2024 DECEMBER SEMIANNUAL TRAINING

WEEK 24

DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Ephesians 4 7 to 8

But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Therefore the Scripture says, Having ascended to the height, He led captive those taken captive and gave gifts to men.

In Ephesians 4 7 to 16 Christ is presented to us as the Giver of gifts. In order for Christ to be constituted the Giver of gifts, He had to fill all things by passing through the highest and lowest places in the universe. In His incarnation and death, Christ descended from the highest place in the universe, heaven, to the lowest place in the universe, Hades; in His resurrection and ascension, He ascended from Hades to heaven. Through His descending and ascending, Christ became the One who fills all things. Christ passed through incarnation and crucifixion and entered into resurrection and ascension to conquer all the negative things in the universe such as sin and death.

In particular, through His death Christ conquered God’s enemy Satan, destroyed his power of darkness, and captured from Satan’s hand God’s chosen people, those who had been taken captive by Satan in his kingdom. Through His resurrection Christ imparted Himself into them as life, and in ascension He led these captives in His train of vanquished foes, His train of the triumphal procession. By His universal traffic, His victory over His enemy, and His triumphal procession He became qualified to be the Giver of gifts to His Body.

Today's Reading

Originally these captives were all God’s chosen people. Yet through the fall they became the captives of God’s enemy, Satan. Through His descending and ascending, however, Christ defeated Satan and recaptured these captives of Satan, enlivened them with His resurrection life, and made them His captives in His triumphal procession, a procession celebrating His victory. Christ then gave them as gifts to the Body for its building up; these gifts include apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherds and teachers.

When Christ ascended up on high, to the third heaven, that was not the end of His traveling. After He ascended, He descended into our spirit. Today Christ is still traveling; that is, He is still ascending and descending. However, now His traveling takes place mainly within us. When we are down, Christ comes down to where we are and brings us up to God.

Many times during the course of a day we may be brought by Christ into the heavens. From our experience we can testify that within us Christ descends and ascends; He goes up and down. Although He is always steady, He does not stand still. On the contrary, He does a great deal of traveling within us. It is difficult to say where Christ is. Is He in heaven or on earth? Actually, Christ is everywhere. He descended and ascended in order to fill all things. Through His descending and ascending, Christ will fill us with Himself.

Many believers have very little function in the church because they have not yet been constituted as gifts. But as Christ descends and ascends within them, He captures them, vanquishes them, and constitutes them into gifts to His Body.

Verse 8 reveals an important principle that it was only after Christ on the cross had defeated and captured God’s chosen people that Christ led them to the heavens as His captives in His train of vanquished foes and made them gifts to His Body. Because Christ on the cross defeated all His enemies, He is victorious in the universe and has gained the ground to fill all things in the universe. But He may not be victorious in us and may not have ground in us, because we have not been subdued by Him in our experience. In order for us to function as a gift to the Body, we must be conquered and subdued by Christ. When we are willing to be subdued and captured by Christ, we will give Christ the ground to establish us as gifts

to His Body.

This is the end of Today’s Morning Revival