

THE SOURCE AND CONSUMMATION OF THE TWO TREES

It would be a great help to us to see a brief picture of the tree of life throughout the entire Bible. The Bible starts with two trees and also ends with the result of the two trees. It starts in the same way that it ends.

THE THREE PARTIES IN THE UNIVERSE

In the universe there are three parties: God, Satan, and man. Man is in between God and Satan. After man was created by God, he was neutral to God and to Satan. In Genesis God is represented by the tree of life. God presented Himself to man as the tree of life, so the tree of life is the reality of God. There is another tree, the tree of knowledge, representing Satan. Man, created by God with a spirit, soul, and body (2:7), was neutral between these two trees. The three parties in Genesis 2 are God, represented by the tree of life; Satan, the very source of death, represented by the tree of knowledge; and man, who was created by God in three parts. Genesis 2:7 says that “Jehovah God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.” This verse shows the tripartite man with the body formed of the dust of the ground, the spirit as the breath of life, and the soul, which was formed when both the spirit and the body came together. Between God and Satan there was and still is a struggle. God is going to perform and fulfill His purpose, and Satan is doing his best to frustrate God’s purpose. All the incidents recorded in the sixty-six books of the Scriptures came either out of the tree of life through man or out of the tree of knowledge through man.

THE TWO MINGLINGS

Before man contacted the tree of life by exercising his spirit, Satan came in, and man was tempted to partake of the tree of knowledge. God’s intention was that the tree of life would get into the spirit of man, but before this the tree of knowledge got into the soul of man. Thus, there was a mingling of Satan with man’s soul. All the evil things and sinful stories came out of this mingling of Satan with man in man’s soul. This mingling is the very source of all the evil, sinful things on this earth. Genesis 3 gives a record of this mingling, and in Genesis 4 are seen the consequences of this mingling. The result of the mingling of Satan with man’s soul was a city built up with a culture (vv. 16-22). Cain named the city after his son Enoch. In that culture man became flesh, and all mankind was corrupted with evil (6:3, 5). Due to the corruption of that sinful culture, God sent the flood to judge the human race (7:17-24). A further result of this satanic force with man’s soulish power is that of Babel (11:1-9). Babel was the issue of the mingling of Satan with man’s soulish power. The negative stories of Sodom and Egypt and all the sinful events recorded in Genesis and Exodus came out of this mingling of Satan with man’s soul.

In the Bible there is a line of the satanic work and another line of God’s work. The enemy of God is working all the time by injecting himself into man’s soul. All the evil things and sinful stories come out of the mingling of Satan with man’s soul, the working of Satan into man, with man, and through man. At the same time God works. God’s work is to work Himself into man’s spirit. All the holy things and spiritual stories come out of another mingling, the mingling of God with man’s spirit. Eventually, in the New Testament there is this verse, 1 Corinthians 6:17, which says, “He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.” Since the Lord Himself is the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:17) and has created us with a spirit (Rom. 8:16), we can be joined to Him as one spirit.

EXPERIENCING CHRIST AS THE TREE OF LIFE IN OUR SPIRIT

On the positive side, there is another line in the New Testament, the line of the mingling of God with the spirit of man. We are charged to walk in the spirit, to live in the spirit, to do things in the spirit, and to pray in the spirit. *In the spirit* is not a mere phrase. When we live in our spirit, we will not live by ourselves but by the Lord. When we learn to walk according to our spirit, we will not walk according to the worldly system but according to the heavenly way. According to the record of the New Testament, even the teachings and gifts by themselves

are categorized with the tree of knowledge. With the tree of knowledge are knowledge, good, evil, and death. This tree is complicated. But with the tree of life there is only one item and nothing else—life, life, life. The tree of life is so simple. The Scriptures reveal life as the beginning, life as the process, life as the ending, and life as everything. It is possible that our good doings may not be related to life but fully related and wrapped up with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The Lord is not merely interested in what we are doing, but in whether we are in our soul or in our spirit. This is why the Lord told us emphatically in the four Gospels many times that we have to deny the soul, the self. This is because Satan is mingled with our soul, with our self. In Matthew 16 Peter thought that he was saying something good to the Lord, but the Lord rebuked him, calling him Satan (vv. 22-23). Christ perceived that it was not Peter but Satan who frustrated Him from taking the cross. Immediately after this the Lord talked about denying the self and losing the soul-life (vv. 24-25). This proves that Satan is one with our soul, one with our self.

Only the experiences of the Lord Himself in our spirit will last eternally. The teachings will not remain; they will pass away. Our primary need is not for more knowledge about the Lord. What we need today is to contact the Lord. Our need today is not for gifts but for the Lord Himself as our life, our food, our drink, and our air. We have to realize the Lord Himself in such a full and all-inclusive way. Then we will have the proper and living knowledge of the Lord, not from letters but from life. If we will experience the Lord in such a way, we will then have the proper function. The proper function and the proper gifts will come out of the inner life.

It is good that we retire from things other than the Lord Himself. We must learn to return ourselves to the Lord Himself. With the tree of the knowledge of good and evil everything is complicated. Good and evil are mixed together and result in death. The one thing we need is to enjoy the Lord as the tree of life. We have to learn how to enjoy, to partake of, this living Lord. We have to learn how to contact Him, how to realize Him, and how to experience Him in the spirit as our life and everything.

THE ULTIMATE CONSUMMATION OF THE TWO TREES

All the positive things come out of the experience of the tree of life, out of the mingling of Christ as life with our spirit. The church, the kingdom, the New Jerusalem, and all the positive spiritual heavenly things come out of the mingling of God with our spirit, that is, out of the experience of the tree of life. The ultimate consummation of the tree of knowledge is the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10, 14-15), and the ultimate consummation of the tree of life is the city of water, the New Jerusalem (21:2). This city is characterized by a pure river of water of life with the tree of life in its flow (22:1-2). All the things of man related to the tree of knowledge, related to Satan, will go into the lake of fire, and the things of man related to God, to the tree of life, will go into the city of living water. We need to spend our time to read the New Testament once more with this point of view, the point of view in the spirit.