

GENERAL SUBJECT: PROCLAIMING THE JUBILEE

Message 2

The Blessings of the Jubilee— Returning to Our Possession and Freedom from Slavery

Scripture Reading: Luke 4:18-19; Eph. 1:13-14; 2 Cor. 6:2; Lev. 25:9-13, 39-41; Psa. 16:5; 90:1; Eph. 2:12; Acts 26:18; Col. 1:12; Rom. 7:14b; John 8:34, 36; Rom. 6:6-7; 8:2; Gal. 5:1

Day 1

I. In the year of jubilee there were two main blessings: the returning of every man to his lost possession and the liberation from slavery—Lev. 25:8-17:

- A. In the year of jubilee everyone who had sold his possession, his allotted portion of the good land, was returned to it without paying anything to redeem it (vv. 10, 13, 28), and everyone who had sold himself into slavery regained his freedom and returned to his family (vv. 39-41).
- B. Returning to one's possession and being freed and returning to one's family signify that in the New Testament jubilee the believers have returned to God as their lost divine possession, have been released from all bondage, and have returned to the church as their divine family—Eph. 1:13-14; John 8:32, 36; cf. Psa. 68:5-6.

Day 2

II. The first blessing of the jubilee is the return to our lost possession—Lev. 25:9-13; Psa. 16:5, 2; 90:1; Acts 26:18; Eph. 1:14; Col. 1:12:

- A. We must now consider what man's possession is; Psalm 16:5 says, "Jehovah is the portion of My inheritance and of My cup; / You maintain My lot"; an inheritance is a possession; the land is not our real possession; rather, God is our possession; the land is merely a type, a symbol, and a figure.
- B. After God created Adam, He put Adam in front of the tree of life, indicating that He wanted Adam to receive the tree of life; the tree of life is God—Gen. 2:7, 9; John 6:35.
- C. But Adam did not take the tree of life; hence, he lost his portion of the enjoyment of God; Adam fell from God's presence, and as a result, all the people of the world lost God; therefore, Ephesians 2:12 says that people living in the world today have no hope and are without God.

- D. To be saved is to return to our inheritance, to return to God, to come back to God and enjoy Him anew as our possession; God is our inheritance, and after we are saved, the Spirit of God is in us as the pledge, the guarantee, the proof, and the security of our inheritance—Eph. 1:13-14.

Day 3

- E. Colossians 1:12 says, "Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light"; today God has become our blessed portion in Christ:
 - 1. Today, we are no longer apart from Christ; rather, we are in Christ (1 Cor. 1:30); we have God, and we "turn on the switch" to enjoy God as our possession—cf. 12:3; Rom. 10:12.
 - 2. The jubilee is altogether related to our possession, and our possession is God; when we have God, we have the jubilee; when we have God, everything is to our satisfaction.
- F. In the year of jubilee we mainly do not have our possession restored to us; rather, we are returned to our possession; primarily, God is not restored to us; we are returned to God.
- G. The greatest blessing in the year of jubilee is that we are returned to God as our possession; this is the first main point in Leviticus 25—*Hymns*, #600, stanzas 1-2.

Day 4

III. The second blessing of the jubilee is that those who have sold themselves as slaves are freed from their slavery—Lev. 25:39-41, 54; John 8:34, 36; Rom. 7:14; 6:6-7; 8:2; Gal. 5:1:

- A. The other main point in Leviticus 25 is that we have obtained freedom—Gal. 5:1.
- B. Because we were poor, we not only lost God as our possession but also sold ourselves as slaves; since we sold ourselves, we lost our freedom—Rom. 7:14; 6:6b; John 8:34.
- C. However, when the year of jubilee comes, we not only are returned to God as our possession, but we also obtain freedom and are released from the bondage of slavery—v. 36; Luke 4:18-19.
- D. Man has lost God and is without God because of the fall; therefore, when the Bible speaks of the year of jubilee, the first thing it teaches is that man must be returned to God; then

when we have God and enjoy Him, we have the real freedom—*Hymns*, #310.

Day 5

IV. God's salvation causes us to have real freedom; our possession is God, and our freedom comes from our enjoyment of God:

- A. If man does not enjoy God, he cannot have real freedom; freedom means release, to be freed from all bondage, all heavy burden, all oppression, and all enslavement—John 8:32, 36; Gal. 5:1; 2 Cor. 3:17.
- B. Everything in our life can be a bondage to us, and we can be slaves under any matter—John 8:34; cf. 1 Cor. 6:12.
- C. First, Satan captured us; then he came to dwell in us as the inciter, the instigator, of our sins; the result is that he has become our illegal master, and we have become his captives to the extent that we are unable to do good and can only commit sins—Rom. 7:14; 1 John 5:19:
 - 1. If a man does not have God, whatever he tries to enjoy apart from God is dog food, refuse, and dung—Phil. 3:7-9; cf. 2 Pet. 2:22.
 - 2. Satan is called Beelzebul, which means “the lord of the dunghill,” from *Beelzebub*, meaning “the lord of flies”; Satan specializes in leading sinners like flies to feed on dung—Matt. 10:25; 12:24, 27; 2 Kings 1:2.
 - 3. Although deep in his heart no one wants to sin, eventually everyone sins; no one has control over himself, and everyone has become a slave of sin—Rom. 7:18-23; John 8:34.

Day 6

V. Paul's desperate cry in Romans 7:24 is answered in Romans 8:2, which says that the law of the Spirit of life frees us in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death; this is the freedom of Christ as the jubilee—*Hymns*, #508:

- A. We can be released and have real freedom only by enjoying Christ as the life-giving Spirit; only those who enjoy God do not commit sin and are really free, living a life of liberty, release, and freedom from bondage—John 8:36; 2 Cor. 3:17:
 - 1. The law of the Spirit of life releases us from the law of sin and of death; this law is the Lord Himself, who passed

through death and resurrection to become the life-giving Spirit—Rom. 8:2; 1 Cor. 15:45.

- 2. If we do not enjoy the Lord sufficiently, we will still be in bondage to many things; making up our mind will not work; we must continually come to the Lord to eat and enjoy Him—1:9; Rev. 2:7; Isa. 55:1-2.
- 3. Only those who enjoy God do not practice sin and are really free—John 8:11-12, 24, 28, 31-36.
- 4. Christ as the jubilee frees us from our poverty, captivity, blindness, and oppression—Eccl. 1:2, 14; 3:11; Phil. 3:8; 2 Pet. 2:22; Luke 12:21; Rev. 3:17.
- B. Paul made a great discovery in receiving the revelation of the Triune God being processed through incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension to become the law of the Spirit of life installed in our spirit—Rom. 8:3, 11, 34, 16.
- C. The law of the Spirit of life is the automatic principle and spontaneous power of the divine life; it is the natural characteristic and the innate, automatic function of the divine life.
- D. A Christian should not live by the power of his will but by the power of the inner law of the Spirit of resurrection life in his spirit; this law possesses the greatest power; it overcomes death, transcends death, and is not bound by death—7:19; Matt. 26:41; Eph. 1:19-23; Col. 1:28-29; 2 Cor. 1:8-9; John 11:25; Heb. 7:16; Acts 2:24; Rev. 1:18.
- E. We can cooperate with the installed and inner operating law of the Spirit of life by exercising our spirit to “switch on” this law so that we can enjoy Christ as the freedom and living of the jubilee—Phil. 2:12-13; Rom. 8:2, 4-6, 13-16, 23; 5:10, 17; 1 Tim. 4:7; 2 Tim. 4:22.
- F. The best way to switch on the divine and mystical “current” of the flowing Spirit in our spirit is to call on the name of the Lord Jesus—1 Cor. 12:3b; Rom. 10:12-13.
- G. When we contact the Spirit through the exercise of our spirit, we enjoy Christ as all the myriad and rich aspects of the jubilee—8:4.

Lev. 25:10 And you shall sanctify the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family.

13 In this year of jubilee each one of you shall return to his possession.

In the year of jubilee everyone who had sold his possession, his allotted portion of the good land, was returned to it without paying anything to redeem it (vv. 10, 13, 28), and everyone who had sold himself into slavery regained his freedom and returned to his family (vv. 39-41). Returning to one's possession and being freed and returning to one's family signify that in the New Testament jubilee the believers have returned to God as their lost divine possession, have been released from all bondage, and have returned to the church as their divine family.

Each family of the Israelites was allotted a portion of the good land. After the children of Israel received their portions of the land, some became poor and sold their allotment (v. 25a), thus losing their possession, their inheritance. Others became so poor that they even sold themselves into slavery (v. 39a), thus losing their freedom and becoming separated from their families. The good land of Canaan typifies the Triune God embodied in Christ and realized as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45; 2 Cor. 3:17; Gal. 3:14) as the allotted portion of the saints.... When God created man, He intended to give Himself in Christ to man as man's possession, man's inheritance (Gen. 2:9; 13:12-15; Psa. 16:5; 90:1). However, man became fallen, and in the fall man lost God as his possession (Gen. 3:24; 4:16; Eph. 2:12) and sold himself into slavery under sin, Satan, and the world (John 8:34; Rom. 7:14b; Gal. 4:8; Titus 3:3; 1 John 5:19b). God's New Testament salvation, accomplished by God's grace based on His redemption in Christ (Rom. 3:24; 5:1-2; Eph. 2:8), brings fallen man back to God as His divine possession (Acts 26:18; Gal. 3:14; Eph. 1:14; Col. 1:12; Luke 15:12-14), releases man from slavery under sin, Satan, and the world (John 8:32; Rom. 6:6, 14; 8:2; Heb. 2:14-15; John 12:31), and restores man to his divine family, the household of God (Gal. 6:19; Eph. 2:19), that he may enjoy fellowship in God's grace (2 Cor. 13:14). (Lev. 25:10, footnote 2, paragraphs 1 and 2)

IN REDEMPTION GOD BEING OUR POSSESSION FOR OUR ENJOYMENT

We must now consider what man's possession is. Psalm 16:5 says, "Jehovah is the portion of My inheritance and of My cup; / You maintain My lot." An inheritance is a possession. The land is not our real possession; rather, God is our possession. The land is merely a type, a symbol, and a figure. How can we say that God is man's possession? From Genesis 1:26 and Romans 9:21-23 we can see clearly that man was created by God to be His vessel. A vessel as a container is empty by itself hence, it needs content. The content of a vessel is its possession. An empty cup is a destitute cup. One who is thirsty desires a drink, but an empty cup cannot quench his thirst. To be empty is to be poor, and to be poor is to be empty. Man is a vessel of God; hence if man does not have God, he is empty and poor. The first chorus of *Hymns*, #1080 says, "Vanity! Vanity! / Vanity! Vanity! / 'Tis chasing the wind, / It's all vanity!" The last chorus says, "Christ without, all is vain! / Christ within, all is gain! / All things are vain, / Christ only is gain!" Man without Christ is vain. Hence, man's real possession is not land or a house, and neither is it a wife or children; man's possession is God. God created man as His vessel to contain Him. If we as a vessel do not have God as our content, we are empty and poor.

After God created Adam, He put Adam in front of the tree of life, indicating that He wanted Adam to receive the tree of life; besides this, He indicated little else to Adam. What is the tree of life? The tree of life is God. The Lord Jesus said, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall by no means hunger, and he who believes into Me shall by no means ever thirst" (John 6:35). Psalm 36:9 also says, "For with You is the fountain of life." The Lord is the tree of life and the river of life; he who believes into Him eats and drinks Him and is satisfied. To be sure, God is our possession. Furthermore, according to Psalm 16:5 God is not only our inheritance, but also the portion of our cup. In this verse, inheritance is a general expression, whereas cup is a more personal expression. God is not only our inheritance but also the portion of our cup for our enjoyment. God is not only our possession but also our real enjoyment. Moreover, God maintains our allotted portion. (*The Jubilee*, ch. 2, pp. 21-22)

WEEK 2—DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

Eph. In whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, 1:13 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.

[The word *pledge* can be translated as] foretaste, guarantee. I.e., token payment; a partial payment in advance, guaranteeing the full payment. Since we are God's inheritance, the Holy Spirit is a seal upon us. Since God is our inheritance, the Holy Spirit is a pledge to us of this inheritance. God gives His Holy Spirit to us not only as a guarantee of our inheritance, securing our heritage, but also as a foretaste of what we will inherit of God, affording us a taste beforehand of the full inheritance. In ancient times the Greek word for pledge was used in the purchasing of land. The seller gave the purchaser some soil as a sample from the land. Hence, a pledge, according to ancient Greek usage, is also a sample. The Holy Spirit is the sample of what we will inherit of God in full. (Eph. 1:14, footnote 1)

We, God's redeemed ones, the church, are God's possession, which He acquired with the precious blood of Christ (Acts 20:28). In God's economy, God becomes our inheritance and we become God's possession. How marvelous! We give nothing and we get everything! God acquired us at a cost, but we inherit God at no cost. This is to the praise of God's glory. (Eph. 1:14, footnote 5)

Today's Reading

God presented the tree of life to Adam, but Adam did not take it; hence, he lost his portion of the enjoyment of God. Adam fell from God's presence, and as a result, all the people of the world lost God. Therefore, Ephesians 2:12 says that people living in the world today have no hope and are without God. The prodigal son in Luke 15:11-32 is a portrait of all mankind. From kings and presidents to street sweepers and beggars, everyone is a prodigal son who has become penniless and who lives with "hogs." The fall of man is a fall from God, a fall from man's possession. Man has lost God as his possession and enjoyment. This is the first step of man's loss.

The second step is that in the fall, man sold himself to sin. Paul says in Romans 7:14, "I am fleshly, sold under sin." As fallen sinners,

we have lost God, and we are without God. Not only so, we have sold our members to sin to become slaves of sin (6:19). Sin dominates man. Today people in the world, no matter who they are, are under the domination of sin. Some people have a higher degree of intellect and thus are controlled by their reason. For the sake of society, their relatives, and their friends, they are not reckless outwardly, but they are still reckless in their mind. Who is not sold to sin in his heart? We have all sold ourselves to sin.

God called Paul and said to him, "I send you, to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me" (Acts 26:17b-18). This inheritance is God as our possession, that is, God as our land with its rich produce. Today man needs land to provide food for his living and a lodging for his rest. As we have seen, Psalm 16:5 says, "Jehovah is the portion of My inheritance," and Psalm 90:1 says, "O Lord, You have been our dwelling place / In all generations." *Hymns*, #600 is written based on these two psalms. The general idea of the hymn is that God is our eternal portion, our everlasting all, and our safe abode. God is our land and our dwelling place. It is no wonder that when the Lord Jesus came, He said, "Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). Moreover, in John 15:4 He said, "Abide in Me." Today all men have lost God as their possession, and they have no real dwelling place. Fallen people are all drifting about and wandering without a home. Although they may live in high-rise buildings or large mansions, within them there is no rest, no dwelling place. Man is wandering because he has lost God. God is man's real dwelling place and real possession. (*The Jubilee*, ch. 2, pp. 22-23)

Col. 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light.
2 Cor. 6:2 For He says, “In an acceptable time I listened to you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.” Behold, now is the well-acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

God the Father has qualified us by the redemption of God the Son and through the sanctification of God the Spirit for a share of the all-inclusive Christ, the very embodiment of the processed Triune God, as the allotted portion of the saints. (Col. 1:12, footnote 1)

[The *allotted portion*] refers to the lot of the inheritance, as illustrated by the allotment of the good land of Canaan given to the children of Israel for their inheritance (Josh. 14:1). The New Testament believers' inheritance, their allotted portion, is not a physical land; it is the all-inclusive Christ. He is the allotted portion of the saints as their divine inheritance for their enjoyment. (Col. 1:12, footnote 2)

Today's Reading

THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL BEING THE PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S JUBILEE, THAT MAN MAY BE SAVED AND RETURNED TO HIS POSSESSION TO ENJOY GOD

When we preach the gospel, we proclaim God's jubilee to others. In Luke 4:18-19 the Lord Jesus made a proclamation concerning the coming of the jubilee. The proclamation of the jubilee in Luke 4 governs the central thought of the whole Gospel of Luke, and the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15 is an excellent illustration of the jubilee. Before examining this parable, however, we must consider a few verses. In Ephesians 1:13-14, Paul says, “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, who is the pledge of our inheritance unto the redemption of the acquired possession, to the praise of His glory.” What does it mean to be saved? To be saved is to return to our inheritance, to return to God, to come back to God and enjoy Him anew as our possession. God is our inheritance, and after we are saved, the Spirit of God is in us as the pledge, the guarantee, the proof, and the security of our inheritance. In Greek, the word for *pledge* or *guarantee* also means

sample. A sample is a foretaste, guaranteeing the full taste in the future. Today the Holy Spirit is in us as the guarantee, the sample, of God as our enjoyment, giving us a foretaste and guaranteeing our full enjoyment of God in the future. Therefore, to be saved is to gain God. We have not only obtained salvation, but even more we have obtained God. When we have God, we have everything; without God, we have nothing. We are saved only when we have God, and with God we have everything. Therefore, God is our inheritance.

Furthermore, Colossians 1:12 says, “Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light.” Today God has become our blessed portion in Christ. Apart from Christ, people live in the world, having no hope and being without God. Outside of Christ, we are without God in the world. We, however, can no longer say that we are apart from Christ. We are in Christ, and we have God. This is not merely a saying but a reality. Perhaps some may ask, “Why is it, then, that some Christians are still unhappy?” We may illustrate this with electric lights. Lights may be installed in a building, and the electricity may be connected, but if we do not use the switch to turn them on, the lights do not shine. There is electricity, but there are no lights; practically, this is the same as having no electricity. This is the situation of many Christians. Even though they have God, they are like lights that do not shine because they do not “turn on the switch” by taking God as their portion.

As Paul says in Ephesians 2:12, we were apart from Christ, having no hope and without God in the world. Today, however, we are no longer apart from Christ. Rather, we are in Christ. We have God, and we “turn on the switch” to enjoy God as our possession. The jubilee is altogether related to our possession, and our possession is God. When we have God, we have the jubilee; when we have God, everything is to our satisfaction. Our preaching of the gospel is our blowing of the trumpet of redemption to proclaim to the world, “Behold, now is the well-acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation,” the year of jubilee (2 Cor. 6:2). Though man has fallen far from God, God is waiting for him, longing for his return. (*The Jubilee*, ch. 2, pp. 23-24)

Gal. 5:1 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not be entangled with a yoke of slavery again.

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

[*Freedom* in Gal. 5:1 refers to freedom] from the slavery of the law. Christ has set us free through His redeeming death and life-imparting resurrection that we may enjoy this freedom in grace. (Gal. 5:1, footnote 1)

The Spirit, who is the ultimate expression of the Triune God, was not yet in John 7:39, because at that time Jesus had not yet been glorified. He had not yet finished the process that He, as the embodiment of God, had to pass through. After His resurrection, that is, after the finishing of all the processes, such as incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection, that the Triune God had to pass through in man for His redemptive economy, He became a life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45). In the New Testament, this life-giving Spirit is called “the Spirit” (Rom. 8:16, 23, 26-27; Gal. 3:2, 5, 14; 6:8; Rev. 2:7; 3:22; 14:13; 22:17), the Spirit who gives us the divine life (v. 6; John 6:63) and frees us from the bondage of the law. (2 Cor. 3:17, footnote 3)

Today's Reading

THE TRUE HUMAN CONDITION— POOR, CAPTURED, AND OPPRESSED

Man has lost God and is without God because of the fall. Therefore, when the Bible speaks of the year of jubilee, the first thing it teaches is that man must be returned to God. Then when we have God and enjoy Him, we have the real freedom. According to the Old Testament type, when the year of jubilee came, a person who had sold himself into slavery was returned to his own possession and to his own family to be reunited with his relatives, and at the same time he was also released from the yoke of slavery and was no longer a slave. In the New Testament age, in Luke 4, the Lord spoke of the condition of three kinds of people. Verse 18 says, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to announce the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to send away in release those who are oppressed.” The three categories of people in this verse are the poor, the captives,

and the oppressed. On the one hand, these are three kinds of people, but on the other hand, they are three human conditions. When we lost God, we became poor, and the result of poverty was that we were captured. Then after being captured, we were oppressed. When the year of jubilee comes, however, we obtain freedom and are delivered from poverty, captivity, and oppression.

When I was young, I did not know whether *the poor* denotes those who are poor materially or poor spiritually. Some may say that *poor* denotes being poor in material things, and material poverty symbolizes spiritual poverty. This way of explaining this verse is wrong. The really poor people are not those who have no money. The really poor ones are those who do not have God. We may consider today's millionaires; even though they have much wealth, if the emptiness in the depths of their being cannot be satisfied, are they not poor? To be without God is to be really poor. Material riches mean nothing. Paul said that material matters were like refuse to him. He said, “On account of whom [Christ] I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ” (Phil. 3:8). He counted all things as refuse for Christ's sake. The meaning of the word *refuse* is *dog food*, that is, dregs and rubbish that are thrown to the dogs. What Paul means by this is that if a man on earth does not have God, then whatever he enjoys apart from God is like dog food. Only God is man's real food. The Lord Jesus said that He is the bread of life. Apart from Him, everything is dog food or worse than dog food. When the prodigal son in Luke 15 left his father, he left his inheritance. As a result, he had to eat hog food, which may be worse than dog food. There was an abundance of food in his father's house, but he himself was so poor that he had to eat hog food. Please remember that it is not those who do not have money who are poor; rather, it is the people who do not have God who are poor. (*The Jubilee*, ch. 3, pp. 32-33)

Morning Nourishment

John 8:34 Jesus answered them, Truly, truly, I say to you, Everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin.
36 If therefore the Son sets you free, you shall be free indeed.
32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.

The truth is not the so-called truth of doctrine but the reality of the divine things, which is the Lord Himself... [John 8:32] says that “the truth shall set you free,” whereas v. 36 says that “the Son sets you free.” This proves that the Son, the Lord Himself, is the truth. Since the Lord is the embodiment of God (Col. 2:9), He is the reality of what God is. Hence, reality is the very divine element of God realized by us. When the Lord as the great I Am comes into us as life, He shines within us as light, bringing the divine element as reality into us. This reality, which is the divine element imparted into us and realized by us, sets us free from the bondage of sin by the divine life as the light of man. When the Lord as the Word of God became flesh (1:14), He brought God to us as this reality, that God might be the grace for our enjoyment (1:17). (John 8:32, footnote 1)

Today's Reading

Moreover, Luke 4:18 says, “To proclaim release to the captives.” America today is the freest country; no one can wrongly capture anyone here. In reality, however, nearly everyone is a captive. The leaders have been captured, and the people have also been captured. Who captured them? According to Acts 26:18, the Lord told Saul of Tarsus that He would send him to the Gentiles “to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God.” Strictly speaking, we have all been captured by Satan. All human beings, regardless of their occupation, gender, or age, are captives of Satan and are under his authority. Apparently, human beings are free, but actually in the whole world no one is free because all are captives under the authority of Satan. First John 5:19 says, “The whole world lies in the evil one.” All the people of the world remain passively in the sphere of the evil one's influence, under the evil one's usurpation and manipulation.

All the descendants of Adam are the captives of Satan; everyone has been captured by him. After he captured us, he entered into us as Beelzebul, the lord of flies, and began leading us about to commit sins. Deep in his heart, no one wants to sin, but when a person becomes

addicted and is stirred up by Beelzebul, he has to follow, allowing himself to be led around “by the nose.” Afterward he regrets it and may say, “I am so stupid; what was I doing? Why did I have to do that?” Although deep in his heart no one wants to sin, eventually everyone sins. No one has control over himself, and everyone has become a slave of sin. This is why the Lord Jesus said, “Everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin” (John 8:34).

One who becomes angry at someone and then can immediately get over his anger may be considered to be a sage and a virtuous man. Logically, as saved ones, the saints, we should surpass the sages and virtuous ones, but can we quickly get over our anger? It is not easy to come back to the Lord after we get angry. Perhaps a person may be one who has learned the lessons well and is able to come back to the Lord and calm his anger. However, after such a one leaves the Lord's presence, his anger may return again when he sees the offending person. Wood and stones do not become angry, but no human being can avoid getting angry; only dead people do not get angry. All these problems are due to the fact that man is under bondage and has no freedom. The sin within us is a real controlling power. In Romans 7:24 Paul said, “Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from the body of this death?” How we thank God for Romans 8:2, which says that in Christ the law of the Spirit of life frees us from the law of sin and of death! We thank the Lord for His mercy. Many can testify that when they get angry, they can get over it very quickly, and the anger does not come back. This is because the law of the Spirit of life frees us from the bondage of sin! (*The Jubilee*, ch. 3, pp. 33-34, 36-37)

Rom. 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ from the law of sin and of death.
Rev. 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

The law of the Spirit of life is the subject of [Romans 8]. The Spirit and life are mentioned in [v. 2], but only in connection with the working of this law. Life is the content and issue of the Spirit, and the Spirit is the ultimate and consummate manifestation of the Triune God after His being processed through incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection and becoming the indwelling, life-giving Spirit, who is life to all the believers in Christ. The law that has freed us from the law of sin, which is of Satan, who dwells in the members of our fallen body (Rom. 7:23, 17), is of this Spirit of life. It is this law, not God nor the Spirit, that works in us to deliver us from the working of the law of sin in our flesh and to enable us to know God and gain God and thereby live Him out. This law of the Spirit of life is the spontaneous power of the Spirit of life. Such a spontaneous law works automatically under the condition that fulfills its requirements....

Both Satan and God, after entering into our being and dwelling in us, work within us not by outward, objective activities but by an inward, subjective law. The working of the law of the Spirit of life is the working of the processed Triune God in our spirit; this is also the working of the Triune God in us in His life. (Rom. 8:2, footnote 1)

Today's Reading

BEING RELEASED AND HAVING REAL FREEDOM ONLY BY ENJOYING GOD AS THE LIFE-GIVING SPIRIT

In Luke 4:18-19 the Lord Jesus quoted the words of the prophet Isaiah, saying, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to announce the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to send away in release those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, the year of jubilee." As we have seen, to announce the gospel to the poor is to preach the gospel to those who have lost God, and those who are oppressed refers to those in slavery. We should not think that the year of jubilee came to free us only on the day we were saved. Actually, the entire age of the New Testament

is the age of the jubilee. We have our entire Christian life in the jubilee, living a life of liberty, release, and freedom from bondage.

Announcing the gospel to the poor, proclaiming release to the captives, and sending away in release those who are oppressed are the freedoms of the jubilee. These are the blessings of the jubilee, the blessings of the gospel. The blessings of the gospel are the return to God and the gaining of God as our possession. Once we enjoy God as our possession, we are free. Only those who enjoy God do not commit sin and are really free. John 8:36 says, "If therefore the Son sets you free, you shall be free indeed." If we want to be free, if we do not want to commit sin, then we must obtain the Son of God and enjoy Him. The Son of God today is the life-giving Spirit. This life-giving Spirit is the Spirit of life, who is in us as the law of the Spirit of life. Therefore, the law of the Spirit of life is just the Lord Himself, who passed through death and resurrection to become the life-giving Spirit, the Spirit of life. Every life has a law, so the Spirit of life also has a law. The law of the Spirit of life releases us from the law of sin. We enjoy the freedom of the jubilee not only at the moment we believe in the Lord, but beginning from that day we should enjoy this freedom all our life and for eternity. This freedom comes from our enjoyment of God. He has become our possession for our enjoyment, and when we enjoy Him, we obtain freedom. This is how we have the real freedom and are no longer in bondage. However, if we do not enjoy God sufficiently, we will still be in bondage in many things.

In conclusion, the year of jubilee is for us to be returned to God as our possession and as our enjoyment so that we may become free and be released from all oppression. Thus, we are returned to God from the authority of Satan and are freed from the slavery of sin. Hence, it is useless to struggle and strive. The only effective way for us is to believe the gospel and enjoy God. Some may say, "I will go home and make up my mind not to be angry or lose my temper again," but whereas one can make up his mind to do good, he does not have the power to perform the good. Making up our mind will not work; we must enjoy the Lord. We must learn to contact this true and living Lord to enjoy Him. In this way, He becomes our release within us and our freedom. As a result, we have not only our possession but also our freedom. (*The Jubilee*, ch. 3, pp. 37-38)