

## Message 1

### Seeing the Prophecies of the Lord's Coming in the Light of God's Economy

Scripture Reading: Psalm 2:1-12; 24:1-10; Dan. 9:24-27

- I. **We need to see the divine revelation of Christ in God's economy in Psalm 2; Psalm 2 exalts Christ as the center of the economy of God; although the word *economy* is not in Psalm 2, the revelation and reality of God's economy are there—vv. 2, 6-9, 12:**
  - A. Christ was anointed in His divinity in eternity by God to be the Messiah—Christ—the Anointed One—v. 2; Dan. 9:26; John 1:41.
  - B. After being cut off, crucified (Dan. 9:26), Christ was resurrected to be begotten as the firstborn Son of God (Psa. 2:7; Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5-6); in His resurrection He became the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45) for the purpose of being God's Anointed.
  - C. In His ascension, He was made both Lord and Christ, becoming God's Anointed in an official way to carry out God's commission, and was installed, enthroned, as God's King in the heavens for God's kingdom to fulfill His economy—Acts 2:36; 5:31; Rev. 1:5a:
    1. This kingdom includes all the nations as Christ's inheritance and the limits of the earth as Christ's possession—Psa. 2:8; Matt. 28:18-20.
    2. Eventually, in His universal kingdom Christ will rule the nations with an iron rod—Psa. 2:9; Rev. 19:15.
  - D. Psalm 2:10-12 are a warning concerning the coming wrath of God and Christ upon the world; in the New Testament the period in which Christ will come to execute His judgment in His wrath upon the world is called "the day of the Lord" (Acts 2:20; 1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Thes. 5:2; 2 Thes. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:10), which is also the day of God (2 Pet. 3:12).
  - E. Since God and His Christ will be in wrath to the world, man must repent (Psa. 2:11; Acts 17:30); this is the New Testament gospel:
    1. To take refuge in the Son is to believe into the Son, Christ (John 3:16, 36), taking Him as our refuge, protection, and hiding place.
    2. To kiss the Son is to love the Son and thereby to enjoy Him (John 14:21, 23); to believe in the Lord is to receive Him (John 1:12); to love the Lord is to enjoy the Lord whom we have received; these are the two requirements for us to participate in the Lord.
- II. **Psalm 24 reveals Christ as the King who will regain the entire earth through the church, His Body—vv. 1-10:**
  - A. At His second coming Christ will take possession of the earth (Rev. 10:1-2), which has been given to Him as His possession (2:8), and will establish God's kingdom on the whole earth (Dan. 2:34-35; Rev. 11:15), thus recovering God's right over the earth, which has been usurped by His enemy, Satan.
  - B. The mountain mentioned in this Psalm implies the city, which signifies the kingdom of God—Psa. 24:3; cf. 30:7 and note:
    1. Although the Lord has the right, the title, to the earth (v. 1), today the earth is usurped by His enemy.
    2. Yet on this usurped earth there is the mountain of Jehovah, Mount Zion (2:6), which is absolutely open to the Lord and absolutely possessed by Him (vv. 1, 3, 7-10).
    3. The overcomers, who are typified by Zion, are the beachhead through which the Lord will return to possess the whole earth—Psa. 48:2 and note; Dan. 2:34-35.

- C. Verses 7-10 of Psalm 24 unveil the victorious Christ as the coming King in God's eternal kingdom:
1. Verse 7 says, "Lift up your heads, O gates; / And be lifted up, O long enduring doors; / And the King of glory will come in"; the gates are of the cities of the nations; the doors are of the houses of the people.
  2. Christ is the desire of all the nations (Hag. 2:7); all the nations, in a general way, are expecting Christ to come, but Christ will not come quickly according to our human concept (2 Pet. 3:8-9); thus, we need to lift up our heads and await and expect His coming with long endurance.
  3. The King of glory is Jehovah of hosts, the consummated Triune God embodied in the victorious and coming Christ—Psa. 24:7-10; Luke 21:27; Matt. 25:31:
    - a. Jehovah is Jesus (Matt. 1:21 and note), and Jesus is the incarnated, crucified, and resurrected Triune God, who is strong in fighting and is victorious (Rev. 5:5).
    - b. He is the One who will come back in His resurrection with His overcomers to possess the entire earth as His kingdom—Dan. 2:34-35; 7:13-14; Joel 3:11; Rev. 11:15; 19:13-14.

**III. The prophecy of the seventy weeks in Daniel 9:24-27 shows that the day of the Lord's coming is very near; the seventy weeks are divided into three parts, each week being seven years in length—cf. 2 Pet. 1:19:**

- A. First, seven weeks (forty-nine years) were apportioned from the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem (Neh. 2:1-8) to the completion of the rebuilding.
- B. Second, sixty-two weeks (434 years) were apportioned from the completion of the rebuilding of Jerusalem to the cutting off (crucifixion) of the Messiah—Dan. 9:26.
- C. Third, the last week of seven years will be for Antichrist to make a firm covenant with the people of Israel (v. 27); in the middle of that week he will break the covenant, terminate Israel's sacrifices and oblations to God, and persecute those who fear God (v. 27; Rev. 13); this will be the beginning of the great tribulation, which will last for three and a half years:
  1. When there is news that such a strong man signs a treaty of seven years with Israel, we have to prepare ourselves to be raptured—Matt. 24:32-44.
  2. At the beginning of the great tribulation, Antichrist's image will be set up in the temple as an idol, and he will sit in the temple of God, exalting himself above every object of worship; this means that the temple must be rebuilt before the great tribulation begins—vv. 15, 21; Rev. 13:14-15; 2 Thes. 2:3-4; Dan. 11:36-37.
- D. There is a gap of unknown duration between the first sixty-nine weeks and the last week of the seventy weeks; this gap is the age of mystery, the age of grace, the age of the church—Eph. 3:3-11; 5:32; Col. 1:27:
  1. During this age Christ is secretly and mysteriously building up the church in the new creation to be His Body and His bride—Eph. 5:25-32.
  2. At the end of the last week of the seventy weeks, Christ with His overcomers, His bridal army, will come as the smiting stone to crush the totality of human government and become a great mountain, the kingdom of God, that fills the whole earth—Dan. 2:34-35; 2 Thes. 2:8; Rev. 19:19-20.

## Message 2

### The Coming of Christ Being His Complete Presence with the Believers

Scripture Reading: Matt. 24:3, 40-44; Rev. 3:3; 10:1; 16:15; Matt. 24:27; 2 Thes. 2:8; Zech. 14:4; Rev. 14:1; John 15:4; Gen. 5:21-24; 1 John 2:28

#### I. We need to see the divine revelation in the Bible concerning the promised parousia (presence, coming) of Christ:

- A. The promised coming of Christ is His complete presence with His believers—Matt. 24:3, 27, 37, 39:
  1. *Parousia* is the Greek word for *coming* and means “presence”; this word was used for the coming (presence) of a dignified person.
  2. Before the Lord Jesus ascended, He promised that He would come again; Christ second coming will be His complete presence with His believers:
    - a. Even today we enjoy the Lord’s presence, but not His complete presence—*Hymn, #958*.
    - b. Today we cannot see the Lord physically (1 Pet. 1:8); but one day we will see Him physically in resurrection and His presence with us will be visible.
- B. Christ’s second coming, His parousia, begins with the rapture of the man-child and the firstfruits to the heavens (Rev. 12:5; 14:1-4) and ends with His appearing on the earth with His saints (Matt. 24:27; 2 Thes. 2:8):
  1. The Lord’s parousia will probably last about three and a half years, which will be the time of the great tribulation—Dan. 9:24-27; 12:7; Matt. 24:21; Rev. 11:2-3; 12:14.
  2. The Lord’s parousia begins from the rapture of the overcomers—the dead overcoming saints typified by the man-child (12:5) and the living overcomers, the firstfruits (14:1-4)—before the three and a half years of the great tribulation.
  3. This parousia of the Lord will end with Christ’s appearing on the earth, which will be seen by all men—2 Thes. 2:8; Matt. 24:27; Rev. 1:7; Zech. 12:10-14; 14:4; Acts 1:11-12.
- C. Christ’s parousia, His coming, will have a secret aspect in the heavens—Matt. 24:40-44; Rev. 3:3; 10:1; 16:15:
  1. The Lord’s parousia, His presence, will travel from the throne of God in the third heaven to the air—Rev. 10:1.
  2. On the way of His parousia, Christ will do three things: rapture the majority of the saints (1 Thes. 4:16-17; Rev. 14:14-16), judge all the saints at His judgment seat (2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 4:5; Matt. 25:19; Luke 19:15; Rom. 14:10, 12), and marry His overcomers (19:7-9).
- D. Christ’s parousia, His coming, will have an open aspect to the earth—Matt. 24:27; 2 Thes. 2:8; Zech. 14:4:
  1. The open aspect of Christ’s coming will be at Jerusalem (12:10-11; Rev. 1:7); Christ, together with His newly married overcomers, will come to defeat and destroy Antichrist and his followers (19:11-21; 17:14; 14:17-20); His coming will be to save the whole house of Israel (Rom. 11:26-27; Zech. 12:10-14).
  2. The Lord’s coming will be to judge the nations, to prepare the “sheep” to be the people on the earth in the millennium—Matt. 25:31-46.
  3. In the open aspect of Christ’s coming, He will cause Satan to be bound and cast into the abyss—Rev. 20:1-3.
  4. Christ’s coming will bring His kingdom to the earth and establish it as the kingdom of a thousand years—Dan. 7:13-14; Luke 19:12; Rev. 11:15; 20:4, 6.

#### II. The meaning of rapture is to be taken into the Lord’s presence; if we would be taken into His presence, we must be in His presence today—14:1:

- A. When we abide in Christ, Christ abides in us, and His abiding is His presence with us—John 15:4:
  - 1. The Lord said, “Abide in Me and I in you” (John 15:4); thus, abiding in Him is a condition of His abiding in us.
  - 2. The Lord’s abiding in us brings His presence to us, so we live with Him—v. 4.
  - 3. To live in the Lord puts us into the position of the enjoyment of the Lord; to live with Him is the enjoyment itself.
- B. Enoch was raptured on the basis of his walk with God for a period of many years; he offers us an excellent example—Gen. 5:21-24:
  - 1. The characteristic of Enoch’s life was that he walked with God—vv. 22, 24:
    - a. To walk with God is to not override God, to not be presumptuous, to not do things according to our own concept and desire, to not do things according to the current of the age, and to not do anything without God—cf. Psa. 19:12-13; Josh. 9:14b; Luke 24:15-17.
    - b. To walk with God is to take Him as our center and everything, to live and do things according to God and with God, according to His revelation, and leading, and to do everything with Him—Rom. 8:4, 13-14; Gal. 2:2a; 2 Cor. 5:14-15.
    - c. To walk with God is to walk by faith—v. 7; Heb. 11:5-6, 1-2; 2 Cor. 4:13, 18.
  - 2. Enoch continually walked upward with God day and night for three centuries, becoming closer to God and more one with God each day until “he was not, for God took him”—Gen. 5:24; cf. S. S. 8:5a.
  - 3. The fact that Enoch walked with God proves that he loved God and loved to be in the presence of God:
    - a. Rapture requires that we love the Lord and live in His presence.
    - b. This loving attitude is the preparation, condition, and basis of being raptured.

**III. “Abide in Him, so that if He is manifested, we may have boldness and not be put to shame from Him at His coming [Gk. *parousia*]”—1 John 2:28:**

- A. If we abide in Christ and bear much fruit by His life to glorify God, when He is manifested, we will boldly meet Him and not be put to shame from His glorious presence—cf. Matt. 25:30.
- B. If we do not abide in the Lord according to the teaching of the anointing (1 John 2:27), we will “be put to shame from Him at His coming” (v. 28):
  - 1. Literally, the Greek words translated “at His coming” mean “in His presence”; the Greek word for “presence” is *parousia*, which includes the meaning of coming.
  - 2. The Lord Jesus will come, but will we be worthy to be in His presence? If we live in a worldly way, loving the world and not giving the Lord the first place, how can we be brought into His presence when He comes?
  - 3. At His appearing, the Lord will deal with His believers; to be put to shame away from the Lord must mean to be put to the place of shame outside His presence—v. 28:
    - a. A believer who is put to shame away from Him is not lost; he is still a saved person, but he must suffer being put to shame, which will be a dealing and a discipline for him.
    - b. This is like Lot’s wife, who was saved from destruction, but became a pillar of salt (Gen. 19:15-17, 26; Luke 17:32), a sign of shame; although we are saved, we may become ashamed at the Lord’s coming back.

**IV. We need to pray, “Lord Jesus, make me one who lives in Your presence and walks with You. Save me from any kind of entanglement in the affairs of this life. I want to live a simple life so that I may spend all my time, attention, and being on You”; if we are those who live in the Lord’s presence, His coming as a thief will not be a surprise to us; the only difference will be a change in location: one day we will be on the earth in His presence, and when He takes us away, we will be in the third heaven in His presence.**

## Message 3

### The Signs of the Lord's Coming

Scripture Reading: Matt. 24:3, 7-8; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; James 5:3; Luke 17:26-28; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 4:3-4; 2 Pet. 3:3-4; Luke 18:8; Matt. 24:14, 32-33; 1 Thes. 5:3; 2 Thes. 2:3, 7; Matt. 24:15; Luke 21:25-26

- I. **“What will be the sign of Your coming?”—Matt. 24:3:**
  - A. There are signs related to the Lord's second coming, which remind us to be watchful and ready while we wait for the Lord to return.
  - B. When we see these signs, the Lord's second coming will be near.
- II. **“Nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these things are the beginning of birth pangs”—Matt. 24:7-8:**
  - A. Nation fighting against nation denotes civil war, and kingdom fighting against kingdom denotes international war; these two types of fighting will occur frequently in the last days; history also shows that famine follows war.
  - B. Moreover, when the Lord spoke this word concerning earthquakes, there were very few earthquakes, but now earthquakes occur very frequently; the appearance of these disasters on the earth are signs that the Lord's second coming is drawing near.
- III. **“In the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boasters, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, savage, not lovers of good, traitors, reckless, blinded with pride, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having an outward form of godliness, though denying its power”—2 Tim. 3:1-5:**
  - A. In this verse “the last days” denotes the present age (2 Pet. 3:3; Jude 18), which began with Christ's first coming (1 Pet. 1:20) and will last until His second appearing.
  - B. The prophetic picture presented in these verses portrays not the evil condition of the non-Christian society but the corrupted situation of Christianity in decline (2 Tim. 2:20; 3:5).
  - C. In 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus seven kinds of lovers are mentioned—vv. 2-4; 1 Tim. 6:10; Titus 1:8; 2:4:
    1. Whatever one loves, his whole heart, even his entire being, is set on and occupied and possessed by; this is crucial!
    2. Whether there would be a day of glory in the church's victory or grievous days of the church's decline depends altogether on what kind of lovers we are—cf. Rev. 2:4.
    3. To maintain the victorious standard of the church, we must be lovers of God and lovers of the good that pertains to God's economy.
- IV. **“Even as it happened in the days of Noah, so will it be also in the days of the Son of Man: they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage”—Luke 17:26-28:**
  - A. The situation before the Lord's coming will be like that in the days of Noah, who lived in a crooked and perverse age; at that time the godless culture of fallen man produced an evil, crooked, and perverse generation, and the evil power of darkness corrupted the earth and filled it with violence—Gen. 6:1-22.
  - B. The Lord Jesus likened our age to the days of Noah—Matt. 24:37-39; Luke 17:26-27:
    1. The conditions of evil living that stupefied the generation of Noah before the flood portray the perilous condition of man's living before the great tribulation and the Lord's Parousia—Matt. 24:21, 3, 27, 37, 39.

2. If we would participate in the overcomers' rapture to enjoy the Lord's Parousia and escape the great tribulation, we must overcome the stupefying effect of man's living today—Luke 21:34-36.

**V. "This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come"—Matt. 24:14:**

- A. The most important sign of the consummation of the age is the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom to all the inhabited earth.
- B. The gospel of the kingdom, including the gospel of grace (Acts 20:24), not only brings people into God's salvation, but also into the kingdom of the heavens (Rev. 1:9):
  1. The emphasis of the gospel of grace is on forgiveness of sin, God's redemption, and eternal life; whereas the emphasis of the gospel of the kingdom is on the heavenly ruling of God and the authority of the Lord; this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole earth for a testimony to all the nations before the end of this age comes—Matt. 24:14.
  2. The gospel of grace has been preached in every continent, but not the gospel of the kingdom; the gospel of grace is the lower gospel, but the gospel of the kingdom is the highest gospel; this higher gospel will be brought to every continent through the churches in the Lord's recovery.

**VI. "Learn the parable from the fig tree: As soon as its branch has become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that the summer is near"—Matt. 24:32-33:**

- A. The fig tree represents the nation of Israel; in Matthew 21:18-20 the fig tree was cursed by the Lord and withered because it did not produce fruit for Him; the Jews lost their nation and were scattered.
- B. The Lord's word concerning the fig tree becoming tender and putting forth its leaves refers to the Jews recovering their nation; this is another sign of the Lord's second coming.

**VII. "It will not come unless the apostasy comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of perdition...It is the mystery of lawlessness that is now operating"—2 Thes. 2:3, 7:**

- A. Before the day of the Lord's second coming, the apostasy will come, and the man of lawlessness, Antichrist, will be revealed.
- B. Although Antichrist has not yet been revealed, the mystery of lawlessness is already operating on the earth, so the earth is filled with apostasy; this tells us that the day of the Lord's second coming is not far off.

**VIII. The Lord spoke of some outward signs that can be seen, but He also said that no one knows the hour or day of His return—Matt. 24:36:**

- A. The outward signs are mainly related to the restoration of the nation of Israel, the return of Jerusalem to Israel, and the rebuilding of the temple; two of these three signs has occurred, and after the third occurs, there will be a period of secrecy until some of the saints are stolen away.
- B. It is a great blessing from the Lord that our eyes have seen the fulfillment of two of the three great signs of the Lord's coming; however, we need to realize that we have a great responsibility before us; we need to pray, "Lord, keep us watchful, on the alert, and prayerful. Lord, we take You as our life and person. We want to live in Your Spirit and walk in Your presence all the time so that we may be taken into Your presence in the third heaven at Your coming."

## Message 4

### The Believers' Proper Attitude Toward the Coming of Christ

Scripture Reading: 2 Tim. 4:8; Phil. 3:20; 1 Thes. 1:10; Rev. 22:20; 2 Pet. 1:19; Matt. 24:32-33, 42-44; 25:13; Luke 21:34-36; Rev. 3:10; Matt. 25:4, 10; 24:45-51; 25:19-30; 1 Cor. 3:10-17; Rev. 16:15

- I. **We should love the Lord's appearing—2 Tim. 4:8:**
  - A. The teaching of the New Testament shows us that the apostles' living was in preparation for the Lord's return—2 Cor. 5:9-10:
    1. This is like a family preparing to welcome long-separated relatives who are soon to return; it is also like a young woman waiting to be married, who is waiting wholeheartedly for that day to arrive—*Hymns*, #958, #1314.
    2. Paul was one who had such an attitude; the life he lived was a life of waiting for the Lord's return—1 Thes. 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:15-17; 5:23.
  - B. The Lord's appearing, His coming back, is a warning, an encouragement, and an incentive to us; we should love it and look forward to it with earnest expectation and joy—2 Tim. 4:1, 8, and footnote 8<sup>5</sup>.
- II. **We should earnestly await the Lord's return—Phil. 3:20; 1 Thes. 1:10; 1 Cor. 7:29-31; Hymns, #710:**
  - A. Since we love the Lord's appearing, we should earnestly wait for His coming; hence, our future is with Him—Phil. 3:20; 1 Thes. 1:10.
  - B. In 1 Corinthians 7 Paul says, "This I say, brothers, the time is shortened. Henceforth both those who have wives should be as though they had none, and those who weep as though they did not weep, and those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, and those who buy as though they did not possess, and those who use the world as though they did not abuse it; for the fashion of this world is passing away" (vv. 29-31).
- III. **We should call for the Lord's return—S. S. 8:14; Rev. 22:20; Hymns, #959:**
  - A. We may express our desire for the Lord's return in the way of a prayer to Him, calling, Come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev. 22:20).
  - B. We should always call for His coming; this becomes our response to His return.
- IV. **We should give heed to the prophetic word until the day dawns and the morning star rises in our hearts—2 Pet. 1:19:**
  - A. The prophetic words in the Scriptures are like a lamp to the believers, transmitting spiritual light to shine in our darkness, leading us through the dark night to the day of the Lord's appearing, that is, the time of the dawning of the day.
  - B. Before the Lord as the shining of the sun appears, we need the light of His word to enlighten our footsteps.
- V. **We need to be watchful and be ready—Matt. 24:42-43; 25:13:**
  - A. We all know that the Lord will come; therefore, we should watch and be ready; if we are ready, we will be taken, but if we are not ready, we will be left behind—24:36-44.
  - B. Watching and being ready are the way for a Christian to mature in life; a person who is ready must certainly be mature—25:1-13.
- VI. **We should take heed to ourselves lest our hearts be weighed down with debauchery and drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and we need to be watchful at every time,**

**beseeking that we would prevail to escape the great tribulation and stand before the Son of Man—Luke 21:34-36:**

- A. We need to be on guard that our hearts would not be weighed down with debauchery, drunkenness, and the anxieties of life; if our heart is full of anxieties, then it has no room for God and Christ.
- B. In order for us to escape the coming tribulation, we need to be not only watchful but also beseeking; our strength and power to escape all these things come from being watchful and beseeking.
- C. For this we need to be revived every morning and overcoming every day so that we can be raptured before the great tribulation to Mount Zion in heaven to stand before our Savior—cf. Rev. 12:5-6, 14.

**VII. We need to keep the word of the Lord's endurance so that we may be kept out of the hour of trial—Rev. 3:10:**

- A. The word of the Lord's endurance is the word of the Lord's suffering:
  - 1. The Lord today is still bearing rejection and persecution by His endurance; we are the joint partakers not only of His kingdom but also of His endurance; hence, His word to us today is the word of endurance —1:9.
  - 2. To keep the word of His endurance, we must bear His rejection and persecution.
- B. If we keep the word of the Lord's endurance, we will be preserved and kept from the great tribulation, which will come upon the whole inhabited earth—3:10.

**VIII. We need to be a prudent virgin—Matt. 25:1-10:**

- A. Matthew 25 shows us how the prudent virgins watchfully await the bridegroom's return; they carry their lamps with oil in their vessels to go forth to meet the bridegroom; thus, when the bridegroom comes, they can go in with him to the wedding feast—vv. 1-10.
- B. We, the believers, are like chaste virgins (2 Cor. 11:2); in this dark age we are testifying for the Lord, and we are going out of the world to meet the Lord.
- C. For this we need not only the indwelling Spirit of God but also the filling and the saturation of our soul, that is, of our entire being, by the Spirit of God, lest we be shut outside the door of the wedding feast—Rom. 8:6-11; 2 Cor. 3:18; Matt. 25:6-13.

**IX. We need to be a faithful and prudent slave—vv. 14-30:**

- A. On the one hand, we need to be the Lord's prudent virgins; on the other hand, we need to be the Lord's faithful and prudent slaves; virgins signify the aspect of life, and slaves signify the aspect of service.
- B. Matthew 24 and 25 tell us of the way to be a faithful and prudent slave: to take care of the Lord's church by distributing food to the believers at the proper time and to do our best to function according to the gift we have received, lest we lose our reward and receive punishment instead—24:45-51; 25:14-30.

**X. We need to be careful how we build the church upon the foundation laid by the apostles—1 Cor. 3:10-17:**

- A. In building the church, we should not use the materials of our natural man, which are wood, grass, and stubble—v. 12.
- B. Instead, we should build upon Christ as the unique foundation with all the attributes and virtues of the Triune God, which are gold, silver, and precious stones, lest our building be consumed and we ourselves suffer loss so as through fire—vv. 12-15.



## Message 5

### The Hope of the Lord's Coming

Scripture Reading: Col. 1:27; 3:4; Rom. 8:18, 21, 23; Eph. 1:13-14; Phil. 3:21; 2 Thes. 1:10; Heb. 2:10; 1 John 3:10; 1 Thes. 1:3, 10; 2:19-20; 3:13; 5:1-11, 23

- I. When the Lord returns, He will be glorified in us, we will be manifested with Him in glory, and we will be like Him—Col. 1:27; 3:4; 2 Thes. 1:10; 1 John 3:2; *Hymns, #948*:**
- A. Glorification is the final step of God's organic salvation in Christ, which brings the conformed believers into God's glory—Rom. 8:18, 21; Heb. 2:20; 1 Pet. 5:10:
1. God glorifies us that we may arrive at the consummation of the possession of His divine image:
    - a. In regeneration God seals us with His Spirit (Eph. 1:13); this sealing Spirit, who is the Triune God Himself entering into us, causes us to bear God's image, signified by the seal, thus making us like God.
    - b. This sealing of the sealing Spirit is like inking, saturating us from within with the glorious life element of God throughout our life, resulting in the redemption of our body (4:30; Rom. 8:23) so that our entire being bears the image of God.
    - c. At the time of our rapture when we are matured in the divine life, we will be brought into God's glory outwardly for our glorification—v. 30; Heb. 2:10.
    - d. Hence, we will be glorified from within through the lifelong saturation with the glory of God and from without through our being brought into God's glory; by such glorification we will arrive at the consummation of the possession of God's divine image.
  2. God glorifies us that we may arrive at the consummation of the experience of organic salvation:
    - a. In God's organic salvation His glorifying work begins with His regenerating us with His life of glory.
    - b. After regenerating us, God continues, step by step, with His work of renewing, sanctification, transformation, and conformation to transfuse us with Himself as glory, until the glory of His life saturates our being and is manifested in our body; thus, His work of glorification in us reaches its consummation.
    - c. Our glorification is the top portion of our divine sonship in God's organic salvation—Gal. 4:5; Rom. 8:23.
    - d. The consummation of God's organic salvation is the New Jerusalem—the universal incorporation of the union and mingling of divinity with humanity—the processed and consummated Triune God incorporated with His regenerated, renewed, sanctified, transformed, conformed, and glorified tripartite elect—Rev. 21:2, 9-10a.
- B. At His coming back, on the one hand, the Lord will come from the heavens with glory (Rev. 10:1; Matt. 25:31), and on the other hand, He will be glorified in the saints (2 Thes. 1:10):
1. For the Lord to be glorified in His saints means that His glory will be manifested from within His members; He will be marveled at, admired, wondered at, in us, His believers, by the unbelievers—v. 10.
  2. The coming of the Lord is both from the heavens to the earth and also from within us; for Christ to come from within us is for Him to be glorified in us.
- C. "We who are in this tabernacle groan, being burdened, in that we do not desire to be unclothed, but clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. Now He

who has wrought us for this very thing is God, who has given to us the Spirit as a pledge—2 Cor. 5:4-5:

1. Paul knew that his spirit had been regenerated and that his soul had been transformed, but he also realized that his body had not yet been transfigured; therefore, he was longing and waiting for the redemption of his body.
2. The Greek word translated wrought in verse 5 means fashioned, shaped, prepared, made fit; God has wrought us, fashioned, shaped, prepared us, made us fit, for the purpose that our mortal body may be swallowed up by His resurrection life.
3. God intends to clothe us with a body of resurrection; but if we would be clothed with a transfigured body, we need certain qualifications:
  - a. God is not shaping a body—He is shaping us, preparing us, to fit into a resurrected body—v. 5.
  - b. God shapes us by forgiving our sins, putting the divine life within us to regenerate our spirit, and then transforming our soul—Acts 2:38; Rom. 8:6; 2 Cor. 3:18.
  - c. We have been shaped to some degree; however, we have not been absolutely shaped by Him; therefore, we need further shaping.

## **II. In 1 and 2 Thessalonians Christ in His coming is revealed as the hope of the church—1 Thes. 1:3, 10; 2:19-20; 3:13; 5:1-11, 23:**

- A. Christ is the Husband of the church; without Christ's visible presence, the church is like a widow, a woman who is without her husband; hence, our unique hope is the coming back of our Husband to the earth—1 Thes. 1:3; S. S. 8:14; cf. Eph. 5:25-27:
  1. The hope of Christ's coming is the cause of our endurance—1 Thes. 1:3.
  2. Christ in His coming is also our expectation, the One who delivers us from the wrath which is coming—v. 10; Rom. 2:5-9.
  3. The coming of Christ is our incentive to work for Him by fostering the believers unto maturity so that they may be our hope, joy, crown, and glory at His coming—1 Thes. 2:19-20.
  4. The coming of Christ is also the cause of our blamelessness in holiness before our God and Father—3:13.
  5. The coming Christ is the cause of our watchfulness—5:1-11.
  6. The coming of Christ is the cause of the complete sanctification in our spirit, soul, and body—5:23.
- B. As Christians, we must live a life that declares to others that our hope is not on this earth or in this age; instead, our hope is in the coming Lord, and our future is in Him—1:10:
  1. Our future, our destiny, and our destination are altogether focused on the Lord who is coming; we are going to the Lord, and our destiny is to meet Him.
  2. Our hope today should not be on any person, matter, or thing upon the earth; our only hope should be on our coming Lord.
  3. When our hope is placed on Him, we will be those waiting for the Lord's coming; that is how to be a proper, overcoming believer.