

THE CENTRAL LINE OF THE BIBLE

(Friday—First Morning Session)

Message One

The Lines in the Word of God

Note: This outline was produced from notes of a meeting of Brother Witness Lee with the trainers of the full-time training in Anaheim on January 23, 1996.

Scripture Reading: John 1:1; 1 John 1:1; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 1:10; 3:9; John 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:45; 2 Cor. 3:17-18; Acts 16:7; Rom. 8:9-11; Phil. 1:19; Eph. 4:4; 1 Cor. 12:13; Rev. 1:4; 4:5; 5:6; 21:2; Gen. 2:7; Rom. 5:14; Gen. 2:20-24; 3:20; Eph. 5:29-32; 2 Cor. 11:2-3; 1 Cor. 10:1-11; Exo. 25; Heb. 9:2-5; 1 Chron. 28:11; 29:1; 2 Chron. 3—4; John 2:21; 1 Cor. 3:17; Eph. 2:21; Rev. 21:22

- John 1:1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- 1 John 1:1** That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life
- Matt 28:19** Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
- 2 Cor 13:14** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- 1 Tim 1:4** Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.
- Eph 1:10** Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;
- Eph 3:9** And to enlighten all *that they may see* what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
- John 1:14** And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
- 1 Cor 15:45** So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul"; the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.
- 2 Cor 3:17** And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.
- 2 Cor 3:18** But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.
- Acts 16:7** And when they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, yet the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.
- Rom 8:9** But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Yet if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him.
- Rom 8:10** But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.
- Rom 8:11** And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.
- Phil 1:19** For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and *the* bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,
- Eph 4:4** One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;
- 1 Cor 12:13** For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one Body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.
- Rev 1:4** John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,
- Rev 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;

Rev 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having *just* been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Gen 2:7 Jehovah God formed man with the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

Rom 5:14 But death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, who is a type of Him who was to come.

Gen 2:20 And the man gave names to all cattle and to the birds of heaven and to every animal of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper as his counterpart.

Gen 2:21 And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place.

Gen 2:22 And Jehovah God built the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman and brought her to the man.

Gen 2:23 And the man said, This time this is bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; This one shall be called Woman Because out of Man this one was taken.

Gen 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Gen 3:20 And the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

Eph 5:29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ also the church,

Eph 5:30 Because we are members of His Body.

Eph 5:31 For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh.

Eph 5:32 This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.

2 Cor 11:2 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.

2 Cor 11:3 But I fear lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your thoughts would be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity toward Christ.

1 Cor 10:1 For I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;

1 Cor 10:2 And all were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

1 Cor 10:3 And all ate the same spiritual food,

1 Cor 10:4 And all drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank of a spiritual rock which followed *them*, and the rock was Christ.

1 Cor 10:5 But with most of them God was not well pleased, for they were strewn along in the wilderness.

1 Cor 10:6 Now these things occurred as examples to us, that we should not be ones who lust after evil things, even as they also lusted.

1 Cor 10:7 Neither become idolaters, as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play."

1 Cor 10:8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed fornication, and there fell in one day twenty-three thousand.

1 Cor 10:9 Neither let us test Christ, as some of them tested *Him* and were destroyed by the serpents.

1 Cor 10:10 Neither murmur, just as some of them murmured and perished by the destroyer.

1 Cor 10:11 Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our admonition, unto whom the ends of the ages have come.

Exo 25:1 Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,

Exo 25:2 Tell the children of Israel to take for Me a heave offering. From every man whose heart makes him willing you shall take My heave offering.

Exo 25:3 And this is the heave offering which you shall take from them: gold and silver and bronze,

Exo 25:4 And blue and purple and scarlet strands, and fine linen, and goats' hair,

Exo 25:5 And rams' skins dyed red, and porpoise skins, and acacia wood,

Exo 25:6 Oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense,

Exo 25:7 Onyx stones and stones to be set for the ephod and for the breastplate.
Exo 25:8 And let them make a sanctuary for Me that I may dwell in their midst.
Exo 25:9 According to all that I show you, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its utensils, even so you shall make it.
Exo 25:10 And they shall make an ark of acacia wood: two and a half cubits shall be its length; and one and a half cubits, its width; and one and a half cubits, its height.
Exo 25:11 And you shall overlay it with pure gold; inside and outside you shall overlay it; and you shall make a rim of gold upon it all around.
Exo 25:12 And you shall cast four rings of gold for it, and put them on its four feet; and two rings shall be on one side of it, and two rings on the other side of it.
Exo 25:13 And you shall make poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold.
Exo 25:14 And you shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark to carry the ark with them.
Exo 25:15 The poles shall be in the rings of the ark; they shall not be taken from it.
Exo 25:16 And you shall put into the ark the testimony which I shall give you.
Exo 25:17 And you shall make an expiation cover of pure gold: two and a half cubits shall be its length, and one and a half cubits, its width.
Exo 25:18 And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of beaten work you shall make them, at the two ends of the expiation cover.
Exo 25:19 And make one cherub at one end and one cherub at the other end; of one piece with the expiation cover you shall make the cherubim on its two ends.
Exo 25:20 And the cherubim shall spread out their wings above the cover, covering the expiation cover with their wings, with their faces toward one another; the faces of the cherubim shall be toward the expiation cover.
Exo 25:21 And you shall put the expiation cover on top of the Ark, and into the Ark you shall put the testimony that I shall give you.
Exo 25:22 And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the expiation cover, from between the two cherubim which are upon the Ark of the Testimony, of everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.
Exo 25:23 And you shall make a table of acacia wood: two cubits shall be its length, and a cubit its width, and one and a half cubits its height.
Exo 25:24 And you shall overlay it with pure gold and make a rim of gold around it.
Exo 25:25 And you shall make a frame of a handbreadth around it; and you shall make a rim of gold for its frame around it.
Exo 25:26 And you shall make for it four rings of gold and put the rings on the four corners that are on its four feet.
Exo 25:27 The rings shall be close to the frame as holders for the poles to carry the table.
Exo 25:28 And you shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold, and the table shall be carried with them.
Exo 25:29 And you shall make its plates and its spoons and its pitchers and its bowls with which to pour out drink offerings; of pure gold you shall make them.
Exo 25:30 And you shall set the bread of the Presence upon the table before Me always.
Exo 25:31 And you shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand with its base and its shaft shall be made of beaten work; its cups, its calyxes, and its blossom buds shall be of one piece with it.
Exo 25:32 And there shall be six branches going out of its sides; three branches of the lampstand out of one of its sides, and three branches of the lampstand out of its other side;
Exo 25:33 Three cups made like almond blossoms in one branch, a calyx and a blossom bud; and three cups made like almond blossoms in the other branch, a calyx and a blossom bud—so for the six branches going out of the lampstand.
Exo 25:34 And there shall be on the lampstand four cups made like almond blossoms, its calyxes and its blossom buds;
Exo 25:35 And a calyx under two branches of one piece with it, and a calyx under two branches of one piece with it, and a calyx under two branches of one piece with it, for the six branches going out of the lampstand.

- Exo 25:36 Their calyxes and their branches shall be of one piece with it; all of it one beaten work of pure gold.
- Exo 25:37 And you shall make its lamps, seven; and set up its lamps to give light to the area in front of it.
- Exo 25:38 And its tongs and its firepans shall be of pure gold.
- Exo 25:39 It shall be made of a talent of pure gold, with all these utensils.
- Exo 25:40 And see that you make them according to their pattern, which was shown to you in the mountain.
- Heb 9:2 For a tabernacle was prepared, the first, in which were the lampstand and the table and the loaves that were set forth, which is called the Holy Place;
- Heb 9:3 And after the second veil, a tabernacle, which is called the Holy of Holies,
- Heb 9:4 Having a golden altar and the ark of the covenant covered about everywhere with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna and Aaron's rod that budded and the tablets of the covenant,
- Heb 9:5 And above it cherubim of glory overshadowing the propitiation place, concerning which it is not now *the time* to speak in detail.
- 1 Chron 28:11 Then David gave Solomon his son the pattern of the portico of the temple and its buildings and its storehouses and its upper rooms and its inner rooms and the building for the propitiation cover;
- 1 Chron 29:1 And David the king said to all the assembly, Solomon my son, he alone whom God has chosen, is young and tender, and the work is great because the palace is not for man but for Jehovah God.
- 2 Chron 3:1 And Solomon began to build the house of Jehovah in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where He had appeared to David his father, at the place that David prepared, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.
- 2 Chron 3:2 And he began to build on the second day of the second month in the fourth year of his reign.
- 2 Chron 3:3 And these are the foundations which Solomon laid to build the house of God. The length in cubits, according to the former standard, was sixty cubits, and it was twenty cubits wide.
- 2 Chron 3:4 And the portico that was at the front was as long as the width of the house, twenty cubits; and its height was one hundred twenty cubits. And he overlaid it within with pure gold.
- 2 Chron 3:5 And the greater house he overlaid with cypress wood, and he overlaid it with fine gold and put palm trees and chains on it.
- 2 Chron 3:6 And he adorned the house with precious stones for beauty, and the gold was gold from Parvaim.
- 2 Chron 3:7 And he overlaid the house—the beams, the thresholds, and its walls and its doors—with gold; and he carved cherubim on the walls.
- 2 Chron 3:8 And he made the house of the Holy of Holies; its length, across the width of the house, was twenty cubits, and its width was twenty cubits; and he overlaid it with fine gold amounting to six hundred talents.
- 2 Chron 3:9 And the weight of the nails was fifty shekels of gold, and the upper chambers he overlaid with gold.
- 2 Chron 3:10 And he made two cherubim of sculptured work in the house of the Holy of Holies, and they overlaid them with gold.
- 2 Chron 3:11 And the wingspan of the cherubim was twenty cubits; the wing of one, of five cubits, touched the wall of the house, and its other wing, of five cubits, touched the wing of the other cherub.
- 2 Chron 3:12 And the wing of the other cherub, of five cubits, touched the wall of the house, and its other wing, of five cubits, was attached to the wing of the first cherub.
- 2 Chron 3:13 The wings of these cherubim were spread out twenty cubits in length; and they stood on their feet, and their faces were toward the house.
- 2 Chron 3:14 And he made the veil of blue and purple and crimson cloth and fine linen, and he put cherubim upon it.
- 2 Chron 3:15 And at the front of the house he made two pillars, thirty-five cubits high; and the capital that was on the top of each was five cubits high.
- 2 Chron 3:16 And he made chains in the innermost sanctuary and set them on the tops of the pillars, and he made one hundred pomegranates and put them on the chains.

- 2 Chron 3:17 And he erected the pillars in front of the temple, one on the right and one on the left; and he called the name of the one on the right Jachin and the name of the one on the left Boaz.
- 2 Chron 4:1 And he made an altar of bronze; its length was twenty cubits, and its width was twenty cubits, and its height was ten cubits.
- 2 Chron 4:2 And he made the molten sea, ten cubits from brim to brim, fully round; and it was five cubits high, and a line of thirty cubits encompassed it.
- 2 Chron 4:3 And under it there were figures of oxen all around, encircling it, for ten cubits, surrounding the sea all around; the oxen were cast in two rows when they were cast.
- 2 Chron 4:4 It stood upon twelve oxen, three facing north and three facing west and three facing south and three facing east; and the sea was upon them, and all their hindquarters were within.
- 2 Chron 4:5 And it was a handbreadth thick; and its brim was like the work of a cup's brim, like the flower of a lily; it could hold three thousand baths.
- 2 Chron 4:6 And he made ten basins in which to wash, to rinse the things for the burnt offering, and he set five on the right and five on the left; but the sea was for the priests to wash in.
- 2 Chron 4:7 Then he made the ten golden lampstands according to the ordinance for them, and he put them in the temple, five on the right and five on the left.
- 2 Chron 4:8 And he made ten tables and placed them in the temple, five on the right and five on the left; and he made one hundred golden bowls.
- 2 Chron 4:9 And he made the court of the priests and the great court and the doors of the court, and he overlaid their doors with bronze.
- 2 Chron 4:10 And he put the sea on the right side of the house, on the east side southward.
- 2 Chron 4:11 And Hiram made the pots and the shovels and the bowls. Thus Hiram finished doing the work that he was doing for King Solomon in the house of God:
- 2 Chron 4:12 The two pillars and the bowls and the two capitals that were at the top of the pillars and the two networks to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were at the top of the pillars;
- 2 Chron 4:13 And the four hundred pomegranates for the two networks, two rows of pomegranates for each network, to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were on the pillars.
- 2 Chron 4:14 He also made the bases, and he made the basins upon the bases;
- 2 Chron 4:15 And the one sea and the twelve oxen under it.
- 2 Chron 4:16 And the pots and the shovels and the forks and all their vessels that Hiram-abi made for King Solomon for the house of Jehovah were of burnished bronze.
- 2 Chron 4:17 The king cast them in the plain of the Jordan, in the clay ground between Succoth and Zeredah.
- 2 Chron 4:18 And Solomon made all these vessels in great number, for the weight of bronze could not be ascertained.
- 2 Chron 4:19 And Solomon made all the vessels that were in the house of God: the golden altar; and the tables upon which the bread of the Presence was put;
- 2 Chron 4:20 And the lampstands and their lamps of pure gold to burn according to their ordinance before the innermost sanctuary;
- 2 Chron 4:21 And the flowers and the lamps and the tongs, of gold, of purest gold;
- 2 Chron 4:22 And the snuffers and the bowls and the spoons and the firepans, of pure gold; and the entrance of the house, its innermost doors for the Holy of Holies, and the doors of the house of the temple, of gold.
- John 2:21 But He spoke of the temple of His body.
- 1 Cor 3:17 If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him; for the temple of God is holy, *and* such are you.
- Eph 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;
- Rev 21:22 And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

I. In the Lord's recovery we consider that there are three lines of truth in the divine revelation of the Bible—the central line, the line of supplemental points, and “the leaves and the branches”:

- A. In all our handling of the Scriptures, the central line should stand out.

- B. We should be particularly careful not to confuse the first two lines—the central line and the line of supplemental points.
- C. We receive all believers according to the standard of the central line, not according to the standard of the line of supplemental points.
- D. The arrangement of classes in the full-time training respects this crucial distinction of lines in the Bible.

II. The central line:

- A. The Word of God—John 1:1; 1 John 1:1:
 - John **1:1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
 - 1 John **1:1** That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life
 - 1. Although in this universe God is the primary thing, it is the Word of God that tells us about God.
 - 2. In order to know the living Christ, we must have the written Word—John 5:39; Luke 24:27.
 - John **5:39** You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that testify concerning Me.
 - Luke **24:27** And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, He explained to them clearly in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.
 - 3. John 1 stresses the relationship between God and His Word.
 - 4. We must stress the preeminence of the Word of God and make it the basis of all our understanding of the truth—Acts 17:11.
 - Acts **17:11** Now these people were more noble than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily *to see* whether these things were so.
- B. The Triune God—Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14:
 - Matt **28:19** Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
 - 2 Cor **13:14** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
 - 1. He is self-existing and ever-existing—Exo. 3:14.
 - Exo **3:14** And God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM. And He said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you
 - 2. He is eternally one God—Psa. 86:10; Isa. 45:5; 1 Cor. 8:4; 1 Tim. 2:5.
 - Psa **86:10** For You are great, and You do wondrous deeds; You alone are God.
 - Isa **45:5** I am Jehovah and there is no one else; Besides Me there is no God; I girded you, although you do not know Me;
 - 1 Cor **8:4** Therefore concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world and that there is no God but one.
 - 1 Tim **2:5** For there is one God and one Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus,
 - 3. He is eternally three—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—Matt. 28:19.
 - Matt **28:19** Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
 - 4. The three are never separate in being or action but mutually coinhere and mutually indwell one another—John 10:38; 14:10-11; 17:21.
 - John **10:38** But if I do *them*, even if you do not believe Me, believe the works so that you may come to know and continue to know that the Father *is* in Me and I *am* in the Father.

- John **14:10** Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak from Myself, but the Father who abides in Me does His works.
- John **14:11** Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; but if not, believe because of the works themselves.
- John **17:21** That they all may be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that You have sent Me.
5. We must get fully into the Triune God, both in our understanding and in our experience of Him—2 Cor. 13:14.
- 2 Cor **13:14** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- C. The economy of God—1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 1:10; 3:9:
- 1 Tim **1:4** Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.
- Eph **1:10** Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;
- Eph **3:9** And to enlighten all *that they may see* what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
1. God's economy is His arrangement to fulfill His purpose.
 2. His economy is according to His heart's desire.
 3. The economy of God takes the all-inclusive Christ as its center.
- D. The all-inclusive Christ:
1. He is the Christ of the four Gospels, God become flesh—John 1:1, 14.

John **1:1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John **1:14** And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
 2. He became the life-giving Spirit of the Epistles; hence, He is the pneumatic Christ—1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17-18.

1 Cor **15:45b** ...the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.

2 Cor **3:17** And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

2 Cor **3:18** But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.
 3. His full ministry is in three stages: incarnation, inclusion, and intensification.
- E. The life-giving Spirit:
1. The Spirit is Christ's realization; hence, He is called the Spirit of Jesus, the Spirit of Christ, and the Spirit of Jesus Christ—Acts 16:7; Rom. 8:9-11; Phil. 1:19.

Acts **16:7** And when they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, yet the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.

Rom **8:9** But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Yet if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him.

Rom **8:10** But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

Rom **8:11** And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

Phil **1:19** For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and *the* bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

2. The Spirit of Christ brings forth the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:4; 1 Cor. 12:13.
 Eph **4:4** One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;
 1 Cor **12:13** For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one Body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.

F. The Body of Christ:

1. The twenty-two books from Romans through Revelation (all can be considered Epistles) are concerned with the pneumatic Christ as the life-giving Spirit for His reproduction, the Body of Christ.
2. In God's economy Christ is the center, the Body is the line, and the New Jerusalem is the goal.
3. The all-inclusive Christ as the life-giving Spirit has been intensified as the sevenfold intensified Spirit to counteract the degradation of the church for the building up of the Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem— Rev. 1:4; 4:5; 5:6.
 Rev **1:4** John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,
 Rev **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;
 Rev **5:6** And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having *just* been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

G. The New Jerusalem—21:2:

- Rev **21:2** And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
1. The New Jerusalem is the eternal goal of God's economy.
 2. The New Jerusalem is the aggregate of all the visions and revelations of the Bible.
 3. The New Jerusalem is the organism of the Triune God, an organic constitution of the processed and consummated Triune God and the regenerated, transformed, and glorified elect.

III. The line of supplemental points, for example:

A. The prophecy concerning Christ.

B. The Old Testament types:

1. Adam—Gen. 2:7; 1 Cor. 15:45; Rom. 5:14.
 Gen **2:7** Jehovah God formed man with the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.
 1 Cor **15:45** So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul"; the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.
 Rom **5:14** But death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, who is a type of Him who was to come.
2. Eve—Gen. 2:20-24; 3:20; Eph. 5:29-32; 2 Cor. 11:2-3.
 Gen **2:20** And the man gave names to all cattle and to the birds of heaven and to every animal of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper as his counterpart.
 Gen **2:21** And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place.
 Gen **2:22** And Jehovah God built the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman and brought her to the man.

- Gen 2:23 And the man said, This time this is bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; This one shall be called Woman Because out of Man this one was taken.
- Gen 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.
- Gen 3:20 And the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.
- Eph 5:29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ also the church,
- Eph 5:30 Because we are members of His Body.
- Eph 5:31 For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh.
- Eph 5:32 This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.
- 2 Cor 11:2 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.
- 2 Cor 11:3 But I fear lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your thoughts would be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity toward Christ.
3. Israel—see 1 Cor. 10:1-11 and cross references there, and read footnote 6 in 1 Cor. 10.
- 1 Cor 10:1 For I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;
- 1 Cor 10:2 And all were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;
- 1 Cor 10:3 And all ate the same spiritual food,
- 1 Cor 10:4 And all drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank of a spiritual rock which followed *them*, and the rock was Christ.
- 1 Cor 10:5 But with most of them God was not well pleased, for they were strewn along in the wilderness.
- 1 Cor 10:6 Now these things occurred as examples to us, that we should not be ones who lust after evil things, even as they also lusted.

Note 6**examples** Lit., types (so also in v. 11); i.e., figures of facts or of spiritual truths. This book takes the history of the children of Israel in the Old Testament as a type of the New Testament believers. In 5:7-8 the believers experienced Christ as their Passover and began to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Here in this chapter they are baptized unto their Moses (Christ), passing through their Red Sea (the death of Christ). They are now eating the spiritual food and drinking the spiritual drink that they might take their journey (the Christian race) toward their good land (the all-inclusive Christ). Also, they are warned here (v. 11) not to repeat the history of the children of Israel in doing evil against God, as illustrated in vv. 6-11.

The goal of God's calling of the children of Israel was that they would enter into the promised land to enjoy its riches so that they might establish God's kingdom and be God's expression on earth. However, although all Israel was redeemed through the Passover, delivered out of the Egyptian tyranny, and brought to the mountain of God to receive the revelation of God's dwelling place, the tabernacle, nearly all fell and died in the wilderness, failing to reach this goal (Heb. 3:7-19) because of their evildoings and unbelief. Only Caleb and Joshua reached the goal and entered into the good land (Num. 14:27-30). This signifies that although we have been redeemed through Christ, delivered out of Satan's bondage, and brought into the revelation of God's economy, we may yet fail to reach the goal of God's calling, that is, to enter into the possession of our good land, Christ (Phil. 3:12-14), and enjoy His riches for the kingdom of God that we may be His expression in the present age and participate in the fullest enjoyment of Christ in the kingdom age (Matt. 25:21, 23). This should be a solemn warning to all New Testament believers. It was especially applicable to the Corinthians,

who were in danger of repeating the failure of the children of Israel in the wilderness

1 Cor **10:7** Neither become idolaters, as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play."

1 Cor **10:8** Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed fornication, and there fell in one day twenty-three thousand.

1 Cor **10:9** Neither let us test Christ, as some of them tested *Him* and were destroyed by the serpents.

1 Cor **10:10** Neither murmur, just as some of them murmured and perished by the destroyer.

1 Cor **10:11** Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our admonition, unto whom the ends of the ages have come.

4. The tabernacle and its furniture—Exo. 25; John 1:14; Heb. 9:2-5 and footnote 4.

Exodus 25 (be omitted)

John **1:14** And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

Heb **9:2** For a tabernacle was prepared, the first, in which were the lampstand and the table and the loaves that were set forth, which is called the Holy Place;

Heb **9:3** And after the second veil, a tabernacle, which is called the Holy of Holies,

Heb **9:4** Having a golden altar and the ark of the covenant covered about everywhere with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna and Aaron's rod that budded and the tablets of the covenant,

Note 4 **Pot** The arrangement of the furniture of the tabernacle portrays our experience of Christ. In the outer court were the bronze altar and the bronze laver (Exo. 40:29-32). This signifies that our experience of Christ begins, in an outward sense, with His redemption, which was accomplished on the cross, and the cleansing of the Holy Spirit, which is based on Christ's redemption. In the Holy Place were the showbread table and the lampstand, with the incense altar located close to the Holy of Holies, in front of the ark of the testimony. The showbread table signifies our experience of Christ as our life supply, and the lampstand, our experience of Christ as the shining light. These experiences are rather inward, in the intellect and consciousness of our being. The incense altar signifies our experience of Christ as the sweet incense ascending to God. This experience is deeper and more inward, leading to the deepest and most inward experiences, in the Holy of Holies. In the Holy of Holies was the ark of the testimony, in which were the golden pot containing the hidden manna; Aaron's budding rod; and the tablets of the covenant. The hidden manna in the golden pot signifies our experience of Christ as our life supply in the deepest way, an experience much deeper than that signified by the showbread table in the Holy Place. The budding rod signifies our experience of Christ in His resurrection as our acceptance by God for authority in the God-given ministry. This is deeper than the experience of Christ as the incense for our acceptance by God. The tablets of the covenant, which are the tablets of the ten commandments, signify our experience of Christ as the enlightening inner law, which regulates us according to God's divine nature. This is deeper than the experience of Christ as the shining lampstand in the Holy Place. All these deepest experiences of Christ take place in our spirit, signified by the Holy of Holies.

Heb **9:5** And above it cherubim of glory overshadowing the propitiation place, concerning which it is not now *the time* to speak in detail.

5. The temple—1 Chron. 28:11; 29:1; 2 Chron. 3—4; John 2:21; 1 Cor. 3:17; Eph. 2:21; Rev. 21:22.

1 Chron **28:11** Then David gave Solomon his son the pattern of the portico of the temple and its buildings and its storehouses and its upper rooms and its inner rooms and the building for the propitiation cover;

- 1 Chron **29:1** And David the king said to all the assembly, Solomon my son, he alone whom God has chosen, is young and tender, and the work is great because the palace is not for man but for Jehovah God.
- 2 Chronicles 3-4 (be omitted)
- John **2:21** But He spoke of the temple of His body.
- 1 Cor **3:17** If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him; for the temple of God is holy, *and* such are you.
- Eph **2:21** In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;
- Rev **21:22** And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

- C. The church, supplementary to the Body of Christ.
- D. The kingdom, including the judgment seat and the wedding feast.

IV. “The leaves and the branches”:

- A. There are many other items in the Bible that are there as helps to the central line and the line of supplemental points. These items are either manifestations of the organic nature of the other lines (leaves) or channels of the organic supply for the working out of the other lines (branches).
- B. These points include but are not limited to the God-ordained way, the Lord’s table, the administration of the local church, head covering, foot-washing, the rapture, the keeping of days, the handling of idol sacrifices, one cup versus many cups in the Lord’s table meeting, and leavened bread versus unleavened bread in the Lord’s table meeting.
- C. We need to use these matters, but we should not be distracted by them. We must learn how to apply these matters to help us progress in the central line of the Bible, but we should never allow them to become our central line.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

THE FUNCTIONS OF THE BIBLE

1. **“Testify concerning Me”** (John 5:39, see also v. 46; Luke 24:27, 44, 46).

The first function of the Bible is to testify concerning the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus is the subject and content of the Bible, and the Bible is the explanation and expression of the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus is the *living* Word of God, whereas the Bible is the *written* Word of God. If the written Word, the Bible, did not have the living Word, the Lord Jesus, as its reality, it would be nothing but empty doctrines and letters. If the living Word, the Lord Jesus, did not have the written Word, the Bible, as His expression, He would be abstract and vague and difficult to know and touch. Thankfully, we have the distinct and definite explanation of the Bible with its clear revelation so that we can know and understand the Lord Jesus. The books of the New Testament reveal the Lord Jesus, and even the books of the Old Testament, including the law of Moses, the books of prophecies, and the psalms and poetry, reveal the Lord Jesus. The Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms are the three general sections that comprise the Old Testament (Luke 24:44). If we want to know the Lord Jesus, we must read and understand the Bible.

2. **“Make you wise unto salvation”** (2 Tim. 3:15).

On the one hand, the Bible serves the Lord Jesus by testifying concerning Him, and on the other hand, it serves us by causing us to be saved and built up. The first function of the Bible in relation to us is to make us wise unto salvation. It reveals God’s way of salvation in Christ and our pathway to salvation through faith so that we may know and understand God’s salvation.

3. **“Regenerated”** (1 Pet. 1:23; see also James 1:18).

The Bible causes us to be regenerated. The Bible is the word of the eternally living God, and it contains God’s eternal life. When we receive the word of the Bible through faith, the word is planted like a seed of life in us. The Bible functions to sow the life of God into us, imparting God’s life into us and regenerating us.

4. **“For teaching, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete”** (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

After being regenerated by the word of God, the Bible teaches, convicts, corrects, and instructs us in righteousness so that we may be complete before God as regenerated men of God.

5. **“For our instruction, in order that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope”** (Rom. 15:4).

The teachings of the Bible enable us to endure and provide us with encouragement and hope. Many believers are unable to endure when they encounter difficulties or sickness. They become discouraged and lose hope. However, simply reading a section or even a sentence of the Bible often provides us with the inward strength to endure and supplies encouragement and hope that is beyond our expectations. When we encounter difficulties, we are helped and established by the Bible.

6. **“An example...written for our admonition”** (1 Cor. 10:11).

Many things are recorded in the Bible as examples for our admonition. When we read the Bible, we can be warned by the experiences of some who went before us, and we can be careful not to follow their example. This is another help that believers find in the Bible.

7. **“A lamp shining in a dark place”** (2 Pet. 1:19).

Often the Bible is like a lamp shining in a dark place. We are in a dark night because the age in which we live is dark (Rom. 13:12). In this darkness the Bible is like a shining lamp. It causes us to know our situation so that we do not become lost and confused. If we want to be enlightened and knowledgeable in this dark age, we must understand the Bible and keep the word of the Bible in our hearts so that it can shine and enlighten us.

8. **“A lamp to my feet / And a light to my path”** (Psa. 119:105; see also Prov. 6:23).

People walking in the dark need a lamp to shine on the path of their feet. The Bible functions in this capacity. As we walk in this dark age, we truly need a heavenly lamp to shine on our every step so that we do

not leave our path and fall into a deep pit. The Bible is a heavenly lamp. If we read the Bible and keep the word of the Bible in our heart, it will become a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. It will shine continually on our footsteps according to our need.

9. “Gives light, / Imparting understanding to the simple” (Psa. 119:130).

The light from the Bible not only shines upon our feet and path; it also imparts understanding to the simple. Many who are simple by nature have gained understanding through reading the Bible. Furthermore, anyone who wants to understand spiritual matters must understand the Bible and be enlightened by the Bible.

10. “Keep his way pure” (Psa. 119:9).

In addition to containing the power to enlighten, the word in the Bible has the power to cleanse. Enlightenment is in contrast to darkness, and purification is in contrast to filthiness. The age in which we live is filthy and dark. The word of the Bible causes all darkness to vanish when it shines on our feet. It cleanses our actions by removing everything that is filthy and impure. This is especially important to young people. If we read the Bible frequently, we will not only be enlightened but also kept pure. Every time we approach the Bible, its word will pass through us and enlighten and cleanse us. The word of the Bible will cleanse us, even if we cannot always remember what we have read. This is like a bamboo basket being dipped in water; it will be cleansed even though the water leaks away. If we want to be pure, we must read the Bible frequently.

11. “That I might not sin against You” (Psa. 119:11).

The Bible also prevents us from sinning against God. We were born in sin, have grown up in sin, and easily sin against God. If we store the words of the Bible in our heart, they will constantly remind and warn us so that we do not sin against God.

12. “The sword of the Spirit” (Eph. 6:17).

The word in the Bible is the sword of the Spirit. We can apply it by the Holy Spirit to deal with Satan and his messengers. Through the word of the Bible, we can defeat the devil, the enemy, who tempts and attacks us. When the Lord Jesus was in the wilderness, He defeated the tempter, the devil, through the word of the Old Testament. Therefore, in order to fight and defeat Satan and the evil spirits, we must read the Bible. We must be familiar with the Bible and be able to use it to deal with spiritual enemies at any time and in any place.

13. “Sharper than any two-edged sword” (Heb. 4:12).

The word of the Bible is as sharp as a sword. It can deal with our spiritual enemies, but it can also divide our soul from our spirit and discern the thoughts and intentions of our heart. It divides what is of the soul and what is of the spirit. It also enables us to discern the thoughts and intentions that come from ourselves and those that come from God. The word exposes our entire inward condition before God. Nothing can be hidden in us, and everything is made manifest through the word.

For example, a brother who preaches the gospel and casts out demons according to his natural zeal can be touched when reading Matthew 7:21-22, which says, “Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but he who does the will of My Father who is in the heavens. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, was it not in Your name that we prophesied, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name did many works of power?” As he is reading, the word will pierce him and cause him to see that his preaching of the gospel and his casting out of demons are according to soulish zeal, rather than God’s revelation in his spirit. This exposes his zealotry as being from himself, according to the power of his soul, rather than from the will of God, according to the power of the Spirit. In this way, the word of the Bible enables him to discern that the source of his gospel preaching and casting out of demons is his soul rather than his spirit. Consequently, in the matters of preaching the gospel and casting out demons, the word separates his soul from his spirit, causing him to reject his soul in these matters and to rely on his spirit.

A sister who plans to marry an unbeliever may be touched when she reads 2 Corinthians 6:14, which says, “Do not become dissimilarly yoked with unbelievers.” This word can pierce her heart and cause her to see that her desire to marry an unbeliever is according to her own will, not God’s will. Thus, the word enables her to discern that she is following her will and minding the preferences of her flesh rather than God’s will and heart’s desire in the matter of marriage. When the will in her soul is divided from God’s will in her spirit, she will be

saved from the desires of her flesh in this important matter. Rather than following her flesh and the desires of her heart, she will obey the peerless will of God. Then she will please God and be preserved by God.

The word of the Bible is always living and operative in our circumstances. It is sharper than any two-edged sword. There is no amount of mixture within us that cannot be divided and discerned by the word of the Bible. The word will always expose our real condition, bringing our situation into the shining of the light from His face. This will empower us to live in our spirit, forsaking our self and the thoughts of the self in order to live in God and in His will.

14. “I ate” (Jer. 15:16; see also Matt. 4:4; Job 23:12; Heb. 5:14).

The Bible is food for our spiritual life. Just as our physical life needs nourishment, our spiritual life needs nourishment. The word is the only thing that can supply nourishment to our spiritual life. If we want to be strong and living before God, we cannot live on bread alone; we need the word that proceeds out of the mouth of God, which is the word of the Bible. We must eat the word of the Bible like food and even esteem the Bible more highly than food. We need to eat the word in order for our spiritual life to grow. We also must exercise to understand the more difficult portions in the Bible in order to be full-grown men, who are able to eat solid food. Without this eating and exercise, we will not become strong in our spiritual life.

15. “Milk of the word” (1 Pet. 2:2; see also 1 Cor. 3:1-2; Heb. 5:12-14).

The Bible is not only solid food but also milk for our spiritual life. Solid food is for adults; milk is for infants. When our spiritual life is mature and we have an understanding of spiritual matters, we can extract the nourishment of solid food from the Bible, strengthening our spiritual life. When our spiritual life is immature and we lack an adequate understanding of spiritual matters, there are portions of the word of the Bible that are like milk, which can nourish us and cause our spiritual life to grow. Therefore, newly regenerated believers must love the word of the Bible and “as newborn babes, long for the guileless milk of the word.” If they do not, they will remain babes in Christ and their spiritual life will not grow.

16. “Washing”; “Clean” (Eph. 5:26; John 15:3).

The word of the Bible washes our outward actions and removes our outward defilement. It also washes us inwardly and frees us from the weaknesses of the old creation. Ephesians 5:26 refers to this kind of washing. The Lord uses the water of life within us to wash us through the word of the Bible, eliminating the spots and wrinkles of the old creation. Spots and wrinkles are not related to the defilement that we acquire from our outward actions but to the weaknesses of the life of the old creation within us. The Lord uses the word in coordination with His life in us to wash away our spots and wrinkles. The Holy Spirit in coordination with the Lord’s life in us frequently enlivens us with a word or sentence in the Bible in order to remove things of the old creation so that we can grow in the new creation. This washing is a function of the word of the Bible.

Ephesians 5 is not the only portion of the Bible that speaks of this function. John 15:3 says, “You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.” This portion, which is related to being branches abiding in the Lord as the vine, shows that the Lord’s word, the word of the Bible, cleanses us so that we can bear much fruit. This cleansing does not refer merely to an outward washing of the branches but to the removal of everything old so that the branches can be renewed. Therefore, this washing does not involve our outward actions but our inward life. Inwardly, we must be cleansed of everything related to the old creation in order to grow in the new creation. The word of the Bible manifests this washing power and function in us.

17. “Like fire...and like a hammer” (Jer. 23:29; see also 5:14).

The word of the Bible is powerful; it is like a burning fire and a smashing hammer. The word of the Bible can burn hearts that are ice cold toward God and can completely burn away the things of man, which are contrary to God’s holy nature. It can smash hearts that are hard toward God and subdue every thought that is against God. For thousands of years countless hearts which were cold toward God have been burned by the word of the Bible, and countless hearts which were hard toward God have been smashed by the word of the Bible. Throughout the ages many things which are contrary to God’s holy nature have been burned by the word of the Bible, and many thoughts which were against God have been subdued by the word of the Bible. The word of the Bible truly has the power to deal with a person’s cold and hard heart.

18. “Like the rain...like the dew...and like abundant showers” (Deut. 32:2).

The word of the Bible is like rain, dew, and abundant showers. It waters and refreshes us. Rain is a general watering, dew is a gentle refreshing, and showers are a special watering. The word of the Bible manifests these functions, especially in relation to us as God’s farm (1 Cor. 3:9), the harvest that God cultivates (Mark 4:20; 1 Cor. 3:6). The word of the Bible is like rain, dew, and showers. It waters and refreshes us so that we can grow and bear fruit.

19. “As the rain...and the snow...so will My word be” (Isa. 55:10-11).

The word of the Bible is not only like rain, but it also refreshes like snow. Rain comes in the spring, summer, and fall, but snow comes in the winter. The refreshing of rain is quick and brief, but the refreshing of snow is slow and lasting. These comparisons remind us that the word of the Bible can refresh us in every season of our condition. Sometimes we need a quick, short refreshing, like rain. At other times we need a slower, longer refreshing, like snow. Whether the refreshing is like rain or snow, the word causes us to grow and bear fruit, and it will accomplish God’s delight upon us (v. 11).

20. “A mirror” (James 1:23).

The word of the Bible is like a mirror; it reflects our true appearance and condition. By reading the Bible, we see our real countenance and know our true condition. It is difficult to find a person who has not seen himself when he comes to the word in the Bible.

21. “Restoring the soul... / Making the simple wise... / Making the heart joyous... / Enlightening the eyes” (Psa. 19:7-8).

The Bible functions in a sweet way to restore and refresh our soul, to make us wise, to make our heart joyous, and to enlighten our eyes. The word manifests these functions when we read the Bible. Our soul may be depressed, but a word in the Bible will restore and refresh us. We may be simple, that is, foolish, but a word from the Bible will make us wise. We may be troubled in our heart, but a word in the Bible will make us joyous; and we may be blind, but a word from the Bible will enlighten our eyes.

22. “Are spirit and are life” (John 6:63).

The Lord’s words, the word of the Bible, are spirit and life. God is Spirit; He is the source of life. The word of the Bible comes out of God, so it comes out of the Spirit and out of life. Since the source of the word is Spirit and life, it is spirit and life. The word of the Bible enables us to have Spirit and life; it causes us to receive life from the Spirit and to live according to the Spirit.

23. “My words...are life to those who find them, / And healing to all their flesh” (Prov. 4:20-22; see also 16:24).

The word of the Bible can spiritually nourish us and also heal our flesh. Because the word of the Bible can restore our soul and make our heart joyous, it can heal our body. Our soul is refreshed, our heart is made joyous, and our body is healed because of the word of the Bible. There is a saying, “When the heart is happy, the body grows fat.” Since the word of the Bible makes our heart happy, it can also make our bodies healthy.

24. “Counselors” (Psa. 119:24).

This verse says that the word of the Bible is our counselor. This is true. Often the word of the Bible is far better than the ideas or suggestions of any counselor, strategist, or consultant. We should consider all things with the Bible, the best counselor, and consult it in order to give the Lord an opportunity to give us His counsel and thoughts.

25. “Likened to...the rock” (Matt. 7:24-25).

The word of the Bible is like a rock. It is reliable and firm. If our life and work are based on the Bible, they will be like a solid and reliable house built on a rock. The word of the Bible is the solid foundation of our life and work. This is another function of the Bible. (*Crucial Truths in the Holy Scriptures*, vol. 3, PP. 169-177)