

Monday 10/27

Related Verses**Heb. 6:1**

1 Therefore leaving the word of the beginning of Christ, let us be brought on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith in God,

Rom. 12:2

2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

2 Pet. 1:3-4

3 Seeing that His divine power has granted to us all things which relate to life and godliness, through the full knowledge of Him who has called us by His own glory and virtue,

4 Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.

1 Cor. 12:16, 18-19, 21, 24

16 And if the ear should say, Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body, it is not that because of this it is not of the body.

18 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, even as He willed.

19 And if all were one member, where would the body be?

21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

24 But our comely members have no need. But God has blended the body together, giving more abundant honor to the member that lacked,

Related Reading

We need to point out the difference between transformation and maturity. The last stage of transformation is maturity. Maturity means the fullness of life...The more life we have, the more mature we are. An infant is obviously not mature, but a grown man is

The Maturity of the Bride

mature. For a human being to be mature means that his life has come into fullness.

Transformation is a metabolic change in life. Thus, transformation is not a matter of fullness; it is a matter of change...Only through transformation can we reach maturity. We have a natural life, but this life is not good for God's economy. Although our natural life does not need to be replaced, it does need to be metabolically changed. We must not only have an outward change in appearance, but also an inward change in nature. Although our human life is necessary for God's economy, it should not remain a natural human life; it should be a human life that has been transformed in nature so that the divine life may be mingled with the transformed human life to become one. This is a deep matter. (*Life-study of Genesis*, p. 1191)

At least two verses in the New Testament unveil the matter of transformation...The Greek word translated "transformed" in Romans 12:2 also appears in 2 Corinthians 3:18. According to the Greek, this verse should be rendered, "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." The word "transformed" in these verses indicates that in our Christian life we need a metabolic change. We do not need outward correction and alteration; rather, we need an inward change in nature and in life.

This metabolic change begins with regeneration...At regeneration a new life, the divine life, was put into our spirit. From the time of our regeneration, this life has been transforming our natural life. As the divine life changes our natural life, it imparts more and more of the divine life into our being. Therefore, transformation is the change of our natural life. When this change reaches the point of fullness, the time of maturity has come...Maturity is not a matter of our being changed; it is a matter of having the divine life imparted to us again and again until we have the fullness of life.

Now we must consider how Jacob, a transformed person, could be filled with life. Human beings are vessels.

From the selling of Joseph to the sending of Jacob's sons to Egypt was a period of at least twenty years.

During these silent years Jacob was a person without any ambitions, interests, or things to do. This must have been the time God imparted Himself into Jacob more and more.

The only thing that could not be taken away from Jacob was God's presence. At Hebron Jacob constantly lived in fellowship with God. Through the loss of Joseph, Jacob became a jar that was absolutely open to God...Now, after the loss of Joseph, Jacob was free from every frustration and was completely open to the Lord. Undoubtedly, Jacob thought about Joseph day after day. He had concluded that Joseph had been devoured by an evil beast, but this had not been confirmed. Hence, Jacob might have thought that perhaps he would see Joseph again. This pressed Jacob to God and opened him up to God. The more he thought about Joseph, the more open he was. During all these years, Jacob was a jar open to the heavens, and the heavenly rain was continuously falling into him. In this period of time Jacob was daily in the presence of God, being filled with the divine life. (*Life-study of Genesis*, pp. 1191-1195)

Further Reading: *Life-study of Hebrews*, msg. 30; *Life-study of Genesis*, msg. 62

Tuesday 10/28

Related Verses**Phil. 3:12-15**

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

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

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

15 Let us therefore, as many as are full-grown, have this mind; and if in anything you are otherwise minded, this also God will reveal to you.

Titus 3:5

5 Not out of works in righteousness which we did but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit,

1 Pet. 1:3, 23

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has regenerated us unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

23 Having been regenerated not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, through the living and abiding word of God.

Matt. 5:48

48 You therefore shall be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Eph. 4:13, 15

13 Until we all arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, at a full-grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,

Related Reading

The apostle Paul tells us in Philippians 3:12-15 how he pursued growth and maturity in the life of Christ. In this matter, he was never contented with himself but always pursued, forgetting the things which were behind and stretching forward to the things which were before, pressing toward Christ, who is the goal and the mark. This he did in order to gain Christ that he might grow and mature in His life. With his own pursuit as the pattern, he exhorted the believers whom he was leading and caring for to be like him, to pursue in the life of Christ, and to gain Christ fully in order that they might grow and mature. Finally, Paul said that as many of us as are (relatively) full-grown should have this mind and set this as the goal. (*Life Lessons*, vol. 4, pp. 71-72)

The Lord commands us to be perfect (in life) as our heavenly Father is perfect [Matt. 5:48]. To be perfect in life is to grow and mature in life. The Lord commands us in this way in the conclusion of the law of the new life in

The Maturity of the Bride

the kingdom of the heavens because we are children born of our Father with our Father's life. This life is able to make us perfect in the life of our Father, as our Father is perfect. Therefore, this commandment of the Lord is based upon the divine life of the Father. It is also fulfilled by the divine life of the Father. The divine life of the Father is able to make us perfect in life as He is perfect. This is not only the Lord's commandment to us but also the Lord's expectation concerning us. We should care for the Lord's heart's desire, keep His commandment, and grow and mature by the Father's life within us, thus accomplishing the will of the Triune God.

"The word of the beginning of Christ" [Heb. 6:1] refers to the word in the gospel concerning Christ's saving us and regenerating us, that is, the word in God's salvation which initiates us in the spiritual life. This verse exhorts us to leave the word of the beginning, that is, to leave the beginning of our spiritual life, and to be brought on to perfection in the spiritual life. This is to grow and mature in the spiritual life.

The prerequisite for maturity in the spiritual life is to grow continually in this life. As soon as a believer is regenerated and becomes a newborn babe spiritually, he should long for God's word in the Bible as the guileless milk that he may grow in his spiritual life [1 Pet. 2:2].

In the spiritual life, a believer is, on the one hand, a person with the spiritual life and, on the other hand, like a plant cultivated on God's farm (1 Cor. 3:5-9). Whether as a person or like a plant, a believer needs to grow that he may become mature. Therefore, continuing growth is a prerequisite for becoming full-grown and mature.

"But holding to truth [Christ] in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ" (Eph. 4:15). We grow in the spiritual life by holding in love to Christ as the truth and growing up into Christ as the Head in all things. This kind of growth, which takes Christ as the truth and which grows into Christ, is a further prerequisite for our becoming full-grown and mature.

Colossians 2:19 indicates that the church as the Body of Christ grows with the growth of God by holding Christ as the Head, by receiving the rich supply from Him, the Head, through the joints of His Body, and by being knit together by the bands of His Body. This

growth in the Body of Christ is also a prerequisite for our growth and maturity in the life of Christ. This prerequisite consummates in the growth of this Body of Christ. (*Life Lessons*, vol. 4, pp. 70-73)

Further Reading: *Life Lessons*, vol. 4, lsn. 46

Wednesday 10/29**Related Verses****James 5:7**

7 Therefore be long-suffering, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer eagerly awaits the precious fruit of the earth, exercising long-suffering over it until it receives the early and late rain.

S.S. 4:1, 4

1 Oh, you are beautiful, my love! Oh, you are beautiful! Your eyes are like doves behind your veil; Your hair is like a flock of goats That repose on Mount Gilead.

4 Your neck is like the tower of David, Built for an armory: A thousand bucklers hang on it, All the shields of the mighty men.

Matt. 13:3

3 And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, Behold, the sower went out to sow.

Rev. 14:4, 14-15

4 These are they who have not been defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are they who follow the Lamb wherever He may go. These were purchased from among men as firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.

14 And I saw, and behold, there was a white cloud, and on the cloud One like the Son of Man sitting, having a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand.

15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, Send forth Your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come because the harvest of the earth is ripe.

Gal. 4:19

19 My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you,

*The Maturity of the Bride***2 Cor. 3:18**

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.

Rom. 8:29

29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

Related Reading

In James 5:7 James uses the illustration of a farmer eagerly awaiting with long-suffering the precious fruit of the earth...The Lord Jesus is actually the real Farmer, the unique Farmer. As we are awaiting His coming, He, as the real Farmer, is awaiting our maturity. We may pray, "Lord, come back quickly." However, He may say, "My children, mature quicker. While you are awaiting My coming back, I am awaiting your maturity. Do you know why it has been nearly two thousand years and I have not yet come back? The reason is that My people are not yet matured. Only your maturity can hasten My coming back."

It is a great help for us to realize that if we are serious about awaiting the Lord's coming back, we need to grow in life. Most Christians today view the Lord's coming in an altogether objective way, in a way that has nothing to do with our spiritual condition or spiritual growth. Their expectation is that one day the Lord will suddenly come and that His coming will have nothing to do with their maturity. (*Life-study of James*, pp. 92-93)

[In Song of Songs 4:4] the Lord likens [the seeking one's] neck to the tower of David...Hair signifies our will [v. 1], and...our neck also signifies our will. Those who are rebellious toward God in the Bible are called stiff-necked (Exo. 32:9; Acts 7:51)...A flock of goats appearing on the mountain shows the subduing of her will, and the tower of David illustrates how strong her will is in resurrection. First of all, our will must be subdued; then it must be strong in resurrection. The natural will must be dealt with, and then we will have a resurrected will. The crucified and subdued will is just like a flock of goats standing on a mountainside, but the

resurrected will must be like the tower of David builded up as an armory.

First, our will must be subdued; then it will be resurrected like the tower of David, the armory for the spiritual warfare...If our will has never been subdued by the Lord, it can never be a strong armory to keep all the weapons for spiritual warfare. All the weapons are mostly defensive, not offensive...Bucklers and shields are all for protection in order to stand. In spiritual warfare, we are not so much on the offensive as we are on the defensive, standing against all the devilish, subtle attacks of the enemy. Most of the items of the armor mentioned in Ephesians 6 are also defensive. There is really no need for us to fight; the Lord has won the battle already.

We simply need to stand and resist all the enemy's attacks. The bucklers and the shields that protect us against the arrows of the enemy are kept in this tower, which is the subdued and resurrected will of the Lord's seeking one. This is the real maturity in life.

An unsubdued will is, on the one hand, stubborn, and on the other hand, weak. When the enemy comes, the stubborn, unsubdued will always makes an unconditional surrender. We all know this by our own experience...But if we have a submissive will, a will that has been subdued like a flock of goats on a mountainside, our will is expressed like a tower of David. When the enemy comes, our will is like the tower of David that holds all kinds of weapons against his attacks.

The secret of the maturity of the seeking one in Song of Songs 3 is that her will has been completely subdued and resurrected. (CWWL, 1972, vol. 1, "Life and Building as Portrayed in the Song of Songs," pp. 273-274)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1972, vol. 1, "Life and Building as Portrayed in the Song of Songs," ch. 6

Thursday 10/30**Related Verses****Col. 1:28-29**

28 Whom we announce, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man full-grown in Christ;

29 For which also I labor, struggling according to His operation which operates in me in power.

Heb. 12:10

10 For they disciplined for a few days as it seemed good to them; but He, for what is profitable that we might partake of His holiness.

Col. 2:19

19 And not holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.

Col. 3:10-11

10 And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,

11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.

John 10:10

10 The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have it abundantly.

2 Cor. 1:8-10

8 For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of our affliction which befell us in Asia, that we were excessively burdened, beyond our power, so that we despaired even of living.

9 Indeed we ourselves had the response of death in ourselves, that we should not base our confidence on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead;

10 Who has delivered us out of so great a death, and will deliver us; in whom we have hoped that He will also yet deliver us,

Related Reading

The meaning of the word *mature* in Greek is "at the end point."...This word is used many times in the New

The Maturity of the Bride

Testament, referring to the believers' being full-grown, mature, and perfected in the life of God...Although we receive the life of God when we are regenerated, after regeneration we still need to grow and mature unto perfection in this life.

Colossians 1:28 and 4:12 show us that the laboring of the apostles in Christ for the believers and their struggling in prayers for them are all for the believers' growth and maturity, that they may be presented and displayed full-grown and mature before Christ. (*Life Lessons*, vol. 4, pp. 69-70)

The discipline of the Holy Spirit refers to what the Holy Spirit is doing in our outward environment; it refers to His arranging of all people, things, and happenings, through which we are being disciplined.

The major work of God toward us through the Holy Spirit, aside from the Holy Spirit as the anointing, is in His outward discipline...For example, Romans 8, which speaks of the work of the Holy Spirit, first tells us that the Holy Spirit, which contains the law of life, is able to set us free from sin and that by Him we can put to death the practices of the body. This chapter also tells us that the Holy Spirit guides us so that we may live according to Him and finally, that He helps us in our weaknesses and prays for us. All these activities are the work of the Holy Spirit within us as the anointing. In the latter part of this chapter we read that "all things work together for good to those who love God" (v. 28). This speaks of the discipline of the Holy Spirit in our outward environment. The work of this outward discipline coordinates with His inward moving and leading. The Holy Spirit arranges and determines all that comes upon us according to the will of God. Although in many instances this causes temporal pain and trouble, in the end it is for the good of those who love God, that they may be conformed to the image of His Son. This arrangement is what we mean by the discipline of the Holy Spirit.

When the Holy Spirit moves and anoints within us and we obey the feeling that He imparts, God's will is accomplished, and His attributes are increased within us. Therefore, the inward anointing of the Holy Spirit is to some extent sufficient for the obedient ones. However, if we are stubborn, if we do not obey the inner anointing

and rebel time after time, the Holy Spirit is compelled to raise up an environment to chasten and discipline us, thereby causing us to submit. Therefore, the anointing of the Holy Spirit within us is a sweet act of God's love toward us and is His original desire, while the outward discipline of the Holy Spirit is an act of God's hand, an act that He is compelled to perform. (CWWL, 1953, vol. 3, "The Experience of Life," pp. 429-430)

Maturity is a matter of the enlargement of capacity...To escape God's arrangement just one time is to lose an opportunity to have our capacity enlarged...A believer can never be the same after passing through suffering...For this reason, when believers are passing through suffering, they must pay attention and they must realize that maturity in life is the sum total of receiving the discipline of the Holy Spirit. People may see a person who has matured in life, but they cannot see the accumulated discipline of the Holy Spirit which that person has received secretly day by day throughout the years. (*Watchman Nee—a Seer of the Divine Revelation in the Present Age*, pp. 143-144)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1953, vol. 3, "The Experience of Life," ch. 12

Friday 10/31**Related Verses****Gen. 43:14**

14 And may the All-sufficient God grant you mercy before the man, that he may release to you your other brother and Benjamin. And as for me, if I am to be bereaved of my children, I shall be bereaved.

Gen. 48:15-16

15 And he blessed Joseph and said, The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, The God who has shepherd me all my life to this day,
16 The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the boys; And may my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; And may they be a teeming multitude in the midst of the earth.

Luke 1:53

53 The hungry He has filled with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty.

Matt. 5:6

6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

Rom. 5:10

10 For if we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more we will be saved in His life, having been reconciled,

Rom. 9:16

16 So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.

John 3:29

29 He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices with joy because of the bridegroom's voice. This joy of mine therefore is made full.

Related Reading

Jacob's history must also become our biography. We must believe that everything in our daily life is under God's sovereign hand. Everything that happened to Jacob was for his transformation and maturity. In order to be transformed, Jacob had to be pressed into situations that gave him no choice except to undergo a change...God will sovereignly use persons, things, and events to empty us of everything that has filled us and to take away every preoccupation so that we may have an increased capacity to be filled with God...The two main aspects of Jacob's experience are transformation and maturity...The Lord is working among us, on us, and in us to transform us and to cause us to mature. (*Life-study of Genesis*, pp. 1199-1200)

From Jacob's experience we see that everything that happens to us is under God's sovereignty for our transformation and maturity. Nothing is accidental. God's eternal purpose can only be accomplished through our transformation and maturity.

In his early days Jacob always trusted in his own skill and ability. However, after the dealings in the last stage, his trust was no longer in himself, but in God. Jacob had come to know God's mercy. In his experiences through all his life, he eventually realized that it was God's mercy, not his skill and ability, that had counted in his

The Maturity of the BrideFurther Reading: *Life-study of Genesis*, msg. 93**Saturday 11/1****Related Verses****Rev. 19:5-9, 11-14, 16**

5 And a voice came out from the throne, saying, Praise our God, all His slaves and those who fear Him, the small and the great.

6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunders, saying, Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns.

7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.

8 And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the saints.

9 And he said to me, Write, Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true words of God.

11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sits on it called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

12 And His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems, and He has a name written which no one knows but Himself.

13 And He is clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God.

14 And the armies which are in heaven followed Him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean.

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

Rev. 20:6

6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no authority, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

Related Reading

The mature life becomes the reigning life...We all should have the aspect of maturity and the aspect of reigning. Actually, it was not Joseph who was reigning in Egypt—it was Jacob, Israel. If you could have asked an Egyptian who was reigning over him, he would have said

situations. And he had also learned that this merciful God is all-sufficient, not only almighty, to meet his needs in every kind of situation. Hence, Jacob said to his sons, “May the All-sufficient God grant you mercy before the man” (Gen. 43:14). Now his trust and rest are altogether in the mercy of his all-sufficient God, no longer in himself and in his ability. Here we see a man who has been fully transformed for maturity.

When Jacob went to Egypt, he did not engage in any activity for himself. This also is a manifestation of his maturity...He was fully satisfied and rested absolutely in God’s sovereignty. He did not depend upon his own endeavors. From his experience through the years, he had come to know that his destiny was in the hands of God, not in his own hands. As Jacob was about to bless the two sons of Joseph, he spoke of God as the One who had shepherd him all his life long (48:15-16). Jacob’s word in 48:15 and 16 is a reference to the Triune God. Here we see the Triune God in Jacob’s experience, not in doctrine...Here we see a threefold mention of God: the God before whom Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who shepherd Jacob his whole life long, and the Angel who delivered him from evil. The God before whom Abraham and Isaac walked must be the Father; the God who shepherd Jacob his whole life must be the Spirit; and the Angel who redeemed him from all evil must be the Son. This is the Triune God in Jacob’s experience.

Now we come to the strongest sign of Jacob’s maturity: his blessing of others. The first thing Jacob did after arriving in Egypt was bless Pharaoh (47:7, 10). Although Pharaoh was the highest person on earth, he was under Jacob’s blessing hand. According to Hebrews 7:7, “the lesser is blessed by the greater.” Thus, the fact that Jacob blessed Pharaoh was a proof that he was greater than Pharaoh. After Jacob had been ushered into Pharaoh’s presence, he did not speak to him in a polite, political way. He stretched forth his hand and blessed him. This is absolutely different from human culture and religion. As Jacob was leaving Pharaoh’s presence, he blessed him again.

Blessing is the overflow of life, the overflow of God through someone’s maturity in life. In order to bless others, we must be filled to the brim with life so that life overflows to them. (Gen. 48:8-20). (*Life-study of Genesis*, pp. 1201, 1210-1211)

that a Hebrew, an Israelite, was reigning. Israel was reigning in Egypt because Israel had matured in life. Only a matured life can be used by God for His kingdom, for His reigning. (*Life-study of Genesis*, pp. 1200-1201)

The marriage of the Lamb will come after the rapture of the majority of the believers (1 Thes. 4:15-17)...The marriage of the Lamb will also follow the judgment at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10). After all the raptures and before the wedding, there will be the judgment at the judgment seat of Christ to determine which believers will be qualified for the wedding feast. If you are rewarded at the judgment seat of Christ, you will participate in the wedding feast. If you are rewarded at the judgment seat of Christ, you will participate in the wedding feast. If you are not rewarded but are disapproved of by the Lord, you will not perish; yet you will suffer a loss like that described in 1 Corinthians 3:15. This verse says, “If anyone’s work is consumed, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.” The saved ones who suffer loss will certainly miss the wedding feast. According to Matthew 25:1-13, the five prudent virgins will be admitted to the wedding feast, and the five foolish ones will be rejected.

The judgment at the judgment seat of Christ will not determine whether or not we will be saved or perish; it will decide whether we will receive a reward from the Lord or suffer a loss. Only the saved will appear before this judgment seat. As the Lord is coming down from heaven to earth, He will linger for a time in the air, where He will take care of certain matters. The judgment seat of Christ will be set up in the air, and the wedding will also take place there. After this judgment and after the wedding, Christ will descend with His chosen ones as His army to fight against Antichrist in the war at Armageddon. Hence, both the judgment seat and the wedding will take place in the air. Therefore, the wedding will take place after the destruction of the harlot, after all the raptures, and after the judgment at the judgment seat of Christ. As we will see, those who are chosen at the judgment seat will be the bride and also the guests at the feast. The guests will be the corporate bride.

In Revelation 19:5-7 we have the praise of a great multitude...Verse 6 describes the voice of the great

*The Maturity of the Bride***Lord's Day 11/2****Related Verses****Heb. 7:7**

7 But without any dispute the lesser is blessed by the greater.

Heb. 12:5-11

5 And you have completely forgotten the exhortation which reasons with you as with sons, "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when reproved by Him;

6 For whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives."

7 It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons. For what son is there whom the father does not discipline?

8 But if you are without discipline, of which all sons have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.

9 Furthermore we have had the fathers of our flesh as discipliners and we respected them; shall we not much more be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?

10 For they disciplined for a few days as it seemed good to them; but He, for what is profitable that we might partake of His holiness.

11 Now no discipline at the present time seems to be a matter of joy, but of grief; but afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been exercised by it.

Gen. 47:7, 10

7 And Joseph brought in Jacob his father and set him before Pharaoh, and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

10 And Jacob blessed Pharaoh and went forth from Pharaoh's presence.

Further Reading:

Further Reading: *The Experience of Life*, ch. 12

multitude "like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunders." The praise like the sound of many waters proceeds continually, and like the sound of mighty thunders it displays solemnity.

Now we come to a very crucial matter—the matter of the readiness of the bride. Verse 7 says, "Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." His wife refers to the church (Eph. 5:24-25, 31-32), the bride of Christ (John 3:29). However, according to Revelation 19:8 and 9, the wife, the bride of Christ, here consists only of the overcoming believers during the millennium; whereas the bride, the wife, in 21:2 is composed of all the saved saints after the millennium for eternity. The readiness of the bride depends on the maturity in life of the overcomers. Furthermore, the overcomers are not separate individuals but a corporate bride. For this aspect, building is needed. The overcomers are not only mature in life but are also builded together as one bride. (*Life-study of Revelation*, pp. 603-606)

Further Reading: *Life-study of Genesis*, msg. 94

Churchwide Truth Pursuit of Genesis**Level 1—Sequential Life-study Reading**

Scripture Reading and Copying: Gen. 27:30-46

Assigned Reading: *Life-study of Genesis*, msg(s). 63-64

Level 2—Topical Study

Crucial Point: God's Visitation and Abraham's

Fellowship with God in Genesis 18

Scripture: Gen. 18

Assigned Reading: *LS of Genesis*, msg(s). 50

Supplemental Reading: *LS of Exodus*, msg. 176;

Crystallization-study of the Humanity of Christ, ch. 2;

The God-ordained Way to Practice the New Testament Economy, ch. 13

Study Questions: See the church website at

churchinnyc.org/bible-study

Hymn: #1212

1 The Lord of all has shown His plan
Unto each faithful one,
Who leaves behind the worldly things
As virgins for His Son.
To be His Bride we must match Him,
Within and outwardly;
To be this one who matches Him,
Enjoy Him constantly.

2 Like virgins who so single are,
They love the Groom so much,
They in His presence ever stay—
Lord Jesus, make us such.
Lord, make us those who are so wise,
Who gain You every day,
The wise ones who enjoy the feast,
Who all the price will pay.

3 The virgins are mature in life,
They grow so normally.
They daily eat and drink the Lord,
Their lot eternally.
Our need today is growth in life,
Christ's inward work indeed;
Not knowledge, teachings, gifts, nor pow'r—
But life is all we need.

4 Lord, as the seed of life within,
Grow more in us each day;
By spreading from our deepest part,
Gain us in every way.
Lord, strengthen Thou our inner man;
Make home in all our heart.
Fill us completely with Thyself
In every inward part.