

2020 FALL YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONFERENCE

**GENERAL SUBJECT: ENCOURAGING GOD'S PEOPLE TO LOVE HIM, TO GROW
IN LIFE, AND TO RISE UP FOR HIS BUILDING**

Message One
Kiss the Son

Scripture Reading: Psalm 2

- I. God has exalted Christ as the center of His economy and administration**
 - A. Christ is God's Anointed One, who was crucified and resurrected to carry out God's economy - Psa. 2:2, 7; Dan. 9:26; Acts 13:33
 - B. God has established and installed Christ to be the King and Possessor of the whole earth - Psa. 2:6, 8-9; Rev. 19:16

- II. After His exaltation of His Christ; God warns the world concerning His coming judgment in His wrath-Psa. 2:5-6, 8-9**
 - A. The world has been and will be opposing Christ until His second coming - Matt. 27:2, 26; Acts 4:25-27; Rev. 19:19
 - B. Although the nations and the kings of the earth oppose Christ, He will execute His economy on the earth and have them in derision - Psa. 2:1-5; Rev.17:14; Acts 2:32-36
 - C. Christ will return to execute God's judgement; establish His kingdom, and rule the nations with an iron rod - Psa. 2:5-6, 8-9; Rev. 2:27; 19:15, 19-21; 11:15

- III. After warning the world, God encourages every man to take refuge in His Son and kiss Him - Psa. 2:10-12**
 - A. We have to repent and believe into the Son - Psa. 2:10-11; Acts 17:30; John 1:12; 3:16
 - B. We must kiss the Son and love Him - Psa. 2:12a; Eph. 6:24; John 14:23; 1 Tim.1:14
 - C. All those who take refuge in Christ are blessed - Psa. 2:12b; Eph. 1:3-4, 6-7, 11-14

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Message 1-Verse Sheet

Kiss the Son

Psa. 2:1-12

1 Why are the nations in an uproar, / And why do the peoples contemplate a vain thing?
2 The kings of the earth take their stand, / And the rulers sit in counsel together, / Against
Jehovah and against His Anointed:
3 Let us break apart their bonds / And cast their ropes away from us.
4 He who sits in the heavens laughs; / The Lord has them in derision.
5 Then He will speak to them in His anger, / And in His burning wrath He will terrify them:
6 But I have installed My King / Upon Zion, My holy mountain.
7 I will recount the decree of Jehovah; / He said to Me: You are My Son; / Today I have begotten
You.
8 Ask of Me, / And I will give the nations as Your inheritance / And the limits of the earth as
Your possession.
9 You will break them with an iron rod; / You will shatter them like a potter's vessel.
10 Now therefore, O kings, be prudent; / Take the admonition, O judges of the earth.
11 fear, / And rejoice with trembling.
12 Kiss the Son / Lest He be angry and you perish from the way; / For His anger may suddenly
be kindled. / Blessed are all those who take refuge in Him.

Dan. 9:26

And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah will be cut off and will have nothing; and the people of
the prince who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end of it will be with a
flood, and even to the end [there will be] war; desolations are determined.

Acts 13:33

That God has fully fulfilled this [promise] to us their children in raising up Jesus, as it is also
written in the second Psalm, "You are My Son; this day have I begotten You."

Rev. 19:16

And He has on His garment and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF
LORDS.

Matt. 27:2

And having bound Him, they led [Him] away and delivered [Him] to Pilate the governor.

Matt. 27:26

Then he released to them Barabbas, but Jesus he scourged and delivered up to be crucified.

Acts 4:25-27

25 Who, through the Holy Spirit, [through] the mouth of our father David Your servant, has
said, "Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples devise vain things?"

26 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against His Christ."

27 For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel,

Rev. 19:19-21

19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war with Him who sits on the horse and with His army.

20 And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet, who in his presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshipped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire, which burns with brimstone.

21 And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeds out of the mouth of Him who sits on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

Rev. 17:14

These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and they who are with Him, the called and chosen and faithful, [will also overcome them].

Acts 2:32-36

32 This Jesus God has raised up, of which we all are witnesses.

33 Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God and having received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, He has poured out this which you both see and hear.

34 For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at My right hand

35 Until I set Your enemies as a footstool for Your feet."

36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you have crucified.

Rev. 2:27

And he will shepherd them with an iron rod, as vessels of pottery are broken in pieces, as I also have received from My Father;

Rev. 19:15

And out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations; and He will shepherd them with an iron rod; and He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.

Rev. 11:15

And the seventh angel trumpeted; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of the world has become the [kingdom] of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever.

Acts 17:30

Therefore, having overlooked the times of ignorance, God now charges all men everywhere to repent,

John 1:12

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,

John 3:16

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that everyone who believes into Him would not perish, but would have eternal life.

Eph. 6:24

Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.

John 14:23

Jesus answered and said to him, If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make an abode with him.

1 Tim. 1:14

And the grace of our Lord superabounded with faith and love in Christ Jesus.

Eph. 1:3-4

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ,

4 Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love,

Eph. 1:6-7

6 To the praise of the glory of His grace, with which He graced us in the Beloved;

7 In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses, according to the riches of His grace,

Eph. 1:11-14

11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

12 That we would be to the praise of His glory who have first hoped in Christ,

13 In whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in Him also believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise,

14 Who is the pledge of our inheritance unto the redemption of the acquired possession, to the praise of His glory.

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Message 1 - Group Time

Kiss the Son

Verses for Pray-reading:

Eph. 1:20-21 - Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

Psa. 2:12 - Kiss the Son...Blessed are all those who take refuge in Him.

Ministry reading:

His Exaltation

First of all, the ascension of Christ means His exaltation. After He was resurrected, God highly exalted Christ. Man had killed and even buried Christ in the tomb. But God raised Him up. Moreover, He not only raised Him up from the grave but highly exalted Him. "Therefore also God highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should openly confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11). Through His ascension Christ has become the One who is far above all. He has been exalted far above all principalities, powers, might, and dominion, and above every name that is named. This is true not only in this age but also in the age to come: "Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come" (Eph. 1:20-21). This means that in the whole universe, nothing is above Christ. Everything is under Him. He is far above all! Hallelujah! We all must see that Christ is the One who is far above all. (*The Wonderful Christ in the Canon of the New Testament, Chapter 9*)

Executing God's Administration and Carrying Out God's New Testament Economy

As the One who passed through the process of creation, incarnation, human living, crucifixion, and resurrection, the Man-Savior with His wonderful status has been inaugurated into His heavenly office to execute God's administration and to carry out God's New Testament economy. Christ is now on the throne to administrate the entire universe. He is the unique Administrator, the King of kings and the Lord of lords. All the rulers of the earth are under Him. He is the Administrator to execute God's administration and also to carry out God's New Testament economy. His administrating is related to the universe, but His carrying out of God's New Testament economy is to propagate Himself for His reproduction to build up the church, His Body, which will issue in the New Jerusalem. How wonderful! (*Life-Study of Luke, Message 76*)

Three Crucial Matters in the Book of Daniel—God's Heavenly Rule, the Preeminence of Christ, and the Portion of God's People

The book of Daniel covers three crucial matters: God's heavenly rule, the preeminence of Christ, and the portion of God's people. In His economy God administrates the universe in order to fulfill His purpose. His purpose is to give Christ the preeminence in all things. God's intention, therefore, is that Christ should be preeminent.

As those who have been chosen by God to be His people for Christ's preeminence, we are under God's heavenly rule...Under God's heavenly rule, everything is working together for our good (Rom. 8:28). This is especially true of the things in our personal universe. Our universe includes ourselves, our families, and the church. In our universe many things happen day by day for the purpose of making Christ preeminent. We need to realize this and be submissive to God's heavenly rule.

In 4:26 Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar, "Your kingdom will be assured to you after you have come to know that the heavens do rule." It is the heavens that rule, not Nebuchadnezzar or Cyrus or Alexander the Great or illness or turmoil or rebellion. The earth is under the rule of a heavenly administration. The heavens rule for us, and Christ is for us. Furthermore, we are under God's heavenly rule for Christ. The purpose of the heavenly ruling is to complete God's elect so that Christ may be preeminent, that He may be the first—the centrality—and everything—the universality.

Because the heavens rule, Christ is with us in all our situations. When we are sick, He is with us. When we are in turmoil, He is with us. I can testify that we can enjoy His presence in the midst of turmoil and rebellion.

We all need to learn three things: that this universe is under God's administration; that God's intention in His administration is to make Christ preeminent, to cause Him to have the first place in everything; and that for the accomplishment of God's intention, we, His people, His elect, must give Him the best coordination and cooperation. Through our coordination and cooperation, God will consummate His eternal intention to make Christ preeminent through the rule of the heavens. (*Life-Study of Daniel, Message 12*)

Take Refuge in the Son—Believe into the Son, Christ

Psalm 2:12b says, "Blessed are all those who take refuge in Him." To take refuge in the Son equals to believe into the Son, Christ (John 3:16). Many of us probably have never considered that to believe into Christ is to take refuge in Him. We can see this with the type of Noah's ark. When all the people trusted, or believed in, that ark, they all entered into that ark, to take the ark as their refuge, protection, and hiding place. Today our Christ is our refuge, our protection. We are hiding ourselves in Him.

Kiss the Son—Love Christ, the Son of God

Psalm 2:12a says that we need to kiss the Son. The New Testament tells us that we need faith and love. Paul said in 1 Timothy 1:14, "And the grace of our Lord superabounded with faith and love in Christ Jesus." The Lord's grace visited Paul and superabounded in him with faith and love in Christ. One day he received mercy and grace from the Lord, not only to believe in Him but also to love Him. We have been given faith to believe into Christ, taking Him as our refuge. Also, we have been given God's love to love the Lord Jesus.

In the Gospel of John, we are taught that we need to believe into Christ, the Son (1:12), and to love Him (14:23). In the last chapter of John, chapter twenty-one, the very Christ who is our refuge came back to Peter to restore Peter's love toward Him. The Lord asked Peter three times, "Do you love Me?" (vv. 15-17).

Peter failed utterly in denying the Lord three times (18:17, 25, 27), so the Lord came back to ask him three times—"Do you love Me?" I think that this threefold asking reminded Peter of his being defeated three times. This is why Peter responded by saying, "Lord, You know." Peter said, "Lord, You know that I love You" (21:15b, 16b). A young believer may be strong to boldly tell the Lord that he loves Him and will never deny Him. But when he is defeated, his natural confidence in his love toward the Lord will be dealt with. Then he will learn to follow the Lord and to love the Lord without any confidence in his natural strength.

To believe in the Lord is to receive Him; to love the Lord is to enjoy Him. The Gospel of John presents these as the two requirements for us to participate in the Lord. The Lord is within us to be our faith and to be our love. To love Him, according to Psalm 2:12a, is to kiss Him. We should not uplift and treasure the law. Instead, we should kiss Christ, love Christ, day by day.

I read a portion of John Nelson Darby's writings which inspired me to love the Lord. One day when he was over eighty years old, he was traveling and he stayed overnight in a hotel. Before going to sleep, he said to the Lord, "Lord Jesus, I still love You." That inspired me to the uttermost. After many years, he could still speak such a word to the Lord. We need to ask the Lord to keep us loving Him all the time. (*Life-Study of Psalms, Message 3*)

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Message Two

Eternity in Man's Heart

Scripture Reading: Ecclesiastes 1-12

- I. Solomon set himself to try everything that might be worth living for, and found it to be vanity - Eccl. 1:1-2, 13; 7:15a**
 - A. The promise of something new is vain and worthless - Eccl. 1:9-10
 - B. The fame of having a name is vain and worthless - Eccl. 1:11
 - C. Having all wisdom is vain and worthless - Eccl. 1:16-18; 2:15
 - D. Seeking after enjoyment is vain and worthless - Eccl. 2:1
 - E. Possessing wealth is vain and worthless - Eccl. 2:4-9; 4:8
 - F. Doing good is vain and worthless - Eccl. 9:1-2
 - G. All human endeavor and any life-work is vain and worthless - Eccl. 1:14; 5:7
 - H. In its totality, human life is vain and worthless – Eccl. 2:14; 3:19-20

- II. Because God has created man to contain Himself, nothing else truly fits man or satisfies man**
 - A. The reason that man is not satisfied with whatever is under the sun is because God has put eternity in his heart-Eccl. 3:11
 - B. God has put eternity in our hearts so that we would eventually be driven to the eternal God as the unique thing that can give our life its meaning

- III. Solomon charged young people to follow God and to remember Him in their youth and not to waste their lives trying to satisfy the seeking God has put in their hearts with other things - Eccl. 12:1**

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Message 2-Verse Sheet
Eternity in Man's Heart

Eccl. 1:1-2

1 The words of the Preacher, the son of David, the king in Jerusalem.
2 Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher; / Vanity of vanities; all is vanity.

Eccl. 1:13

And I set my heart to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under the heavens. It is grievous travail that God has given to the children of men to travail in.

Eccl. 7:15

I have seen everything in my days of vanity: There is a righteous man who perishes in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man who prolongs [his life] in his wickedness.

Eccl. 1:9-11

9 What has been is what will be, / And what has been done is what will be done, / And there is nothing new under the sun.
10 Is there anything of which one can say, See, this is new? / Already it has been, in the ages that were before us.
11 There is no remembrance of those who were before; / And also those who will come to be afterward, for them there will be no / remembrance / With those who come to be after [them.]

Eccl. 1:16-18

16 I spoke to my own heart, saying, Now I have magnified and increased [my] wisdom more than all who have been over Jerusalem before me; and my heart has observed in abundance wisdom and knowledge.
17 And I set my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly; I perceived that this also is a chasing after wind.
18 For in much wisdom is much vexation, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow.

Eccl. 2:15

And I said in my heart, As it happens to the fool, so also will it happen to me. Why then have I been so wise? And I said in my heart, This also is vanity.

Eccl. 2:1

I said in my heart, Come now, I will test out pleasure; so taste enjoyment. But indeed, this also is vanity.

Eccl. 2:4-9

4 I enlarged my works: I built houses for myself; I planted vineyards for myself;
5 I made gardens and parks for myself, and planted in them trees of every kind of fruit.
6 I made water ponds for myself from which to water a forest of growing trees.

7 I bought male and female servants, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of herds and flocks, more than all that had been before me in Jerusalem.

8 I gathered also silver and gold for myself and the treasures of kings and provinces; I got for myself male singers and female singers and the delights of the children of men, concubine after concubine.

9 And I became great and increased more than all who had been before me in Jerusalem; also my wisdom remained with me.

Eccl. 4:8

There is one [alone] and without a second; also he has no son or brother. Yet there is no end to all his labor; moreover his eye is not satisfied with riches. For whom then, [he says,] do I labor and deprive myself of good? This also is vanity and grievous travail.

Eccl. 9:1-2

1 For all this I laid on my heart, so that I might explain all this, that the righteous and the wise and their works are in the hand of God; man knows neither love nor hate; all is before them.

2 All things are alike to all: One thing happens to the righteous man and to the wicked man, to the good and to the clean and to the unclean, to him who sacrifices and to him who does not sacrifice; as the good man is, so is the sinner; he who swears is like him who fears an oath.

Eccl. 1:14

I have seen all the works that are done under the sun, and indeed, all is vanity and a chasing after wind.

Eccl. 5:7

For in the multitude of dreams and [in] many words are also vanities. Rather, fear God.

Eccl. 2:14

The wise man's eyes are in his head, and the fool walks in darkness; yet I also perceived that one fate happens to them all.

Eccl. 3:19-20

19 For what happens to the children of men happens also to beasts; even the same thing happens to them [both:] As the one dies, so dies the other; and they all have one breath; and man has no advantage over the beast; for all is vanity.

20 All go to one place: all are of dust, and all return to dust.

Eccl. 3:11

He has made everything beautiful in its own time; also He has put eternity in their heart, yet so that man does not find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

Eccl. 12:1

Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near when you will say, I have no pleasure in them;

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Message 2 - Group Time
Eternity in Man's Heart

Verses for Pray-reading:

Ecc. 1:2 - Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher; / Vanity of vanities; all is vanity.

Ecc. 3:11a - He has made everything beautiful in its own time; also He has put eternity in their heart...

Ministry reading:

The contents of Ecclesiastes are a description by Solomon, after his falling away from God and returning back to God, concerning the human life of fallen mankind under the sun, which is in the corrupted world. He set his heart to seek and to search out all that is done under the heavens, and he observed that according to the natural phenomena all the things done in cycle remain the same, generation after generation, all wearisome and nothing new. In his conclusion, this is all vanity of vanities and a chasing after wind to the human life of fallen mankind. Such a conclusion of the wise king by his wisdom may be considered a history of the vain life of a fallen man. His conclusion in this book is like a dirge to a man whose end is in misery.

According to Ecclesiastes, human history, from its beginning to the present, is vanity. Because creation has been made subject to vanity and to the slavery of corruption, everything under the sun is vanity. Paul's word concerning this in Romans 8:20-21 corresponds to Ecclesiastes. Today everyone is actually not living but dying. We have been born to die; that is, we have been dying since the day of our birth. From this we see that human life under the sun is vanity of vanities.

Solomon had unequaled wisdom, the supreme position, unsurpassed wealth, and hundreds of wives and concubines, and fell in the indulgence of his lust to an unparalleled extent. Through all the positive and negative experiences of the human life under the sun, his thought was deeply impressed and occupied with the central thought of this book, that is, the vanity of vanities of the human life under the sun in its falling away from God. Man was created by God with the highest and most noble purpose, that is, to express Him in the resemblance of Him in His life, nature, and expression. But God's enemy, Satan the devil, came in to inject himself as sin into the man created by God for His purpose. Through this fall of man, man and all the created things that had been committed by God to his dominion were brought into the slavery of corruption, made subject to vanity (Rom. 8:20-21). Thus, the human life in the corrupted world also became a vanity, a chasing after wind. The writer Solomon had fully realized this and stressed this to the uttermost in his description. Yet he was not fully disappointed in this, but rather he instructed men that there is a way to get out of this vanity, that is, to come back to God and take God as man's everything, redemption, life, wealth, enjoyment, pleasure, and satisfaction, that man still may be used by God to fulfill His original purpose in man for the fulfillment of His eternal economy (Ecc. 12:13-14).

God Having Put Eternity in Man's Heart

God has made everything beautiful in its own time and has put eternity (an aspiration for the things in eternity) in man's heart, yet so that man does not find out what God has done from the

beginning to the end (v. 11). In His creation of man, God put something into man which Solomon called "eternity." This means that in man there is a kind of aspiration for God, an aspiration for something eternal. Physical things may be enjoyable, but they are temporal.

Many successful people can testify that when they were endeavoring to advance in their career, they sensed that there was an emptiness within them. They began to realize that they were seeking something eternal. After they gained something they wanted, they felt that it was nothing. This feeling comes from the aspiration in man's heart for something eternal.

According to our own experience we know that whenever we have a success in our human life, we also have an empty feeling. This indicates that within man there is an aspiration for eternal things. God has put such an aspiration, such a seeking, in man's heart so that he will seek God. Every person, especially every thoughtful person, has within him this longing and seeking for eternity. (*Life-Study of Ecclesiastes, Message 1*)

Realizing the Vanity of Human Life

As a result of the fall, the human life became a vanity. Look at people today. Although they are very busy, within them there is a gap, a void. Deep within them is a sense of emptiness. Regardless of your social status, regardless how wealthy or how successful you are, when you sit alone in the quiet of the night or early morning, you know there is a gap within you. That emptiness is the vanity that I am talking about. This is exactly what the wise King Solomon meant when he said, "Vanity of vanities, all under the sun are vanity" (Eccl. 1:2-3). In order to escape the second fall of man we must realize that as fallen men without God everything we are, have, and do is empty. We are nothing but vanity. (*Life-Study of Genesis, Message 25*)

All Being Vanity

At some point in our human life, we all have a sense of the vanity of human life: work is vain, adults are vain, children are vain, houses are vain, buying and selling are vain, and riches are vain. Everyone and everything are vain: you are vain, I am vain, clothing is vain, food is vain, staying at home is vain, traveling is vain, east is vain, west is vain, south is vain, north is vain, ancient times are vain, and modern times are vain. Everything in human life eventually causes people to sense the vanity of human existence without God. The Chinese are fond of speaking about blessings, wealth, longevity, and happiness. In fact, blessings are vain, wealth is vain, longevity is vain, and happiness is vain. It is not a coincidence that newspapers and magazines often have stories about successful people who have committed suicide. This shows the uncertainty of everything and that efforts to find something certain are like chasing the wind.

Are our husbands, wives, riches, positions, houses, and knowledge dependable? Even if we depend on these things, they can be gone in the twinkling of an eye. Today's happiness often is the source of tomorrow's grief. Nothing and no one on earth are reliable....In regard to man, the only word is *vanity*. Man experiences vanity because he is full of vanity and not satisfied inwardly. Instead, he is hungry, thirsty, and empty. He is full of anguish rather than rest, sorrow rather than joy. Some may say that they are too busy to feel empty, but after many years everyone senses the tediousness of human life.

Man Being Made for God

Man was made by God for God; this gave great meaning to man in the beginning. However, man has become alienated from God. He does not know God, does not have God, and does not

believe in God. Without God, man is left with a sense of vanity and meaninglessness related to his human life. Man is like a light bulb that cannot shine. The function of a light bulb is to be placed in a lamp so that it can shine and fulfill its function of illumination. If a light bulb is placed in anything other than a lamp, it will be useless, and its inability to shine will make its existence superfluous. This is man's condition without God.

Man is made for God. If he is not for God, his life is meaningless. If a man puts on beautiful clothing, he will eventually feel meaningless. If a man has a good family, he will eventually feel meaningless. Even a high position will not take away a sense of meaninglessness because a high position is not the reason for man's existence. Only when a man touches God does he have a sense of meaning, joy, strength, and power. Man is a "single-purpose" item. He was made solely for God. Hence, when a man has God, he does not have a sense of vanity; instead, he has satisfaction, joy, and peace.

Having Satisfaction, Joy, and Peace When Man has God

All the problems of human life are due to not having God. Whatever man relies on will always be a source of sorrow and vanity (Eccl. 1:2-3).... As long as we stay away from God and set our heart on anything that is vain, we will be empty and miserable. If we love God, we will have God, but many do not have God because they do not love Him. This is the reason for their vanity and misery. As long as we do not want God and do not have God, we will have a sense of vanity related to our family. Similarly, organizations, societies, and countries are vain. Without God, families, organizations, societies, countries, and even the whole world will be a source of vanity and misery. If there is no God, there can only be vanity and misery. Since man was made for God, man can be satisfied, joyous, and peaceful only when he has God. (*Christ Being the Burden of the Gospel, Chapter 17*)

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Message Three

The New Covenant

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 31

- I. Jeremiah observed how Israel broke God's covenant, turned away from God, and worshipped the idols - Jer. 31:32; 11:1-13; 2:13, 28**
 - A. Jeremiah prophesied to Israel to warn them that if they did not repent they would fall under God's chastisement - Jer. 3-4
 - B. Jeremiah wept for God's people as he observed their stubborn refusal to return to God and the eventual loss of their country - Jer. 11:8-12; 9:1; 13:17

- II. Jeremiah's prophecy shows that man, under the old covenant of law, is utterly corrupt and has no way to improve or change himself - Rom. 3:20; 5:20a; 7:7**
 - A. Man's heart is deceitful above all things and is incurable - Jer. 17:9
 - B. Man is wicked by birth and cannot change his sinful nature, just as the leopard cannot change his spots nor the Cushite change his skin - Jer. 13:23
 - C. Man can do nothing to improve or save himself under the first covenant of law and is in desperate need of a new covenant of life

- III. God promised to make a new covenant of life with man in which God does everything in man for the fulfillment of His purpose - Jer. 31:33-34**
 - A. In the new covenant, God imparts His law (His divine life) into us - Jer. 31:33
 - B. In the new covenant, God becomes our God and we become His people - Jer. 31:33
 - C. In the new covenant, all will know the Lord by the capacity of the divine life within them - Jer. 31:34
 - D. In the new covenant, God forgives our iniquities and remembers our sins no more - Jer. 31:34

**GENERAL SUBJECT: ENCOURAGING GOD'S PEOPLE TO LOVE HIM, TO GROW
IN LIFE, AND TO RISE UP FOR HIS BUILDING**

Message 3 – Verse Sheet

The New Covenant

Jer. 31:31-34

31 Indeed, days are coming, declares Jehovah, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,

32 Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by their hand to bring them out from the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was their Husband, declares Jehovah.

33 But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares Jehovah: I will put My law in their inward parts and write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they will be My people.

34 And they will no longer teach, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for all of them will know Me, from the little one among them even to the great one among them, declares Jehovah, for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.

Jer. 11:1-13

1 The word that came to Jeremiah from Jehovah, saying,

2 Listen to the words of this covenant and speak them to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

3 And you shall say to them, Thus says Jehovah the God of Israel, Cursed is the man who does not listen to the words of this covenant,

4 Which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, Listen to My voice and do the things according to all which I command you; and you will be My people and I will be your God,

5 That I may establish the oath which I swore to your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as it is this day. And I answered and said, Amen, Jehovah.

6 And Jehovah said to me, Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, Hear the words of this covenant and do them.

7 For I solemnly warned your fathers in the day that I brought them up from the land of Egypt, even to this day, rising up early and warning, saying, Listen to My voice.

8 But they did not listen or incline their ear, but all walked in the stubbornness of their evil heart; therefore I brought upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded [them] to do, and they have not done [them.]

9 And Jehovah said to me, A conspiracy has been found among the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

10 They have turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, who refused to listen to My words, and they have gone after other gods to serve them. The house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken My covenant which I made with their fathers.

11 Therefore thus says Jehovah, I am about to bring evil upon them, from which they cannot escape; and they will cry to Me, but I will not listen to them.

12 Then the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will go and cry to the gods to whom they burn incense, but they will not save them at all in the time of their trouble.

13 For according to the number of your cities are your gods, O Judah, and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem you have set up altars to [that] shameful thing, altars to burn incense to Baal.

Jer. 2:13

For My people have committed two evils: / They have forsaken Me, / The fountain of living waters, / To hew out for themselves cisterns, / Broken cisterns, / Which hold no water.

Jer. 2:28

But where are your gods, whom you made for yourselves? / Let them arise, if they can save you in the time of your trouble; / For [according to] the number of your cities / Are your gods, O Judah.

Jer. 9:1

Oh that my head were waters, / And my eye a fountain of tears, / That I might weep day and night / For the slain of the daughter of my people!

Jer. 13:17

And if you will not hear it, / My soul will weep in secret places for [your] pride; / And my eye will weep bitterly and shed tears, / Because the flock of Jehovah has been taken captive.

Rom. 3:20

Because out of the works of the law no flesh shall be justified before Him; for through the law is the clear knowledge of sin.

Rom. 5:20

And the law entered in alongside that the offense might abound; but where sin abounded, grace has superabounded,

Rom. 7:7

What then shall we say? Is the law sin? Absolutely not! But I did not know sin except through the law; for neither did I know coveting, except the law had said, "You shall not covet."

Jer. 17:9

The heart is deceitful above all things, / And it is incurable; / Who can know it?

Jer. 13:23

Can the Cushite change his skin, / Or the leopard his spots? / [Then] you also may be able to do good, / Who are accustomed to do evil.

Luke 22:20

And similarly the cup after they had dined, saying, This cup is the new covenant [established] in My blood, which is being poured out for you.

1 Cor. 11:24-26

24 And having given thanks, He broke [it] and said, This is My body, which is [given] for you; this do unto the remembrance of Me.

25 Similarly also the cup after they had dined, saying, This cup is the new covenant [established] in My blood; this do, as often as you drink [it,] unto the remembrance of Me.

26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you declare the Lord's death until He comes.

**GENERAL SUBJECT: ENCOURAGING GOD'S PEOPLE TO LOVE HIM, TO GROW
IN LIFE, AND TO RISE UP FOR HIS BUILDING**

Message 3 - Group Time

The New Covenant

Verses for Pray-reading:

Jer. 31:33 - But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares Jehovah: I will put My law in their inward parts and write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they will be My people.

Jer. 31:34 - And they will no longer teach, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for all of them will know Me, from the little one among them even to the great one among them, declares Jehovah, for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.

Ministry reading:

Jehovah, as their Husband, Making a New Covenant with Israel

Jeremiah 31:31-34 reveals that Jehovah, as their Husband, will make a new covenant with Israel. "Behold, days are coming, declares Jehovah, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by their hand to bring them out from the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was their Husband, declares Jehovah" (vv. 31-32). This new covenant was enacted by the Lord Jesus when He was about to die on the cross for the accomplishment of redemption. As He was instituting His supper, He said, "This cup is the new covenant established in My blood, which is being poured out for you" (Luke 22:20). No doubt, the new covenant here is the new covenant spoken of in Jeremiah 31:31. This new covenant is emphasized by Paul in Hebrews 8, where he quotes Jeremiah 31 in a very particular way.

Jehovah Putting His Law within Them and Writing It upon Their Hearts

The first item of the new covenant is found in Jeremiah 31:33a. "This is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares Jehovah: I will put My law within them and write it upon their hearts." What kind of law can be put into people and be written upon their hearts? Such a law must be a law of life, and this law itself must be a life. Otherwise, it could not be put into us. Furthermore, this law will be written upon our hearts, indicating that it will spread from the center of our being, our spirit, to the circumference, our heart. Thus, this law must be God's life, the divine life, and God's life is God Himself. In the new covenant God will put Himself into His chosen people as their life, and this life is a law.

Every life is a law. For example, the dog life is the dog law, and the bird life is the bird law. Likewise, the life of the peach tree is the law of the peach tree. The principle is the same with human beings. As human beings we have a human life, and this human life is a law that regulates us in every way. In particular, the law of the human life regulates the growth and development of a human being and causes all the parts of one's body to be in the right place and to function in the right way.

God's life is the highest life, and the law of this life is the highest law. The New Testament calls this life eternal life, a life that is divine, uncreated, and indestructible. This eternal life is embodied in Christ (1 John 5:11), and it is actually Christ Himself (John 14:6). The law of this life is wrapped up with the life-giving Spirit, who in Romans 8:2 is called "the Spirit of life." Hence, God, Christ, and the Spirit are this life, and through our regeneration this life is now within us to function as a law to us. This law is righteous and holy, and it is a law of love and of light. Because the eternal life within us is a law, it controls, governs, regulates, and restricts us in everything. What a marvelous law we have within us!

The law of life within us is for God's economy. Without giving us His life as the inner law, God has no way to accomplish His economy. God's economy is to dispense Himself into our being that our being may be constituted with His being to be one constitution with His being. This can be accomplished only by God putting Himself into us as the divine life....The divine life has a function, and with this function there is a capacity, an ability. We can be holy because we have the capacity of holiness. We can be righteous because we have the capacity of righteousness. We can love others, even our enemies, because the divine life within us has the capacity to love.

The teachings in the New Testament are just to develop this capacity, to encourage this capacity to grow. Likewise, all the messages given by this ministry are to strengthen and develop the divine life in its capacity for its function. The goal of this function is for God to dispense Himself into us to accomplish His economy, that is, to produce the increase of God for His expression, which will consummate in the New Jerusalem.

Jehovah Forgiving Their Iniquity and Remembering Their Sin No More

In Jeremiah 31:34b we have yet another aspect of the new covenant. Here Jehovah says, "I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." Our sin and iniquity are great problems, but they have been dealt with. Before Jeremiah spoke of the new covenant, he spoke concerning Christ as the righteous Shoot of David, as the One whose name will be called Jehovah our righteousness (23:5-6). This One has accomplished redemption; He has taken away our sin. "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). He has solved the problem of sin, and now He is our redemption and our justification. In Him we have been justified by God, and God has forgiven our iniquity and our sin. Because we have been justified, there is no obstacle or frustration to keep us from having fellowship with God and to prevent Him from dispensing Himself into us. Because we have been redeemed, justified, forgiven, and cleansed, we are free to contact God, and He is free to work Himself into us.

God has forgiven our sin, and He does not remember it. As a result, there can now be communication, fellowship, between us and God. Day by day we may converse with Him, enjoying Him and receiving His dispensing. (*Life-Study of Jeremiah and Lamentations, Message 25*)

The Blood, the Covenant, and the Cup

The Lord's blood redeemed us from our fallen condition back to God, back to the inheritance we lost through the fall of Adam, and back to God's full blessing. Concerning the Lord's table (1 Cor. 10:21), the bread signifies our participation in life, and the cup, our enjoyment of God's blessing. Hence, it is called the cup of blessing (1 Cor. 10:16). In this cup are all the blessings of God and even God Himself as our portion (Psa. 16:5). In Adam our portion was the cup of God's wrath (Rev. 14:10). Christ has drunk that cup for us (John 18:11), and His blood has constituted the

cup of salvation for us (Psa. 116:13), the cup that runs over (Psa. 23:5). By partaking of this cup we also have the fellowship of the blood of Christ (1 Cor. 10:16).

Mark 14:25 speaks of the fruit of the vine. The fruit of the vine within the cup of the Lord's table is also a symbol. It signifies the Lord's blood shed on the cross for our sins. His blood was required by God's righteousness for the forgiveness of our sins (Heb. 9:22).

Mark 14:24 says that the Lord's blood is the blood of the covenant. The Lord's blood, having satisfied God's righteousness, enacted the new covenant. In this new covenant, God gives us forgiveness, life, salvation, and all spiritual, heavenly, and divine blessings. When this new covenant is given to us, it is a cup (Luke 22:20), a portion for us. The Lord shed the blood, God established the covenant, and we enjoy the cup, in which God and all that is of Him are our portion. The blood is the price Christ paid for us, the covenant is the title deed God made to us, and the cup is the portion we receive from God.

Concerning the Lord's table, we have the blood, the covenant, and the cup. When we come to the Lord's supper, we see a cup on the table. That cup is a covenant and is also related to the blood. Therefore, the blood, the covenant, and the cup are one. The blood is the price paid by Christ, the covenant is the title deed of our inheritance, and the cup is the portion we receive and enjoy. Christ paid the price. God made the covenant, and we enjoy the portion. (*Life-Study of Mark, Message 43*)

**GENERAL SUBJECT: ENCOURAGING GOD'S PEOPLE TO LOVE HIM, TO GROW
IN LIFE, AND TO RISE UP FOR HIS BUILDING**

Message 4

Pursuing Christ for Satisfaction

Scripture Reading: Song of Songs 1-2

- I. The lover yearns for a personal and affectionate relationship with the Lord - S.S. 1:2a**
 - A. The lover is no longer satisfied with a general relationship with the Lord but desires an intimate contact with Him
 - B. In her mind there is only one "him," showing her particular and single love for her Beloved - S.S. 1:2

- II. The lover is attracted by Christ's love and charmed by His name to pursue after Him - S.S. 1:2b-3**
 - A. Christ's attracting love is more cheering than wine - S.S. 1:2b; 2 Cor. 5:14
 - B. Christ's charming name (His person) is like ointment poured forth - S.S. 1:3
 - C. As a result, the lover is captivated by Christ and runs after Him for satisfaction - S.S. 1:4a; Phil 3:12-14

- III. The lover's pursuit leads her to the footsteps of the flock**
 - A. The lover is drawn to the Lord and runs after Him with her companions - S.S.1:4
 - B. The lover is led to the church as the place where Christ pastures, shepherds, and feeds her - S.S. 1:7-8; John 10:16

**GENERAL SUBJECT: ENCOURAGING GOD'S PEOPLE TO LOVE HIM, TO GROW IN
LIFE, AND TO RISE UP FOR HIS BUILDING**

Message 4 – Verse Sheet

Pursuing Christ for Satisfaction

S. S. 1:2-4

2 Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! / For your love is better than wine.

3 Your anointing oils have a pleasant fragrance; / Your name is like ointment poured forth; / Therefore the virgins love you.

4 Draw me; we will run after you-- The king has brought me into his chambers-- / We will be glad and rejoice in you; / We will extol your love more than wine. / Rightly do they love you.

2 Cor. 5:14

For the love of Christ constrains us because we have judged this, that One died for all, therefore all died;

Phil. 3:12-14

12 Not that I have already obtained or am already perfected, but I pursue, if even I may lay hold of that for which I also have been laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

13 Brothers, I do not account of myself to have laid hold; but one thing [I do:] Forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before,

14 I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called [me] upward.

S. S. 1:7-8

7 Tell me, you whom my soul loves, Where do you pasture [your flock?] / Where do you make [it] lie down at noon? / For why should I be like one who is veiled / Beside the flocks of your companions?

8 If you yourself do not know, / You fairest among women, / Go forth on the footsteps of the flock, / And pasture your young goats / By the shepherds' tents.

John 10:16

And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must lead them also, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one flock, one Shepherd.

GENERAL SUBJECT: ENCOURAGING GOD'S PEOPLE TO LOVE HIM, TO GROW IN LIFE, AND TO RISE UP FOR HIS BUILDING

Message 4 - Group Time

Pursuing Christ for Satisfaction

Verses for Pray-reading:

S.S. 1:2 - Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! / For your love is better than wine.

S.S. 1:4a - Draw me; we will run after you.

Ministry reading:

The Need for a Personal and Affectionate Relationship with Christ

Dear saints, in this chapter I want to impress you with something particular. After you have received Christ as your life, you must have a very personal seeking after Christ. No one can represent you or do anything for you in this matter. It must be personal. Every believer's relationship with Christ must be personal and affectionate.

Since we have been born of God, we have become His children (John 1:12-13). John 3:6 says, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Since God is Spirit and we were born of Him, what are we? That which is born of a cow is a cow. That which is born of Chinese is Chinese. Also, that which is born of God as the Spirit is spirit. This is logical. A paraphrased version of John 3:6 could read this way: "He who is born of God the Spirit is the spirit-God." We were regenerated of God as the Spirit to be a spirit. As those who have been born of God, we are the children of God, the same as God in life and nature but not in the Godhead. Therefore, our relationship with God has to be personal and affectionate.

In these days I feel very much that there is a warm, intimate, close affection between me and my God. The seeker said, "Draw me." She did not say, "Draw us." *Draw me* is personal. We want a drawing from the Lord that is His personal and affectionate doing. We want Him to be with us in a personal and affectionate way. All the religions, including Christianity, present a portrait of God that is inaccurate. They portray God merely as great, almighty, sovereign, majestic, and even unapproachable; no one can or even dares to touch God. To say that God is majestic is not wrong, but that is only one attribute of the Divine Being. Regardless of how great, sovereign, almighty, and majestic God is, when He wanted to build up His relationship with man, He took the personal, affectionate way. He took the way of becoming a man. If the Lord Jesus had come to Peter in a majestic way, Peter would have felt threatened. But He did not come to Peter as the majestic, untouchable God. Instead, He came to Peter as his countryman. Peter was a Galilean, and Jesus was also a Galilean. This is personal and affectionate.

The Lord Jesus lived among men for thirty-three and a half years. This was the way in which God came to build up His relationship with man. This is the personal, affectionate way recorded in the New Testament from the incarnation to the day of resurrection. On the morning of His resurrection the Lord's empty tomb was discovered by three sisters (Mark 16:1, 8). When they entered into the tomb, an angel gave them a message from the Lord, saying, "Go, tell His disciples and Peter" (v. 7). Peter's name mentioned in this way is personal and affectionate. Peter's intimate relationship with the Lord Jesus was particular, so it was stressed even by the angel. At the beginning of his contact with the Lord,

Peter's response was not too personal, but gradually, Peter's transaction with the Lord became personal and affectionate.

The apostle John could recline on the Lord's bosom (John 13:23). How personal and affectionate that was! The very God, the very Lord whom we seek, sets up a feast and invites us to feast with Him (Rev. 3:20). We must have such a personal and affectionate contact with Him. If we mail someone a letter, that affects him in a certain way. But if we come to him with a personal visitation and an affectionate contact, that makes a great difference.

Dear saints, my burden in this chapter is to share that you have to start seeking the Lord in a personal and affectionate way. I want to stress these two words: *personal* and *affectionate*. The very God whom we pursue is personal and affectionate.

I have been in the Lord's fellowship for about seventy years, but there was one particular occasion when the Lord touched me in the most personal and affectionate way. In 1943 Japan invaded and occupied China. One day the military police of the invading Japanese army arrested me and imprisoned me for thirty days. Every day I was subjected to two very stern and strict examinations. At that time the Chinese knew how cruel the invading Japanese army was. They would kill a Chinese as they would a chicken. I do not believe that there were many Chinese who were arrested by the Japanese army and released after thirty days. All my relatives, friends, and brothers and sisters in the church were very concerned for my life.

On the first day of my imprisonment, the Japanese military police put me into a soldier's bedroom; that night the Lord gave me a dream, indicating to me that the Japanese army would not hurt me. The next day they began to interrogate me. They threatened to pour cold water upon me if I did not tell the truth. I said to myself, "You don't need to threaten me, because I will surely speak the truth. I am a man of truth." After many times of their testing, they could not find anything wrong with me. After fifteen days of being imprisoned, I was alone in my small cell in the night. I stood up and I can testify that the Lord was in my presence embracing me. I said with tears, "Lord, You know why I am here." This experience of the Lord was personal to the uttermost. In my whole life I never had a time like that in which the Lord was so personal to me. I was so personal and affectionate to Him, and He was the same to me.

We all need this kind of personal, affectionate, intimate contact with the Lord every day. This has become my habit. Every morning after rising up I go to my desk, and the first thing I say is, "Lord Jesus, I love You." I am not just a poor man praying to a merciful God, but I am contacting a Savior who is personal and affectionate to me, as I am personal and affectionate to Him. We all need to take heed to what the seeker says: "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth!" Right away her tone changes: "Your love is better than wine." This is a personal, intimate prayer. "Draw me; we will run after you." This is personal and affectionate. We need this kind of personal and affectionate seeking after Him, and we need to build up such a relationship with Him that is so personal and affectionate. (*Crystallization-Study of Song of Songs, Message 1*)

Follow After Love

Give yourself to love the Lord. No other way is so prevailing, and no other way is so safe, so rich, and so full of enjoyment. Just love Him. Do not care for anything else. Teachings, doctrines, gifts, and power do not mean much. We must continually tell the Lord, "Lord, keep me in Your love! Attract me with Yourself! Keep me all the time in Your loving presence!" If we will pray in this way, we will see what love

we will have toward the Lord and what kind of life we will live. We will simply live by the Lord Himself. As long as we love Him from the deepest part of our being, everything will be all right. If we need wisdom, He will be the wisdom to us. If we need power, He will be the power. If we need the proper and adequate knowledge, He will even be that to us. Whatever we need, He is. Do not try to get anything else; just look to Him that He would reveal His love to you. Song of Songs 1:4 says, "Draw me; we will run after you." We must ask the Lord to draw us, and then others will run after Him with us. To take Him as our life, we must love Him in such a way.

In Revelation 2 the degradation of the church began with the loss of the first love toward the Lord Jesus. The church in Ephesus had many good works and was even strong in faith, but the Lord rebuked her by saying, "I have one thing against you, that you have left your first love" (v. 4). They had lost the fresh and best love toward the Lord. This started the degradation of the churches. When we lose our love for the Lord, we start to backslide. We must go to the Lord and make a deal with Him: "Lord, be merciful to me! I do not need anything or anyone else but Your loving self. Simply show me Yourself! Draw me that we may run after You. O Lord, show me Your love that I might be constrained by Your love! I do not want to do anything for You, Lord. I just want to love You. I just want to take You as my person. I want Your personality as my personality, Your will as my will, Your desires as my desires. I want Your everything as my everything."

Thus, we see that it is not simply a matter of believing but also a matter of loving. We must learn to love the Lord Jesus. If we have such a burning love toward the Lord Jesus, we will enjoy all that He is. Therefore, I do not encourage you to seek anything else. Go to the Lord and ask Him to draw you that you may run after Him. You must realize that the zoe life is such a loving, wonderful person and that love is the way to deal with Him. (*Life and Building in the Song of Songs, Chapter 2*)

The Lover's Pursuing

In [Song of Songs 1] verse 4a we have a word concerning the lover's pursuing: "Draw me; we will run after you." In her pursuit of Christ, she asks Him to draw her that she and her companions may run after Him. Everyone who is drawn by Christ will have companions in following Him. Since I was drawn by the Lord, many have followed the Lord with me. Consider the situation with Peter when he, a fisherman, was called by the Lord (Matt. 4:18-20). One day Christ the Beloved came, and Peter was charmed by Him and he left the nets and followed Him. Many followed Christ as Peter's companions. When we are drawn to follow Christ, we become a factor in others' following of Him. (*Life-Study of Song of Songs, Message 1*)