

Message Three

Transformation for God's Building

Scripture Reading: Gen. 28:10-22; 32:28; 35:10, 15;
Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18; Rev. 4:3; 21:11

I. We need to be enlightened by and fully saturated with the thought that in the universe God is doing only one thing—building His eternal habitation—Bethel—Gen. 28:10-22; Matt. 16:18; Eph. 2:21-22; Rev. 21:2-3:

- A. The entire Bible is a book of building; the main subject of the Bible is the building of God—Gen. 28:10-22; Matt. 16:18; Eph. 2:21-22; 4:16; Rev. 21:2-3.
- B. The central and divine thought of the Scriptures is that God is seeking a divine building as the mingling of Himself with humanity—a living composition of persons redeemed by and mingled with Himself—Matt. 16:18.
- C. God's building is the desire of His heart and the goal of His salvation—Exo. 1:11; 25:8; 40:2-3; Eph. 1:5, 9; 2:21-22; 4:16.
- D. We need to have a divine understanding of God's building—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:16:
 1. God's building is the mingling of God with man—John 14:20; 15:4a; 1 John 4:15:
 - a. The principle of God's building is that God builds Himself into us and builds us into Himself—Eph. 3:17a.
 - b. The church is God's building composed of Himself as the divine material mingled with man as the human material—1 Cor. 3:9, 11.
 2. God's building is the corporate expression of the Triune God—1 Tim. 3:15-16; John 17:22; Eph. 3:19b, 21:
 - a. God's intention is to have a group of people built up as a spiritual building to express Him and to represent Him by dealing with His enemy and recovering the lost earth—Gen. 1:26; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9.
 - b. God's desire to be expressed and represented by man on earth can be fulfilled only when we are built up together—Gen. 1:26; Eph. 2:21-22.
 3. God's building is the enlargement, the expansion, of God to express Himself in a corporate way—John 3:29a, 30a; Col. 2:19:
 - a. The genuine building is the enlargement, the expansion,

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- of the Triune God, enabling God to express Himself in a corporate way—Eph. 3:21.
- b. The divine building is the Triune God as life being wrought into us so that we may become His one expression, the enlargement and expansion of God in His economy—vv. 9, 17a, 19b, 21; 1:10.
 - E. Bethel, the house of God, is the church today and will consummate in the New Jerusalem as the eternal Bethel, the eternal dwelling place of God and His redeemed elect—Gen. 28:19; 35:15; 1 Tim. 3:15; Rev. 21:3, 22.

II. Jacob, a man under God’s transforming hand, represents a life of transformation for God’s building—Gen. 32:28; 35:10, 15:

- A. Jacob’s history must become our biography:
 1. There are three distinct periods in Jacob’s life: the period of dealings (chs. 25—32), the period of transformation (chs. 32—36), and the period of maturity (chs. 37—50).
 2. Everything that happened to Jacob was for his transformation:
 - a. In order to be transformed, Jacob had to be pressed into situations that gave him no choice except to undergo a change—31:36-42; 32:28.
 - b. From Jacob’s experience we see that everything that happens to us is under God’s sovereignty for our transformation—Rom. 8:28-29; 12:2.
 - c. Jacob’s transformation began from the time the Lord came and touched Jacob’s strongest part, his thigh, in Genesis 32; from that time onward, the process of transformation continued until chapter 37.
 - d. The trouble that Simeon and Levi caused Jacob touched him in the depths of his being, and he began to be transformed—34:30; 49:5-7.
 3. Jacob had been chosen to be the expression of God and a prince of God, and he could become God’s expression and a prince of God only through transformation—1:26; 32:28; 2 Cor. 3:18:
 - a. *Israel* means “one who struggles with God” (Gen. 32:28) and “the prince of God.”

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

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- b. God's purpose in dealing with Jacob, a supplanter, was to transform him into Israel, a prince of God, bearing His image to express Him and exercising His dominion to represent Him—1:26.
 - c. Jacob's name was changed to Israel; a supplanter (Jacob) was changed into a prince of God—32:27-28; 35:10.
 - d. The Christian life is a life of struggling with God to be transformed by God into a prince of God—Rom. 12:2; 5:17.
 - e. God's purpose in selecting, predestinating, and calling us is to transform pitiful sinners into royal sons so that, after the process of transformation has been completed, we may reign as kings—Rev. 22:5.
- B. Because of the fall, we became distorted clay; God's way is not to reform distorted ones but to transform them into stones for the building up of God's house, Bethel—Gen. 2:7; John 1:42; 1 Pet. 2:4-5.
- C. To be transformed is to have the pneumatic Christ, Christ in resurrection as the life-giving Spirit, dispensed and wrought into our soul to replace what we are in the natural life so that Christ may increase and our natural life may decrease—1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17-18; Eph. 3:17a.
- D. Transformation is not outward correction or adjustment but the metabolic function of the life of God in us, by the addition of the element of the divine life of Christ into our being, so that we may express the image of Christ outwardly—2 Cor. 3:18:
- 1. The process of transformation is both organic and metabolic; it is organic because it is related to life, and it is metabolic because it is related to a process in which old elements are discharged and new elements are added—Rom. 5:10.
 - 2. The metabolic change that takes place during transformation is a change both in inward constitution and outward form—12:2; 8:29.
 - 3. Transformation is for the mass reproduction of the firstborn Son of God as the prototype of a God-man so that we may be shaped into His image to be exactly the same as the firstborn Son of God—v. 29.

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- E. Whether we are overcomers or defeated ones depends upon the transformation of our soul and upon our attitude toward the Lord's transforming work—12:2:
 - 1. God's transforming work is actually His exercising of His kingdom; to obey God is to cooperate with His transforming work—2 Cor. 3:18; 10:5-6.
 - 2. If we let the Triune God as the life-giving Spirit transform us day by day, we will be overcomers—Rom. 12:2; 8:28-29, 37.
- F. Transformation issues in building up; the building up of the jasper wall of the New Jerusalem goes along with transformation—12:2; Rev. 21:18a:
 - 1. The Spirit's transforming work is with His bountiful supply of the divine element for the building up of Bethel, God's dwelling place—Phil. 1:19.
 - 2. Consummately, the transforming work of the Spirit issues in the New Jerusalem, which bears the image of God for His expression:
 - a. God appears like a jasper stone, and the New Jerusalem, having the glory of God, shines like a jasper stone—Rev. 4:3; 21:11.
 - b. The first layer of the wall's foundation, as well as the entire wall of the New Jerusalem, is built with jasper, indicating that the main material in the building of the city is jasper—vv. 18-19.
 - c. Since jasper signifies God expressed in His communicable glory, the main function of the New Jerusalem is to express God in bearing His glory—4:3; 21:11.
- G. The book of Genesis is a miniature of the complete revelation of the entire Bible:
 - 1. At the end of Genesis we see a man called Israel, a transformed person who is clear, transparent, and full of life; this transformed person is a seed, a miniature, of the New Jerusalem—35:10.
 - 2. At the end of Revelation we see the New Jerusalem, a transparent city filled with the life of God, having the glory of God, and whose light is like "a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal"—21:11, 3; 22:1-2.