

## Message Five

### **Natural Ability versus the Resurrected Ability of the Maturity of Life for the Building Up of the Church as the Organic Body of Christ**

Scripture Reading: 1 Kings 3:1; 11:1-8; Josh. 9:14; 1 Cor. 1:24, 30; Isa. 45:15; 37:31; Matt. 6:6

#### **I. Solomon became a man of wisdom and a man of understanding (2 Chron. 1:10; cf. Col. 2:2b-3); however, because he took many pagan women and worshipped their idols and built places for the people to worship idols, he lost his God-given wisdom and his God-given understanding; he became very foolish and brought in damage to his kingdom (1 Kings 3:1; 11:1-8):**

- A. Solomon's father David, a man according to God's heart, failed in this same gross and ugly sin of indulging his lust (2 Sam. 11); Solomon's failure in this satanic temptation was much greater than his father's; his fall was in his indulging his lust by loving many foreign women (1 Kings 11:1-3), in his forsaking God, who appeared to him twice (v. 9b), and in his worshipping the Gentile idols through the seducing by the foreign women whom he loved (vv. 4-8).
- B. Solomon had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines (v. 3); in order to satisfy their desire, he built up high places; his wives "turned his heart after other gods" (v. 4); "Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians and after Milcom the detestable thing of the Ammonites" (v. 5).
- C. "Solomon built a high place to Chemosh the detestable thing of Moab in the mountain that is before Jerusalem and to Molech the detestable thing of the children of Ammon"—v. 7:
  - 1. During the reign of Solomon the temple was built in Jerusalem, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple; the age of the building of the temple was a golden time in the history of the children of Israel—8:10-11.
  - 2. The unique place, Jerusalem, signifies oneness, whereas the high places signify division; just as all manner of evil and abominable things were related to the setting up of the high places, so in New Testament terms, all manner of evil is related to division—1 Cor. 1:10 and footnote 3.
  - 3. It is remarkable that Solomon, the very one who had built the temple according to God's desire on the ground of the oneness of God's people, took the lead to build up the high places once again—1 Kings 11:6-8.
- D. This caused his descendants to lose more than ninety percent of their kingdom and caused the people of God's elect to suffer division and confusion among themselves throughout many generations; eventually, they lost the God-given land and became captives in the foreign lands of idol worship.
- E. The nation of Israel is still suffering because of Solomon's failure; what a warning and an alarm this should be to us! We must be careful; even a little failure in the indulgence of lust can damage the church life and kill the splendid aspects of the church life.
- F. Therefore, we must be careful, even in the smallest thing; we should walk according to the spirit in everything (Rom. 8:4; cf. Zech. 4:8-10); God's people should co-live with Him, always relying on Him and being one with Him (Josh. 9:14; 2 Cor. 6:1a; 1 Cor. 3:9; Matt. 1:23).
- G. Solomon's decease was in gloomy disappointment (1 Kings 11:40-43); his glory fell off like the flower of grass (Matt. 6:29; 1 Pet. 1:24), and his splendid career became "vanity of vanities," as he had preached (Eccl. 1:2).

#### **II. We need to see Solomon's failure under the light of the spiritual life:**

- A. Solomon was a wise man but not a spiritual man; a man of capability, not a man of life; his enjoyment of the God-given good land reached the highest level through his God-given gift; however, because of his small measure in the maturity of the spiritual life, he was cut off from the enjoyment of the good land in God's economy because of his unbridled indulgence of his lust—1 Cor. 2:14-15; 3:1, 3.
- B. Solomon's God-given wisdom made him great in the world in his days; however, his wisdom was absolutely in the physical realm, without any spiritual element; his wisdom was a shadow of the real wisdom that was to come, and it was altogether different from the wisdom of Paul—1:24, 30.
- C. Paul's wisdom was a spiritual wisdom concerning Christ making His home in our hearts (Eph. 3:17), our walking and having our being according to the spirit (Rom. 8:4), and the two spirits—the divine Spirit and the human spirit—mingled together as one spirit (v. 16; 1 Cor. 6:17).
- D. The mysteries of God's economy were disclosed mainly to Paul (Col. 2:2; Eph. 3:3-5, 9-10); today, if we would know the highest wisdom in the universe, we must get into the crystallization of the truths in Paul's Epistles; the real wisdom is God, who is embodied in Christ, who has become our wisdom to be in us, making us one with God and making us God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead; thus, we become the masterpiece of the Triune God, His poem, displaying His infinite wisdom and divine design (1 Cor. 1:24, 30; Eph. 2:10; 3:9-11).

**III. Solomon was a man full of natural ability but not a man of life, a man whose wisdom was a gift, not a measure of life; the careers he accomplished were evidences of his capacity from the God-given gift of wisdom, not manifestations of the ability of the maturity of life—Heb. 6:1; Col. 1:28-29; Phil. 3:12-15:**

- A. We need to see the difference between our natural ability and the ability that has passed through death and resurrection; we need to realize the impotence, the insufficiency, of our natural being and natural ability in the things of God—Acts 7:22; Exo. 3:2-3, 14-15; 1 Cor. 2:14; Phil. 3:3-9; 2 Cor. 3:5-6.
- B. We should not have any trust in our natural being in the things of God; rather, we must learn to reject our natural being and exercise our spirit in everything for the organic building up of the Body of Christ—Phil. 3:3; Rom. 8:4; 1 Tim. 4:7.
- C. In the Lord's recovery there is no place for our natural being; the churches in the Lord's recovery, as parts of the living Body of Christ, will spontaneously reject anything that is natural—1 Cor. 12:12-13.
- D. In the building of the church, every natural thing in us must be broken before we can be joined together; we can be built only after we have been broken in our natural being—*Hymns*, #837, stanzas 6 and 7.
- E. Natural ability is egocentric and causes us to become proud, resulting in boasting and self-glorification; resurrected ability is not proud and does not boast in itself—cf. Col. 1:17b, 18b; Phil. 3:3; 2 Cor. 12:9.
- F. Natural ability is selfish, and all its schemes and devices are for the sake of the self without any regard for the will of God; resurrected ability is for the will of God; it has been broken and is not for self and has no element of self—cf. Matt. 16:24.
- G. Natural ability causes self-reliance and self-confidence, acting on its own and causing us to depend on ourselves and not on God; resurrected ability relies upon God and does not dare to act according to self, though truly able and capable; resurrected ability is controlled by the Holy Spirit and does not dare to act according to its wishes—cf. 2 Cor. 1:8-9; 4:6-7; 12:7-9.

- H. Natural ability has no divine element; it seeks its own glory and satisfies its own desires; it is mingled with the elements of flesh and temper; therefore, when it is disapproved, it is provoked; resurrected ability is devoid of the flesh—cf. 1 Thes. 2:4.
- I. Natural ability is temporary and is unable to withstand tests, setbacks, or opposition; resurrected ability extols the Father, acknowledging the Father's will—Matt. 11:20-26; John 2:19; Acts 2:24.
- J. Those who serve according to natural ability desire rewards or appreciation from others; those who serve according to resurrected ability desire to win Christ and are determined to gain the honor of being well pleasing to Him—Phil. 3:8; Gen. 15:1; Heb. 11:5-6; 2 Cor. 5:9.
- K. Natural ability likes to manifest itself, to be known by man, and to be carried out in front of man; resurrected ability likes to do things in secret to be one with the “God who hides Himself” and to “take root downward and bear fruit upward”—Isa. 45:15; 37:31; Matt. 6:4, 6, 17-18.
- L. Natural ability and capability apart from life are like a snake, poisoning God's people; life is like a dove, supplying God's people with life and causing us to become a person who expresses in his humanity the bountiful God in His rich attributes through His aromatic virtues; life causes us to become like a lily growing out of brambles and like a bright star shining in the dark night—cf. Exo. 4:1-9; Matt. 3:16-17.
- M. Whenever people try to bring their natural ability into the church, the reality of the church is lost; only that which passes through death and resurrection can be brought into the church—1 Cor. 3:16-17.

**IV. The forty-one kings of Israel and Judah were in the highest position, but they were not careful in their enjoyment of the good land; not even David enjoyed the good land in full; we should apply their example to ourselves:**

- A. The root of the evil of the evil kings, like that of the evil of the people of Israel, was their forsaking the very God as the fountain of living waters and their turning away to the pagan idols as broken cisterns that hold no water; these two evils drowned them in the death waters of idolatry and of the indulgence of lusts—Jer. 2:13.
- B. Today we are kings who are reigning with Christ in life by receiving the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness (Rom. 5:10, 17); we should endeavor to follow the pattern of Paul, who could declare that he had been crucified with Christ and that he no longer lived but Christ lived in him (Gal. 2:20); he said that he lived Christ for His magnification by receiving the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the supply of the Body (Phil. 1:19-21a).
- C. In resurrection Christ became the life-giving Spirit as the consummation of the Triune God (1 Cor. 15:45b); this divine, all-inclusive Spirit enters into our spirit and mingles with our regenerated spirit, causing God and man, man and God, to become one in the mingled spirit; the two spirits are now mingled together as one entity (6:17; Rom. 8:16).
- D. Today God the Spirit is the all-inclusive Spirit, the compound Spirit, the anointing Spirit, the revealing Spirit, and the consummated Spirit as the consummation of the processed Triune God—Phil. 1:19; Exo. 30:22-25; 1 John 2:27; 1 Cor. 2:10; Rev. 22:17a.
- E. In the Lord's recovery today, we should pay our full attention to the mingled spirit, the Spirit mingled with our spirit, and should live, walk, and have our being in and according to this mingled spirit so that we can truly reign in life (Rom. 8:4; 5:10, 17); this mingled spirit is the beginning of the Body of Christ and will consummate in the New Jerusalem (Eph. 1:17; 2:22; 3:5, 16; 4:23; 5:18; 6:18; Rev. 21:10).