

Outline of the Messages for the Thanksgiving Blending Conference

November 27-30, 2025

GENERAL SUBJECT: THE ALL-INCLUSIVE CHRIST AS REVEALED IN MATTHEW

Message One

The Up-to-date, Instant, and Living Vision of the Heavenly Christ as the Living Star

EM *Hymns*: 784, 866

Scripture Reading: Matt. 2:1-12; Num. 24:17; Gen. 1:14-19; Dan. 12:3;
Rev. 1:16, 20; 2:1, 28; 3:1; 22:16; 2 Pet. 1:19; Gen. 22:17; Jude 12-13

- Matt 2:1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem,
- Matt 2:2 Saying, Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star at its rising and have come to worship Him.
- Matt 2:3 And when Herod the king heard this, he was troubled and all Jerusalem with him.
- Matt 2:4 And gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.
- Matt 2:5 And they said to him, In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written through the prophet:
- Matt 2:6 "And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, by no means are you the least among the princes of Judah; for out of you shall come forth a Ruler, One who will shepherd My people Israel."
- Matt 2:7 Then Herod, secretly calling the magi, determined accurately from them the time that the star appeared.
- Matt 2:8 And sending them to Bethlehem, he said, Go and find out accurately about the child. And when you find Him, report to me, so that I also may come and worship Him.
- Matt 2:9 And after they heard the king, they went their way, and behold, the star which they saw at its rising led them until it came and stood over the place where the child was.
- Matt 2:10 And when they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.
- Matt 2:11 And they came into the house and saw the child with Mary His mother. And falling down, they worshipped Him; and opening their treasures, they offered gifts to Him, gold and frankincense and myrrh.
- Matt 2:12 And because they had been divinely instructed in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed by another way to their country.
- Num 24:17 I see Him, but not now; / I behold Him, but not near. / There shall come forth a Star out of Jacob, / And a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, / And He shall crush the corners of Moab / And break down all the sons of Sheth.
- Gen 1:14 And God said, Let there be light-bearers in the expanse of heaven to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years;
- Gen 1:15 And let them be light-bearers in the expanse of heaven to give light on the earth; and it was so.
- Gen 1:16 And God made the two great light-bearers, the greater light-bearer to rule the day and the lesser light-bearer to rule the night, and the stars.
- Gen 1:17 And God set them in the expanse of heaven to give light on the earth
- Gen 1:18 And to rule over the day and over the night and to separate the light from the darkness, and God saw that it was good.
- Gen 1:19 And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.
- Dan 12:3 And those who have insight will shine like the shining of the heavenly expanse, and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars, forever and ever.
- Rev 1:16 And He had in His right hand seven stars; and out of His mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword; and His face shone as the sun shines in its power.
- Rev 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw upon My right hand and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

Rev 2:1 To the messenger of the church in Ephesus write: These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, He who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:

Rev 2:28 And to him I will give the morning star.

Rev 3:1 And to the messenger of the church in Sardis write: These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: I know your works, that you have a name that you are living, and yet you are dead.

Rev 22:16 I Jesus have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright morning star.

2 Pet 1:19 And we have the prophetic word made more firm, to which you do well to give heed as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts;

Gen 22:17 I will surely bless you and will greatly multiply your seed like the stars of the heavens and like the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of his enemies.

Jude 12 These are the hidden reefs in your love feasts, feasting together with you without fear, shepherding themselves; waterless reefs being carried off by winds; autumn trees without fruit, having died twice, rooted up;

Jude 13 Wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shames; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of darkness is kept for eternity.

I. After Jesus was born in Bethlehem, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star at its rising and have come to worship Him” (Matt. 2:2); this was the fulfillment of Numbers 24:17, which says, “There shall come forth a Star out of Jacob”; this Star refers to Christ:

- A. The magi did not say, “We saw *a* star,” or “We saw *the* star,” but “We saw *His* star”; the Star is the heavenly Christ.
- B. The star spoken of in Matthew 2:2 was shown to these learned men; it did not appear to any of the people of Israel; whereas the Jews had the Scriptures concerning Christ and knew where He would be born (vv. 4-6), the magi saw the star of Christ.
- Matt 2:2 Saying, Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star at its rising and have come to worship Him.
- Matt 2:4 And gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.
- Matt 2:5 And they said to him, In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written through the prophet:
- Matt 2:6 "And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, by no means are you the least among the princes of Judah; for out of you shall come forth a Ruler, One who will shepherd My people Israel."
- C. The Jews had the knowledge in letters concerning where Christ was to be born (Micah 5:2), but these learned men from the east received a living vision of Him; eventually, the star led them to the place where Christ was (Matt. 2:1-12).
- Micah 5:2 (But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, / So little to be among the thousands of Judah, / From you there will come forth to Me / He who is to be Ruler in Israel; / And His goings forth are from ancient times, / From the days of eternity.)
- Matt 2:1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem,
- Matt 2:2 Saying, Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star at its rising and have come to worship Him.
- Matt 2:3 And when Herod the king heard this, he was troubled and all Jerusalem with him.
- Matt 2:4 And gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.
- Matt 2:5 And they said to him, In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written through the prophet:
- Matt 2:6 "And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, by no means are you the least among the princes of Judah; for out of you shall come forth a Ruler, One who will shepherd My people Israel."
- Matt 2:7 Then Herod, secretly calling the magi, determined accurately from them the time that the star appeared.

- Matt 2:8 And sending them to Bethlehem, he said, Go and find out accurately about the child. And when you find Him, report to me, so that I also may come and worship Him.
- Matt 2:9 And after they heard the king, they went their way, and behold, the star which they saw at its rising led them until it came and stood over the place where the child was.
- Matt 2:10 And when they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.
- Matt 2:11 And they came into the house and saw the child with Mary His mother. And falling down, they worshipped Him; and opening their treasures, they offered gifts to Him, gold and frankincense and myrrh.
- Matt 2:12 And because they had been divinely instructed in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed by another way to their country.
- D. Christ is the real Sun (Mal. 4:2), but strictly speaking, He does not appear as the sun during the age of night; rather, He shines as a star (Rev. 2:28); a star shines at night, but it indicates that day is coming (Rom. 13:11-14).
- Mal 4:2 But unto you who fear My name will the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings, and you will go forth and leap about like well-fed calves.
- Rev 2:28 And to him I will give the morning star.
- Rom 13:11 And this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to be raised from sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.
- Rom 13:12 The night is far advanced, and the day has drawn near. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the weapons of light.
- Rom 13:13 Let us walk becomingly as in the day; not in reveling and drunkenness, not in fornication and licentiousness, not in strife and jealousy.
- Rom 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts.
- E. When Christ came the first time, He appeared openly as a star, but when He comes the second time, He will be the morning star (Rev. 2:28; 22:16) to His overcomers, who watch for His coming; to all others Christ will later appear as the sun (Mal. 4:2; cf. Matt. 13:43).
- Rev 2:28 And to him I will give the morning star.
- Rev 22:16 I Jesus have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright morning star.
- Mal 4:2 But unto you who fear My name will the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings, and you will go forth and leap about like well-fed calves.
- Matt 13:43 Then the righteous will shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

II. Matthew 2:1-12 reveals that to find Christ is a living matter; it is not a matter of mere doctrinal knowledge of the Bible:

- Matt 2:1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem,
- Matt 2:2 Saying, Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star at its rising and have come to worship Him.
- Matt 2:3 And when Herod the king heard this, he was troubled and all Jerusalem with him.
- Matt 2:4 And gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.
- Matt 2:5 And they said to him, In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written through the prophet:
- Matt 2:6 "And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, by no means are you the least among the princes of Judah; for out of you shall come forth a Ruler, One who will shepherd My people Israel."
- Matt 2:7 Then Herod, secretly calling the magi, determined accurately from them the time that the star appeared.
- Matt 2:8 And sending them to Bethlehem, he said, Go and find out accurately about the child. And when you find Him, report to me, so that I also may come and worship Him.
- Matt 2:9 And after they heard the king, they went their way, and behold, the star which they saw at its rising led them until it came and stood over the place where the child was.
- Matt 2:10 And when they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.
- Matt 2:11 And they came into the house and saw the child with Mary His mother. And falling down, they worshipped Him; and opening their treasures, they offered gifts to Him, gold and frankincense and myrrh.

- Matt 2:12 And because they had been divinely instructed in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed by another way to their country.
- A. The star appeared far away from the temple in the Holy Land, from the Jewish religious center, from the priests, the scribes, the Pharisees, and from all the religious ones; instead, there was a star showing something of Christ in a heathen land.
 - B. Merely to hold the Bible in our hand and read Micah 5:2, saying that Christ will be born in Bethlehem, does not work; we may have the Bible, but we may miss the heavenly star.
Micah 5:2 (But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, / So little to be among the thousands of Judah, / From you there will come forth to Me / He who is to be Ruler in Israel; / And His goings forth are from ancient times, / From the days of eternity.)
 - C. The star is the living revelation, the living vision, not the old and dead doctrinal knowledge of the Scriptures, not the dead knowledge of Micah 5:2; what we need today is not merely Bible knowledge but the heavenly vision, the up-to-date, instant vision, the living vision, the vision that human concepts can never teach.
Micah 5:2 (But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, / So little to be among the thousands of Judah, / From you there will come forth to Me / He who is to be Ruler in Israel; / And His goings forth are from ancient times, / From the days of eternity.)
 - D. Even if we have the knowledge of the Scriptures, we still need the instant, up-to-date, living star to lead us to the very street and the very house where Jesus is.
 - E. After receiving the living vision, the magi were misled by their human concept and went to Jerusalem, the capital of the Jewish nation, where its king was presumed to be; their being misled caused many young boys to be killed—Matt. 2:16.
Matt 2:16 Then Herod, seeing that he had been mocked by the magi, became greatly enraged, and sending out men, he did away with all the boys who were in Bethlehem and in all its borders from two years old and under, according to the time that he had accurately determined from the magi.
 - F. When they arrived in Jerusalem and inquired concerning where the King of the Jews was to be born, the Scripture says that “when Herod the king heard this, he was troubled and all Jerusalem with him”—v. 3:
 1. When they heard this news, they should have rejoiced; instead, they were troubled; this is for no other reason than that they were not genuinely seeking the Savior—cf. Prov. 4:23.
Prov 4:23 Keep your heart with all vigilance, / For from it are the issues of life.
 2. If one who believes in the Lord is not affected by the Lord as love in his inward emotions, he is not worthy to be called a Christian—2 Tim. 4:8; Mark 12:30; 1 Cor. 2:9.
2 Tim 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, with which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will recompense me in that day, and not only me but also all those who have loved His appearing.
Mark 12:30 And you shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart and from your whole soul and from your whole mind and from your whole strength."
1 Cor 2:9 But as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard and which have not come up in man's heart; things which God has prepared for those who love Him."
 3. A Christian who expects the Lord to come or who expects to be raptured should take this as a warning—2 Tim. 4:8; Titus 2:13; Rev. 2:28; 22:20; Matt. 24:40-44; 25:8-13.
2 Tim 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, with which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will recompense me in that day, and not only me but also all those who have loved His appearing.
Titus 2:13 Awaiting the blessed hope, even the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,
Rev 2:28 And to him I will give the morning star.
Rev 22:20 He who testifies these things says, Yes, I come quickly. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

Matt 24:40 At that time two men will be in the field; one is taken and one is left.
 Matt 24:41 Two women will be grinding at the mill; one is taken and one is left.
 Matt 24:42 Watch therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord comes.
 Matt 24:43 But know this, that if the householder had known in which watch the thief was coming, he would have watched and would not have allowed his house to be broken into.
 Matt 24:44 For this reason you also be ready, because at an hour when you do not expect it, the Son of Man is coming.
 Matt 25:8 And the foolish said to the prudent, Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.
 Matt 25:9 But the prudent answered, saying, Perhaps there will not be enough for us and for you; go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.
 Matt 25:10 And as they were going away to buy, the bridegroom came; and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast. And the door was shut.
 Matt 25:11 And later the rest of the virgins came also, saying, Lord, lord, open to us!
 Matt 25:12 But he answered and said, Truly I say to you, I do not know you.
 Matt 25:13 Watch therefore, for you do not know the day nor the hour.

G. After the magi were corrected by the Scriptures (2:4-6), they went to Bethlehem (vv. 8-9), and the star appeared to them again and led them to the place where Christ was, “and when they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy” (v. 10):

Matt 2:4 And gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.
 Matt 2:5 And they said to him, In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written through the prophet:
 Matt 2:6 "And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, by no means are you the least among the princes of Judah; for out of you shall come forth a Ruler, One who will shepherd My people Israel."
 Matt 2:8 And sending them to Bethlehem, he said, Go and find out accurately about the child. And when you find Him, report to me, so that I also may come and worship Him.
 Matt 2:9 And after they heard the king, they went their way, and behold, the star which they saw at its rising led them until it came and stood over the place where the child was.

1. When the magi were corrected by the Scriptures and restored to the right track, the star appeared to them again; living vision always accompanies the Scriptures.
2. The priests were those who taught people the law (Mal. 2:7), and the scribes were those who knew the Scriptures (Ezra 7:6); both the priests and the scribes had knowledge concerning the birth of Christ (Matt. 2:5-6), but unlike the magi from the east, they did not see the vision, nor did they have the heart to seek after Christ.

Mal 2:7 For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of Jehovah of hosts.
 Ezra 7:6 This Ezra went up from Babylon, and he was a scribe skilled in the law of Moses, which Jehovah the God of Israel had given; and the king granted him all his request according to the hand of Jehovah his God upon him.
 Matt 2:5 And they said to him, In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written through the prophet:
 Matt 2:6 "And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, by no means are you the least among the princes of Judah; for out of you shall come forth a Ruler, One who will shepherd My people Israel."

3. Regardless of how “scriptural” we are, if we lose the presence of the Lord, we are absolutely wrong; the New Testament way to find and follow the Lord is to continually stay in His hidden presence—John 5:39-40; Isa. 45:15; Exo. 33:11, 14; cf. 2 Cor. 5:16.

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.
 John 5:40 Yet you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.
 Isa 45:15 Surely You are a God who hides Himself, / O God of Israel, the Savior.
 Exo 33:11 And Jehovah would speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his companion. And Moses would return to the camp, but his attendant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart out of the tent.

- Exo 33:14 And He said, My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest.
 2 Cor 5:16 So then we, from now on, know no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him so no longer.
4. It is easy to accumulate scriptural knowledge, but if we would have living guidance, we must live in an intimate relationship with the Lord; we must be one with Him—Matt. 2:10-14.
 Matt 2:10 And when they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.
 Matt 2:11 And they came into the house and saw the child with Mary His mother. And falling down, they worshipped Him; and opening their treasures, they offered gifts to Him, gold and frankincense and myrrh.
 Matt 2:12 And because they had been divinely instructed in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed by another way to their country.
 Matt 2:13 Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph, saying, Arise, take the child and His mother and flee into Egypt, and stay there until I tell you; for Herod is going to seek the child to destroy Him.
 Matt 2:14 And he arose and took the child and His mother by night and departed into Egypt,
5. The magi saw Christ, and they worshipped Him; then they were warned by God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, so they departed into their own country “by another way” (v. 12); once we have seen Christ, we never take the same way, the way of religion apart from Christ, but we will always take another way.
 Matt 2:12 And because they had been divinely instructed in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed by another way to their country.

III. Christ’s faithful followers are shining and living stars, those who follow Christ as the shining and living star to be His duplication—Dan. 12:3; cf. Gen. 22:17:

- Dan 12:3 And those who have insight will shine like the shining of the heavenly expanse, and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars, forever and ever.
- Gen 22:17 I will surely bless you and will greatly multiply your seed like the stars of the heavens and like the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of his enemies.
- A. The living stars follow the heavenly, living, up-to-date, and instant vision of Christ as the centrality and universality of God’s economy—Acts 26:16-18; Col. 1:17b, 18b.
 Acts 26:16 But rise up and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a minister and a witness both of the things in which you have seen Me and of the things in which I will appear to you;
 Acts 26:17 Delivering you from the people and from the Gentiles, to whom I send you,
 Acts 26:18 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.
 Col 1:17b ...and all things cohere in Him;
 Col 1:18b ... He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
- B. The living stars are those who bless God’s people; the more we praise the Lord for God’s people and speak well of them in faith, the more we put ourselves under God’s blessing—Num. 24:9; Gen. 12:2-3; 22:17.
 Num 24:9 He couches; he lies down like a lion / And like a lioness; who will rouse him up? / Blessed is everyone who blesses you, / And cursed is everyone who curses you.
 Gen 12:2 And I will make of you a great nation, / And I will bless you / And make your name great; / And you shall be a blessing.
 Gen 12:3 And I will bless those who bless you, / And him who curses you I will curse; / And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.
 Gen 22:17 I will surely bless you and will greatly multiply your seed like the stars of the heavens and like the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of his enemies.

- C. The living stars give heed to the prophetic word of the Scriptures “as to a lamp shining in a dark place” so that Christ as the morning star rises in their hearts day by day; if we give heed to the word in the Bible, we will have His rising in our hearts to shine in the darkness of apostasy where we are today, before His actual appearing as the morning star—2 Pet. 1:19; John 6:63; Rev. 2:28; 22:16; 2 Tim. 4:8:

2 Pet 1:19 And we have the prophetic word made more firm, to which you do well to give heed as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts;

John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

Rev 2:28 And to him I will give the morning star.

Rev 22:16 I Jesus have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright morning star.

2 Tim 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, with which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will recompense me in that day, and not only me but also all those who have loved His appearing.

1. In the principle of the morning star, a Christian should rise up early because the early morning is the best time to meet the Lord (to fellowship with God, to praise and sing, to pray-read the Bible with the ministry, and to pray to the Lord)—S. S. 7:12; Psa. 5:1-3; 57:8-9; 59:16-17; 63:1-8; 90:14; 92:1-2; 108:2-3; 143:8; Exo. 16:21.

S. S. 7:12 Let us rise up early for the vineyards; / Let us see if the vine has budded, / If the blossom is open, / If the pomegranates are in bloom; / There I will give you my love.

Psa 5:1 To my words give ear, O Jehovah; / Consider my moaning.

Psa 5:2 Give heed to the sound of my cry, / My King and my God; / For to You do I pray.

Psa 5:3 O Jehovah, in the morning / You will hear my voice; / In the morning I will set forth my words in order to You, / And I will watch.

Psa 57:8 Awake, my glory; / Awake, O harp and lyre! / I will awaken the dawn.

Psa 57:9 I will give thanks to You among the peoples, O Lord; / I will sing psalms to You among the nations.

Psa 59:16 But I will sing of Your strength; / And I will joyfully sing of Your lovingkindness in the morning. / For You have been my high retreat / And a refuge in the day of my distress.

Psa 59:17 O my strength, unto You I will sing psalms, / For God is my high retreat, / My God of lovingkindness.

Psa 63:1 O God, You are my God; I seek You diligently. / My soul thirsts for You, / My flesh faints in longing for You, / In a dry and weary land without water.

Psa 63:2 So I have looked upon You in the sanctuary, / Seeing Your power and Your glory.

Psa 63:3 Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, / My lips praise You.

Psa 63:4 Thus I bless You while I live; / I lift up my hands in Your name.

Psa 63:5 My soul is satisfied as with the rich fatness, / And my mouth praises You with lips of joyous shouting,

Psa 63:6 When I remember You while on my bed, / When I consider You in the night watches.

Psa 63:7 For You have been my help, / And in the shadow of Your wings I will shout for joy.

Psa 63:8 My soul pursues after You; / Your right hand upholds me.

Psa 90:14 Satisfy us in the morning with Your lovingkindness / That we may give a ringing shout and rejoice all our days.

Psa 92:1 It is good to give thanks to Jehovah / And to sing psalms to Your name, O Most High;

Psa 92:2 To declare Your lovingkindness in the morning / And Your faithfulness in the nights,

Psa 108:2 Awake, O harp and lyre! / I will awaken the dawn.

Psa 108:3 I will give thanks to You among the peoples, O Jehovah; / And I will sing psalms to You among the nations.

- Psa 143:8 Cause me to hear Your lovingkindness in the morning, / For in You I trust. / Make known to me the way on which I should walk, / For to You I lift up my soul.
- Exo 16:21 And they gathered it morning by morning, each one according to his eating; and when the sun became hot, it melted.
2. The Lord will secretly give Himself as the morning star to those who love Him and who watch and wait for Him so that they may taste the freshness of His presence at His coming back after a long absence—1 Thes. 5:6; Rev. 2:28; 3:2-3; 16:15.
- 1 Thes 5:6 So then let us not sleep as the rest do, but let us watch and be sober.
- Rev 2:28 And to him I will give the morning star.
- Rev 3:2 Become watchful and establish the things which remain, which were about to die; for I have found none of your works completed before My God.
- Rev 3:3 Remember therefore how you have received and heard, and keep it and repent. If therefore you will not watch, I will come as a thief, and you shall by no means know at what hour I will come upon you.
- Rev 16:15 (Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he who watches and keeps his garments that he may not walk naked and they see his shame.)
- D. The living stars enjoy and are filled with the sevenfold intensified Spirit to make them intensely living and intensely shining for God’s building—3:1; 4:5; 5:6.
- Rev 3:1 And to the messenger of the church in Sardis write: These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: I know your works, that you have a name that you are living, and yet you are dead.
- 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.
- E. The living stars are the messengers of the churches, those who enjoy and experience the pneumatic Christ as the Messenger of God and as the fresh message from God so that they can dispense the fresh and present Christ into the people of God for the testimony of Jesus—1:16, 20; 2:1; Mal. 3:1-3.
- Rev 1:16 And He had in His right hand seven stars; and out of His mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword; and His face shone as the sun shines in its power.
- Rev 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw upon My right hand and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.
- Rev 2:1 To the messenger of the church in Ephesus write: These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, He who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:
- Mal 3:1 I am about to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me; and suddenly the Lord, whom you seek, will come to His temple. And the Angel of the covenant, whom you desire, He will come, says Jehovah of hosts.
- Mal 3:2 And who will endure the day of His coming? And who will stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap.
- Mal 3:3 And He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver, and He will purify the sons of Levi and purge them like gold and like silver, and they will offer to Jehovah a sacrifice in righteousness.
- F. The living stars have “great resolutions in heart” and “great searchings of heart”; they are lovers of God who are like the “stars...from their courses” to fight together with God against His enemy so that they may be “like the sun / When it rises in its might” and be those who “shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their Father”—Judg. 5:15-16, 20, 31; Dan. 11:32; Matt. 13:43.
- Judg 5:15 And the princes in Issachar were with Deborah; / And Issachar was true to Barak; / Into the valley they were sent behind him. / Among the divisions of Reuben / There were great resolutions in heart.
- Judg 5:16 Why did you sit among the sheepfolds / Listening to the pipings for the flocks? / In the divisions of Reuben / There were great searchings of heart.

- Judg 5:20 From heaven the stars fought; / From their courses they fought with Sisera.
 Judg 5:31 May all Your enemies so perish, O Jehovah. / But may those who love Him be like the sun / When it rises in its might. And the land had rest forty years.
- Dan 11:32 And with his smooth words he will cause those who act wickedly toward the covenant to be profane. But the people who know their God will show strength and take action.
- Matt 13:43 Then the righteous will shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.
- G. The living stars are those who fear Jehovah and hear the voice of His servant, trusting in Jehovah so that they may have light while walking in darkness—Isa. 50:10-11; Psa. 139:7-12, 23-24:
- Isa 50:10 Who among you fears Jehovah; / Who hears the voice of His servant; / Who walks in darkness / And has no light? / Let him trust in the name of Jehovah, / And rely on his God.
- Isa 50:11 Indeed, all of you who kindle a fire, / Who surround yourselves with firebrands, / Walk into the light of your fire / And into the firebrands which you have lit. / You will have this from My hand: / You will lie down in torment.
- Psa 139:7 Where shall I go, away from Your Spirit, / And where shall I flee from Your presence?
 Psa 139:8 If I ascend into heaven, You are there; / If I make my bed in Sheol, there You are.
 Psa 139:9 If I take the wings of the dawn / And settle at the limits of the sea,
 Psa 139:10 There also Your hand will lead me, / And Your right hand will take hold of me.
 Psa 139:11 And if I say, Surely darkness will cover me, / And the light around me will be night;
 Psa 139:12 Even the darkness is not dark to You, / And night shines like day; / The darkness is like the light.
- Psa 139:23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; / Try me, and know my anxious thoughts;
 Psa 139:24 And see if there is some harmful way in me, / And lead me on the eternal way.
- Those who make light for themselves and walk in their self-made light instead of in God's light will suffer torment—Isa. 50:11.
 Isa 50:11 Indeed, all of you who kindle a fire, / Who surround yourselves with firebrands, / Walk into the light of your fire / And into the firebrands which you have lit. / You will have this from My hand: / You will lie down in torment.
 - This should be a warning to us so that we may walk in the light given by God, not in the light we make for ourselves; "Come and let us walk in the light of Jehovah"—2:5.
- H. The living stars are typified by the stars that were established on the fourth day of God's restoration with His further creation, in which they rule by their shining; where there is shining, there is ruling for the growth of life—Gen. 1:14-19:
- Gen 1:14 And God said, Let there be light-bearers in the expanse of heaven to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years;
 Gen 1:15 And let them be light-bearers in the expanse of heaven to give light on the earth; and it was so.
 Gen 1:16 And God made the two great light-bearers, the greater light-bearer to rule the day and the lesser light-bearer to rule the night, and the stars.
 Gen 1:17 And God set them in the expanse of heaven to give light on the earth
 Gen 1:18 And to rule over the day and over the night and to separate the light from the darkness, and God saw that it was good.
 Gen 1:19 And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.
- The shining forth of the Lord Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration was the coming of the kingdom in power; this shining forth is actually the ruling presence of the Triune God—Matt. 17:1-8; Mark 9:1-8.
 Matt 17:1 And after six days Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and brought them up to a high mountain privately.
 Matt 17:2 And He was transfigured before them, and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as the light.
 Matt 17:3 And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, conversing with Him.
 Matt 17:4 And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You are willing, I will make three tents here, one for You and one for Moses and one for Elijah.

Matt 17:5 While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have found My delight. Hear Him!

Matt 17:6 And when the disciples heard this, they fell on their face and were greatly frightened.

Matt 17:7 And Jesus came to them and touched them and said, Arise, and do not be afraid.

Matt 17:8 And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one except Jesus Himself alone.

Mark 9:1 And He said to them, Truly I say to you, there are some of those standing here who shall by no means taste death until they see the kingdom of God having come in power.

Mark 9:2 And after six days Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John, and brought them up alone into a high mountain privately. And He was transfigured before them,

Mark 9:3 And His garments became sparkling, exceedingly white, such as no fuller on earth could whiten them.

Mark 9:4 And Elijah with Moses appeared to them, and they were conversing with Jesus.

Mark 9:5 And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tents, one for You and one for Moses and one for Elijah.

Mark 9:6 For he did not know what to answer, for they had become extremely frightened.

Mark 9:7 And a cloud appeared, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud: This is My Son, the Beloved. Hear Him!

Mark 9:8 And suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone, but Jesus only with them.

2. The kingdom of God as the ruling of God, the reigning of God, with all its blessings and enjoyment is the shining of the Lord Jesus and the spreading of the Lord Jesus by shining over us.
3. The kingdom is the shining of the reality of the Lord Jesus; whenever He is shining over us and we are under that shining, we are in the kingdom under God's ruling and reigning within us for our growth of life.

I. On the negative side, there are some who are "wandering stars"—Jude 12-13:

Jude 12 These are the hidden reefs in your love feasts, feasting together with you without fear, shepherding themselves; waterless clouds being carried off by winds; autumn trees without fruit, having died twice, rooted up;

Jude 13 Wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shames; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of darkness is kept for eternity.

1. The metaphor of wandering stars indicates that the erratic teachers, the apostates, were not solidly fixed in the unchanging truths of the heavenly revelation but were wandering about among God's starlike people.
2. The erratic apostates are wandering stars today, but they will eventually be imprisoned in the gloom of darkness, which has been kept for them for eternity.
3. Anyone who does not teach that the local churches are not the goal of God's economy but the procedure to reach the goal of the reality of the Body of Christ does not match the need of the ministry of God in the present age; anyone who keeps us from the blending of the churches for the reality of the Body of Christ is a wandering star; the true stars are those who turn many to righteousness, those who do not lead people astray but turn them to the right way.
4. Today the living Star and the living stars are not far from us—they are in and with the local churches as the practical expressions of the Body of Christ (Rev. 1:11, 20); among all the local churches there are some living stars; we simply need to contact them and keep company with them; they will lead us to the place where Jesus is.

Rev 1:11 Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.

Rev 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw upon My right hand and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

- J. May the Lord be merciful to us that we may always be kept in the right way to meet the Lord, to worship Him, and to offer our love to Him; may the Lord make us all like the magi, following the living star to find and make new discoveries of Christ in order to become His duplication as the living stars—cf. Eph. 5:8-9; Jer. 15:16a.

Eph 5:8 For you were once darkness but are now light in the Lord; walk as children of light

Eph 5:9 (For the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth),

Jer 15:16a Your words were found and I ate them, / And Your word became to me / The gladness and joy of my heart, ...

BLESSING GOD’S PEOPLE TO RECEIVE GOD’S BLESSING

“I will bless those who bless you, / And him who curses you I will curse.”—Gen. 12:3a

“Blessed is everyone who blesses you, / And cursed is everyone who curses you.”—Num. 24:9b

CWWL, 1978, vol. 1, “Fellowship with the Serving Ones, Volume One,” p. 203:

In the eyes of the Lord it is evil, unclean, to criticize the meetings. The Lord would say to you, “This is My Body. Who are you? Who gave you the right to make a standard for a meeting of My church?” As soon as you say something critical of the meeting, you break the oneness. Suppose others do not like your idea of a good meeting. What would you say? I may not like the meeting, but I dare not say a word because I know this causes division...Who am I to say that I do not like the meeting? May the Lord’s merciful shining come to us and to so many dear ones.

Life-study of Exodus, msg. 7, pp. 78-80:

Something happened in a prayer meeting in Shanghai in the early 1940s that helped me to see God’s people as He sees them. In that meeting an experienced sister co-worker, troubled by the low state of the church, cried out to the Lord on behalf of the church. As she prayed, she sighed and groaned because of the poor condition of the church. When she finished praying, Brother Nee broke forth in praise to the Lord and gave Him thanks that the church is never weak or low but always high. The congregation was shocked. Then Brother Nee helped us to understand the significance of Balaam’s prophecy regarding the children of Israel. Balaam was hired by Balak to curse the children of Israel. But instead of cursing God’s people, Balaam blessed them. Speaking on behalf of God, Balaam said, “He has not beheld iniquity in Jacob, / Nor has He seen trouble in Israel” (Num. 23:21). Furthermore, in Numbers 24:5 Balaam said, “How fair are your tents, O Jacob, / Your tabernacles, O Israel!” According to these verses, God did not see iniquity or trouble in Israel. Instead, He saw only goodness, fairness, and beauty. The same is true regarding the church today.

Do not say that the church is low or dead. The more you say this, the more you put yourself under a curse. However, if you praise the Lord for the church life and speak well concerning it, you will put yourself under God’s blessing. During all the years I have been in the church life, I have not seen one person who spoke negatively about the church who was under God’s blessing. On the contrary, all who have said that the church was poor, low, or dead have been under a curse. Those who speak positively about the church, declaring that the church is lovely and that it is God’s house, receive the blessing. This is not mere doctrine; it is a testimony that can be verified by the experiences of many saints.

Sometimes when I am disappointed over the church and do not think positively about it, the Lord within warns me to be careful. Immediately, I ask the Lord to cleanse me, and I begin to declare how wonderful the church is. Even though the church may cause me trouble, I still love the church. The

more I speak in this positive way, the more I am under God's blessing.

Whose word about the church is right, yours or the Lord's? In eternity the Lord's word will prove to be right, for in eternity the church will be marvelous, glorious, and transcendent. All the enemy's accusations regarding the church are lies. To say that the church is poor or dead is to utter a devilish lie. The apparent situation of the church is a lie. It is a lie to say that the church is cold or dead or low. The church is uplifted and very living. I am thankful for Brother Nee's strong word concerning Balaam's prophecy. That word fully changed my concept concerning the present state of the church. From the time I received that word, I have seen the church in a completely different light.

Do not see deeper than the Lord sees. According to Balaam's word in Numbers, the Lord did not see iniquity in Jacob. How, then, can you see it? Are you wiser or more perceptive than God? The Bible declares that the Lord does not see trouble in Israel. But you claim to see trouble in the church. Which do you choose to believe, the Lord's sight or yours? If we stand with the Lord's estimation of the church, we will be kept from falling from the blessing into the curse. May we all take heed how we deal with the church.