua 6:24 - And they burned the city with fire and all that was in it; but the silver and the gold and the vessels of bronze and iron, they put in the treasury of the house of Jehovah.
- Joshua 6:25 - And Joshua preserved Rahab the harlot and her father's house and all that belonged to her, and she has dwelt within Israel to this day; for she hid the messengers whom Joshua had sent to spy out Jericho.
- Joshua 6:26 - Then at that time Joshua charged the people with an oath, saying, Cursed be the man before Jehovah who rises up to rebuild this city Jericho! At the cost of his firstborn son shall he lay its foundation, and at the cost of his youngest son shall he set up its gates.
- Joshua 7:1 - But the children of Israel acted **unfaithfully** in that which was devoted to destruction, for Achan the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of that which was devoted to destruction; and the anger of Jehovah was kindled against the children of Israel.
- Joshua 7:2 - Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Bethaven, east of Bethel; and he spoke to them, saying, Go up and spy out the land. So the men went up and spied out Ai.
- Joshua 7:3 - And they returned to Joshua and said to him, Not all the people need go up; let about two or three thousand men go up and strike Ai. Do not make all the people labor there, for the enemies are few.
- Joshua 7:4 - So about three thousand men from the people went up there, but they fled before the men of Ai.
- Joshua 7:5 - And the men of Ai struck some of them, about thirty-six men; and they pursued them from before the gate unto Shebarim and struck them on the slope. And the heart of the people melted and became like water.
- Joshua 7:6 - And Joshua rent his clothes and fell to the ground upon his face before the Ark of Jehovah until the evening, he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust upon their heads.
- Joshua 7:10 - Then Jehovah said to Joshua, Rise up! Why have you fallen upon your face?
- Joshua 7:11 - Israel has **sinned**. Indeed they have trespassed My covenant, which I commanded them; indeed they have **taken of that which was devoted to destruction**; indeed they have **stolen**; indeed they have been **deceptive**; indeed they have **put it among their goods**.
- Joshua 7:12 - Thus the children of Israel are not able to stand before their enemies; they turn their backs before their enemies, for they have become something devoted to destruction. I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy that which was devoted to destruction from among you.
- Joshua 7:13 - Rise up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow; for thus says Jehovah the God of Israel, There is something devoted to destruction among you, O Israel; you will not be able to stand before your enemies until you remove that which was devoted to destruction from among you.
- Joshua 7:14 - Therefore in the morning you shall be brought near by your tribes; and the tribe which Jehovah takes shall draw near family by family; and the family which Jehovah takes shall draw near house by house; and the house which Jehovah takes shall draw near warrior by warrior.
- Joshua 7:15 - And he who is taken with that which was devoted to destruction shall be burned with fire, he and all that belongs to him, because he has trespassed the covenant of Jehovah and because he has committed folly in Israel.
- Joshua 7:20 - Then Achan answered Joshua and said, It is true; I have sinned against Jehovah the God of Israel; and this is what I did:
- Joshua 7:21 - When I saw among the spoil a beautiful mantle of Shinar and two hundred shekels of silver and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. And now they are hidden in the earth in my tent, with the silver under it.
- Joshua 9:14 - And the men took some of their provisions, but **they did not ask for the counsel of Jehovah**.

## Day 1

<b>Joshua 2:11</b>	When we heard, our hearts melted; and there no longer remained any spirit in any man because of you; for Jehovah your God, He is God in heaven above and upon earth beneath.
<b>1 Peter 1:18-19</b>	Knowing that it was not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, that you were redeemed from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers, But with precious blood, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot, the blood of Christ;
<b>Matthew 1:5</b>	And Salmon begot Boaz of Rahab, and Boaz begot Obed of Ruth, and Obed begot Jesse,

- I. When the two spies came to Jericho, Rahab (who was both a harlot and a Canaanite) contacted them and was willing to receive them, hide them, and deliver them by acts that issued out of her faith (Josh. 2:1b-7, 15-16, 22; James 2:25); she believed in the God of Israel and declared, “Jehovah your God, He is God in heaven above and upon earth beneath” (Josh. 2:11b):**
- Jehovah provided Rahab the harlot to Joshua for the gaining of the land; because of her **faith in God**, she “did not perish with those who were disobedient” (Heb. 11:31); she turned to Israel and their God, and she trusted in Him and His people (Josh. 2:12-13).
  - The sign for Rahab and her house to be saved was for her to hang a line of scarlet thread in the window of her house (vv. 18, 21); the scarlet thread tied in the window typifies an **open confession of the redeeming blood of Christ** (1 Pet. 1:18-19); she believed that by this sign she and her household would be delivered.
  - Although Rahab was a condemned Canaanite and a prostitute in Jericho (Josh. 2:1), a place cursed by God for eternity (6:26), after **she turned to God and to God’s people** (vv. 22-25; Heb. 11:30-31), she married Salmon (Matt. 1:5), the son of a leader of Judah, a leading tribe of Israel (1 Chron. 2:10-11), and probably one of the two spies; then she brought forth Boaz, a godly man, out of whom Christ came, and she became **associated with Christ in His incarnation for the fulfillment of God’s eternal economy** (Matt. 1:5).
  - This shows that regardless of our background, if we **turn to God and His people** and are joined to the proper person among God’s people (not in a physical sense but in a spiritual sense), we will bring forth **proper fruit and participate in the enjoyment of the birthright of Christ**—Exo. 24:13; 33:11; Num. 27:18; Deut. 34:9; Josh. 1:1; 2 Kings 2:2-15; Phil. 2:19-23; 1 Cor. 4:17.

## Day 2

<b>Joshua 7:6</b>	And Joshua rent his clothes and fell to the ground upon his face before the Ark of Jehovah until the evening, he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust upon their heads.
<b>2 Corinthians 2:10</b>	But whom you forgive anything, I also forgive; for also what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, it is for your sake in the person of Christ;
<b>Galatians 5:25</b>	If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

- II. After the destruction of Jericho, Israel was defeated at Ai; at Jericho, according to God’s economy, Joshua sent out spies, not for fighting but to gain Rahab; but at Ai, because **Israel had lost the presence of the Lord** (Josh. 7:12c), Joshua sent out spies for fighting (vv. 2-3):**
- The report of the spies to Joshua concerning Ai indicates that Israel had set God aside; instead of asking God what they should do against Ai, they **forgot God and cared only for themselves**; at that time they were not one with God but **acted on their own**, without seeking the Lord’s direction and without having the Lord’s presence; Israel was **separated from God because of their sin**—vv. 1-5, 12c:
    - The secret of Israel’s defeat at Ai was that **they had lost God’s presence and were no longer one with God**; after this defeat Joshua learned the lesson of staying with the Lord before the Ark (v. 6); eventually, the Lord came in to speak to him and to tell him what to do (vv. 10-15).
    - The spiritual lesson to be learned from this account is that we, the people of God, **should always be one with our God**, who is not only among us but also in us, making us men with God—God-men.

3. As God-men, we should practice being one with the Lord, [walking with Him, living with Him, and having our entire being with Him](#); this is the way to walk as a Christian, to fight as a child of God, and to build up the Body of Christ.
4. If we have the Lord's presence, we have wisdom, insight, foresight, and the inner knowledge concerning things; the [Lord's presence is everything to us](#)—2 Cor. 2:10; 4:6-7; Gal. 5:25; Gen. 5:22-24; Heb. 11:5-6.

The report of the spies to Joshua concerning Ai indicates that **Israel had set God aside**; instead of asking God what they should do against Ai, **they forgot God and cared only for themselves**; at that time they were not one with God but acted on their own, without seeking the Lord's direction and without having the Lord's presence; Israel was separated from God because of their sin. The secret of Israel's defeat at Ai was that **they had lost God's presence and were no longer one with God**; after this defeat Joshua learned the lesson of staying with the Lord before the Ark (v. 6); eventually, the Lord came in to speak to him and to tell him what to do. Unlike their reliance on God and the Ark in the destruction of Jericho, Israel did something out of their own idea, as if they had forgotten God. They did not seek God, they cared only for themselves, and they acted independently without seeking the Lord's direction. Surely, they did not have the Lord's presence. They were separated from God because of the sin of one among them. In verse 12 the Lord said, "I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy that which was devoted to destruction from among you." Eventually, they discovered that Achan had taken a beautiful mantle of Shinar, silver, and gold, which caused God to be angry and to no longer be with Israel. We need to deal with our hidden sins. Israel's defeat was due to the loss of God's presence. **First**, they **sinned**; **second**, they **lost God's presence**; **third**, they **trusted in themselves**; and **fourth**, they **lost their oneness with God**. (*The Ministry of the Word, Vol. 25, No. 04: Crystallization-study of Joshua, Judges, Ruth*)

### Day 3

<b>Exodus 33:14</b>	And He said, My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest.
<b>Psalms 27:8</b>	When You say, Seek My face, / To You my heart says, Your face, O Jehovah, will I seek.
<b>Matthew 1:23</b>	"Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel" (which is translated, God with us).
<b>2 Timothy 4:22</b>	The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

- B. If we would enter, possess, and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ as the reality of the good land, we must do so by the [presence of the Lord](#); the Lord promised Moses, "My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest" (Exo. 33:14); God's presence is His way, the "map" that shows His people the way they should take:
1. In order for us to fully gain and possess Christ as the all-inclusive land for God's building, we must hold on to this principle: [God's presence is the criterion for every matter](#); regardless of what we do, we must pay attention to whether or not we have God's presence; if we have God's presence, we have everything, but if we lose God's presence, we lose everything—Matt. 1:23; 2 Tim. 4:22; Gal. 6:18; Psa. 27:4, 8; 51:11; 2 Cor. 2:10; Ezek. 48:35.
  2. The presence of the Lord, the [smile of the Lord](#), is the governing principle; we must learn to be kept, to be ruled, to be governed, and to be guided, not by His secondhand presence but by the direct, firsthand presence of the Lord; His precious presence is the power for us to possess the all-inclusive Christ as the reality of the good land flowing with milk and honey— Exo. 3:8; 25:30; Deut. 26:9; Ezek. 20:6.
  3. "In my youth I was taught various ways to overcome, to be victorious, to be holy, and to be spiritual. However, not any of these ways worked. Eventually, through more than sixty-eight years of experience, I have found out that nothing works but the Lord's presence. His being with us is everything"— Life-study of Joshua, p. 48.

The **presence of the Lord**, the smile of the Lord, is the governing principle; [we must learn to be kept, to be ruled, to be governed, and to be guided](#), not by His secondhand presence but by the direct, firsthand, [presence of the Lord](#); His precious presence is the power for us to possess the all-inclusive Christ as the reality of the good land flowing with milk and honey. **No one can have the Lord's presence for us**. Some of us may be too quick to seek out fellowship. Of course, we need and should depend on fellowship. However, we all must learn to be kept, ruled, governed, and guided by the direct, firsthand presence of the Lord. Each of us needs to check, "Is the Lord within me smiling or frowning?" Whether the Lord in us is happy or unhappy will tell us whether what we are doing is something of His permissive will or something of His sovereign and perfect will. We need to learn to know the Lord by His presence. [His precious presence is the power for us to possess the all-inclusive Christ as the reality of the good land flowing with milk and honey](#). We are here to gain the all-inclusive Christ as the good land. His presence is our power to gain this Christ, but between us and the gaining of the all-inclusive Christ, the powers of darkness in the heavenlies are trying to frustrate, defeat, distract, and even deceive us. We need the power of His presence to conquer all the powers of darkness in the heavenlies so that we can gain and lay hold of the all-inclusive Christ. What is our power? In Exodus 33:14 the Lord said, "*My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest.*" [The Lord's presence is not only our direction and our way but also our power to fight and to possess Him as our good land](#). (*The Ministry of the Word, Vol. 25, No. 04: Crystallization-study of Joshua, Judges, Ruth*)

## Day 4

<b>Matthew 6:6</b>	But you, when you pray, enter into your private room, and shut your door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.
<b>John 4:23</b>	But an hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truthfulness, for the Father also seeks such to worship Him.

- C. When the Israelites entered into the land of Canaan and gained the victory over Jericho, the first person to commit sin was Achan; the intrinsic, spiritual significance and divine view of Achan's serious sin was his coveting a beautiful Babylonian garment (Shinar is the area that was later called Babylon) in his **seeking to improve himself, to make himself look better for the sake of appearance**— Josh. 7:21:
- Ananias and Sapphira, who lied to the Holy Spirit, sinned in the same principle—this is the principle of Babylon, which is **hypocrisy**—Acts 5:1-11; Rev. 17:4, 6; Matt. 23:13-36:
    - They did not love the Lord very much, but they wanted to be looked upon as those who greatly loved the Lord; they were just **pretending**; God's children need to be delivered from pretending before men.
    - They were **not willing to offer everything cheerfully to God**, but before man they acted as if they had offered all; whenever we put on a garment that does not match our actual condition, we are in the principle of Babylon—6:1-6; 15:7-8.
  - Everything done in falsehood to receive glory from man is done in the principle of the harlot, not in the principle of the bride; **false consecration and spirituality are sins**, but true worship is in spirit and truthfulness; may God make us true men—Rev. 17:4-5; 19:7-9; Luke 12:1; 1 Cor. 2:9-10; 2 Cor. 2:10; 5:14-15; John 4:23-24.
  - "It is not how man sees that matters; for man looks on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looks on the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7); if we **treasure up God's word in our heart** (Psa. 119:11) and **allow Christ to make His home in our heart** (Eph. 3:16-17), He will become the good treasure of our heart, and out of the abundance of our heart we can dispense Him as this wonderful, good treasure into others (Luke 6:44-45).

## Day 5

<b>Joshua 9:14</b>	And the men took some of their provisions, but they did not ask for the counsel of Jehovah.
<b>2 Corinthians 11:2</b>	For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.

### III. After Israel dealt with their sin, the sin of Achan (Josh. 7:11-12, 20-21), they were victorious over Ai (8:1-35), but then there is a record of how the children of Israel were **deceived** by the Gibeonites (9:1-27):

- The Gibeonites were Hivites (vv. 3, 7; 11:18-19)—one of the nations in the land of Canaan that had to be exterminated by Israel because they were devilish and mingled with demons (Deut. 7:2; 9:4-5; 18:9-14); the inhabitants of Gibeon **deceived Israel with their craftiness** (Josh. 9:3-14).
- Because they had heard of Israel's defeating both Jericho and Ai, they wanted to make peace and a covenant with Israel so that Israel would let them live; they went out as though they were envoys and pretended to have come from afar; they went to Joshua at the camp of Gilgal and said to him and to the men of Israel, "From a faraway land we have come... We will be your servants; make then a covenant with us" (vv. 6, 11).
- Joshua 9:14 is a very powerful portion of the Scriptures that shows us why the children of Israel were deceived by the Gibeonites—"they did not ask for the counsel of Jehovah"; thus, Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them to let them live (v. 15):
  - The children of Israel were deceived because they were like a **wife who forgot her husband**; the entire **Bible** is a divine romance, a record of how **God courts His chosen people and eventually marries them** (Gen. 2:21-24; S. S. 1:2-4; Isa. 54:5; 62:5; Jer. 2:2; 3:1, 14; 31:32; Ezek. 16:8; 23:5; Hosea 2:7, 19; Matt. 9:15; John 3:29; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-32; Rev. 19:7; 21:2, 9-10; 22:17a).
  - The Bible shows us that we, as God's elect, are His wife and that between Him and us there must be a **marriage union of mutual love**; the universe, therefore, is a wedding place, the place where the Husband, the processed and consummated Triune God, is being joined in marriage to the redeemed, regenerated, sanctified, renewed, transformed, and glorified tripartite man; eventually, the Bible ends with the New Jerusalem as the ultimate consummation of God's elect in the new heaven and new earth, as the universal wife for eternity— 21:9-10; 22:17a.

3. A wife should never leave her husband; rather, she should **always rely upon him and be one with him**; when the Gibeonites came to Israel, as the wife Israel should have gone to her Husband and checked with Him about what to do—Josh. 9:14.

### Day 6

#### Philippians 4:6-7

In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; And the peace of God, which surpasses every man's understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

4. As believers who love the Lord and aspire to be the constituents of His overcoming bride, we should **consult God** related to every problem that we encounter; we need to **bring every matter to the Lord** and to consider, examine, and determine things before Him and in fellowship with Him:
  - a. In this respect, every believer needs to be **weak** to the extent that he does not have his own ideas, make his own decisions, or take any action related to what he encounters without contacting the Lord and consulting with Him, **allowing Him to make the decisions**; this is the sweetest living of a Christian—2 Cor. 12:9-10.
  - b. We have no alternative but to fellowship with God in all things, discuss all things with Him, and allow Him to handle all things, speak in all things, and make every decision; it is glorious for a Christian to be **dependent on another One—God—at every moment and in every matter**—Phil. 4:6-7; Prov. 3:5-6; Jer. 17:7-8; 2 Cor. 1:8-9; Psa. 62:8; Psa. 102, title and v. 7.
5. If God leads you to take a way that you do not know, **“this forces you to have hundreds and thousands of conversations with Him, resulting in a journey that is an everlasting memorial between you and Him”**—The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, vol. 7, p. 1144.
6. The result of Israel's not seeking the counsel of her Husband was that this independent and individualistic wife was deceived, and she had no protection, no safeguard; from this record in the Scriptures, we need to learn that, as the Lord's wife, we should **co-live with Him, always relying on Him and being one with Him all the time**; this is the intrinsic significance of Joshua 9.

As believers who love the Lord and aspire to be the constituents of His overcoming bride, we should **consult God related to every problem that we encounter**; we need to **bring every matter to the Lord** and to **consider, examine, and determine things before Him and in fellowship with Him**. Consulting the Lord as our Husband is a simple, even basic, principle, but in our experience it is often the first thing that we neglect. Instead, we just react to something and immediately decide what to do, forgetting to take time to pray, to come into the Lord's presence, and to wait on Him. In our presumptuousness, often with a good intention and trusting in what we have learned in our past, we proceed to make judgments and decisions. We should not criticize only Israel. So often we forget that we are married, that we are a wife, and that we should look to, check with, and fellowship with our Husband, our Head.

In this respect, every believer **needs to be weak** to the extent that he does not have his own ideas, make his own decisions, or take any action related to what he encounters without contacting the Lord and consulting with Him, **allowing Him to make the decisions**; this is the sweetest living of a Christian. We all can testify concerning the times that we did not come to the Lord first but made our own decisions, which we eventually regretted and had to repent for. We need to learn to be the weaker vessel, to be under the covering of our Husband, that is, to have our head covered. We need to consult our Husband, asking, “Lord, how do You feel about this? What do You think? What are You trying to accomplish in this matter?” **We need to fellowship with the Lord in all things, in big things as well as in small things**. We may think that we do not need to fellowship with the Lord regarding small things. The more we go on in our Christian life, the more we will realize that we need the Lord's counsel, word, and guidance, especially in the small things. When we touch the Lord first in everything, letting Him make the decisions, we will have a sweet Christian life. (*The Ministry of the Word, Vol. 25, No. 04: Crystallization-study of Joshua, Judges, Ruth*)