

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
NOAH, DANIEL, AND JOB—PATTERNS OF LIVING AN OVERCOMING LIFE
ON THE LINE OF LIFE TO FULFILL THE ECONOMY OF GOD**

Message One

Living and Working according to the Vision of the Age to Change the Age

Scripture Reading: Ezek. 14:14, 20; Gen. 6:8; Matt. 24:37-39; Dan. 2:34-35; Job 42:5-6

- I. Noah, Daniel, and Job are patterns revealing how we can live an overcoming life on the line of life to fulfill the economy of God; this is to live and work according to the vision of the age to change the age—Ezek. 14:14, 20; Gen. 2:9; Rev. 2:7; 22:1-2; Matt. 24:37-39, 45-51; Dan. 2:34-35; Acts 26:19; 2 Tim. 4:8.**
- II. The lives of Noah, Daniel, and Job reveal the Triune God dispensing Himself into His chosen people to fulfill His economy:**
 - A. With Noah we see God the Father in His desire and plan for His building and in His eternal faithfulness in keeping His covenant, His word—Gen. 9:12-17; 1 Cor. 1:9; 1 John 1:9; Rev. 4:3; 21:19-20.
 - B. With Daniel we see Christ the Son as the centrality and universality of God’s move and His second coming as the Son of Man—Dan. 7:13-14; 10:4-9.
 - C. With Job we see God the Spirit in His transforming work to carry out what is hidden in God’s heart that we might gain God to become God in life, in nature, and in appearance but not in the Godhead for the corporate expression of God—Job 10:13; 42:5-6; Eph. 3:9; 2 Cor. 3:18.
- III. “But Noah found grace in the sight of Jehovah”—Gen. 6:8:**
 - A. Noah’s life and work reveal how much grace can do for fallen people; grace is the wonderful Christ as our burden-bearer, doing everything in us on our behalf for our enjoyment—vv. 1-14; Matt. 24:37-39; 2 Cor. 12:7-9:
 1. The flesh is the presence of the devil, and grace is the presence of God; in order for us to face the presence of Satan, we need the presence of God—Gen. 6:3, 8; Rom. 7:17-21; Heb. 4:16; 1 Cor. 15:10.
 2. The issue of grace is righteousness; by the power of grace, the strength of grace, and the life of grace, we can be right with God, with one another, and even with ourselves—Rom. 5:17, 21; 2 Pet. 2:5.
 - B. Noah walked with God and built the ark for the carrying out of the divine economy—Gen. 6:8-22; Heb. 11:7; 1 Pet. 3:20-21; Matt. 16:18:
 1. The first building of God in the Scriptures is Noah’s ark, signifying Christ as the building of God and man; God’s building is a God-man—John 1:14; 2:19; 1 Cor. 3:9, 16-17; Rev. 21:2, 22; Eph. 2:22; Psa. 27:4.
 2. The building of the ark typifies the building of the corporate Christ, the church as the Body of Christ, with the element of Christ’s riches as the building material—Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 3:9-12a; Eph. 3:8-10; 4:12.
 3. The three stories of the ark signify the Triune God according to our experience of Him; the Spirit, signified by the lower story, brings us to the Son (1 Pet. 1:2; John 16:8, 13-15), and the Son brings us higher in our experience to the Father (14:6; Eph. 2:18; 1 John 1:5; 4:8).

4. On the third story of the ark there was only one window, toward the heavens, signifying that in the church, God's building, there is only one revelation and one vision through the one New Testament ministry—Gen. 6:16; Acts 26:19; Prov. 29:18a; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; 2 Cor. 3:6-9; 4:1.

IV. “But Daniel set his heart not to defile himself with the king’s choice provision”—Dan. 1:8:

- A. All those who are used by God to turn the age are today's Nazarites, those who offer themselves willingly to the Lord in the splendor of their consecration—Num. 6:1-8; Psa. 110:3; cf. Judg. 7:13-18.
- B. Daniel shows us the characteristics of men who turn the age:
 1. Daniel was separated from an age that followed Satan—Dan. 1:8; 4:26; 5:23; Phil. 3:13-14; Rev. 2:13.
 2. Daniel was joined to God's desire through God's Word—Dan. 9:2-4; 2 Tim. 3:14-17; 1:13-15; cf. Neh. 8:8, 13; Deut. 17:18-20.
 3. Daniel cooperated with God through his prayer—Dan. 6:10; 9:17; 10:1-21.
 4. Daniel was a self-sacrificing person with a spirit of martyrdom—1:8; 6:10.

V. “Then Jehovah answered Job” (Job 38:1a); “then Job answered Jehovah” (42:1a); “and Jehovah turned the captivity of Job” (v. 10a):

- A. The logic of Job's friends was according to the line of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in their thinking that Job's sufferings were a matter of God's judgment; however, Job's sufferings were God's consuming that God might gain Job so that he might gain God more—9:15; 11:12; 13:4; Phil. 3:8, 12-13:
 1. God's intention with Job was to tear down the natural Job in his perfection and uprightness that He might build up a renewed Job in God's nature and attributes—Job 1:1; Titus 3:5.
 2. God's intention was to usher Job into a deeper seeking after God that Job might realize that what he was short of in his human life was God Himself and that he might pursue God, gain God, and express God—Col. 2:19.
 3. God's intention was to have a Job in the line of the tree of life and to make Job a man of God—Gen. 2:9; 1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 3:17; Eph. 3:14-21.
- B. Job reveals that the Bible of sixty-six books is for only one thing: for God in Christ by the Spirit to dispense Himself into us to be our life, our nature, and our everything that we may live Christ and express Christ; this should be the principle that governs our life—Job 10:13; Eph. 3:9; Phil. 3:8-9; Eph. 1:22-23; 2:15; Rev. 21:2.
- C. The way to live and work in this principle is to be and do everything by the Spirit, with the Spirit, in the Spirit, and through the Spirit by exercising our spirit—Gal. 5:25; Rom. 8:4; Phil. 3:3; Rev. 2:7; 22:17a.

Message Two

Noah—the Life and Work That Can Change the Age

Scripture Reading: Gen. 6:5-22; 7:13, 16; Heb. 11:7

I. Noah's life was a life that changed the age—Phil. 1:19-21a:

- A. God showed Noah the true situation of the corrupt age in which he lived—Gen. 6:3, 5, 11, 13; Matt. 24:37-39; 2 Tim. 3:1-3.
- B. “*But Noah* found favor [grace] in the sight of Jehovah”—Gen. 6:8:
 1. When Satan has done his best to damage the situation, there have always been some who found grace in the eyes of God to become ones who turned the age—cf. Dan. 1:8; 9:23; 10:11, 19.
 2. The main purpose of the record of Genesis is not to show the fall, but to show how much God's grace can do for fallen people; grace is God Himself, the presence of God, enjoyed by us to be everything to us and to do everything in us, through us, and for us; grace is God coming to us to be our life supply, our strength, and our everything—John 1:14, 16-17; Rev. 22:21:
 - a. The enjoyment of the Lord as grace is with those who love Him—Eph. 6:24; John 21:15-17.
 - b. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ as the bountiful supply of the Triune God is enjoyed by us through the exercise of our human spirit—Heb. 10:29b; Gal. 6:18; Phil. 4:23; Philem. 25; 2 Tim. 4:22.
 - c. God's word is the word of grace—Acts 20:32; Col. 3:16; cf. Jer. 15:16.
 - d. We experience the processed Triune God as the grace of life in meeting with the saints on the ground of oneness—Psa. 133:3; 1 Pet. 3:7; Acts 4:33; 11:23.
 - e. We can experience the Lord as our increasing and all-sufficient grace in the midst of sufferings and trials—2 Cor. 12:9.
 - f. We need to labor for the Lord in the power of His grace—1 Cor. 15:10, 58; 3:12.
 - g. We need to be good stewards of the varied grace of God—1 Pet. 4:10; Eph. 3:2; 2 Cor. 1:15; Eph. 4:29.
 - h. By the power of grace, the strength of grace, and the life of grace, we can be right with God and with one another; grace produces righteousness—Heb. 11:7; Rom. 5:17, 21.
- C. Like his great-grandfather Enoch (Gen. 5:22-24), Noah walked with God by faith (6:9; Heb. 11:7), which was God's divine element transfused and infused into him to be his believing ability (Rom. 3:22); as a result, he became the heir and a herald of righteousness (2 Pet. 2:5) as a protest against the evil generation; Noah's righteousness strengthened God's standing to execute His judgment upon that ungodly generation.
- D. The ark that Noah built is a type of the practical and present Christ as God's salvation, and to build the ark is to build up the practical and present Christ as God's salvation in our experience for the building up of the Body of Christ as the corporate Christ; according to Philippians, this is to work out our own salvation—2:12-13:
 1. To build the ark is to work out our own salvation, which is to build up Christ in our experience for the building up of the Body of Christ, the corporate Christ.
 2. What Noah worked on and entered into was God's salvation, the ark; we should have a practical and present Christ into whom we can enter as God's salvation.

3. The salvation in Philippians 2:12 is not eternal salvation from condemnation and from the lake of fire but the daily and constant salvation that is Christ as a living Person; although we have eternal salvation, we need further salvation from the crooked and perverted generation—v. 15.
4. Today we are in the passage of God’s salvation; we have entered into this passage, and our going through this passage is our working out our own salvation:
 - a. The more Noah built the ark, the more he passed through God’s salvation, and eventually, he entered into what he worked out—Gen. 7:7.
 - b. The very Christ whom we are building up in our experience today will become our future salvation; one day under God’s sovereignty, we will enter into the very Christ whom we have built up.
 - c. Even today, if we build up Christ in our experience, we will be able to abide in Christ, to dwell in Christ—John 15:5:
 - (1) To build up Christ in our experience is to love the Lord, to talk to Him by calling on His name, and to fellowship with Him, living by Him and walking together with Him day after day and hour after hour to be a “co-walker” with God, so that we can be a co-worker with God—Gen. 5:22-24; 6:9.
 - (2) Then we build up Christ in our experience so that we can enter into Him as our salvation.
5. All four chapters of Philippians refer to the all-inclusive, living person of Christ as our salvation:
 - a. In Philippians 1 salvation is to live Christ and magnify Christ in any circumstance.
 - b. In Philippians 2 salvation is to reflect Christ by holding forth the word of life.
 - c. In Philippians 3 salvation is the righteousness of God, that is, God Himself embodied in Christ.
 - d. In Philippians 4 salvation is Christ Himself as the life that is true, dignified, righteous, pure, lovely, well spoken of, and full of virtue and praise.

II. Noah’s work was a work that changed the age—2 Cor. 6:1; Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 3:12:

- A. God gave Noah an all-inclusive revelation, a further revelation, the revelation to build the ark, which was the way that God would terminate the corrupted generation and bring in a new age; Noah built the ark not according to his own imagination but absolutely according to God’s revelation and divine instructions by faith—Gen. 6:15a; Heb. 11:5-7; cf. Exo. 25:9; 1 Chron. 28:11-19; 1 Cor. 3:10-12; Eph. 2:20a:
 1. The ark is a type of Christ (1 Pet. 3:20-21)—not only the individual Christ but also the corporate Christ, the church, which is the Body of Christ and the new man to consummate in the New Jerusalem—Matt. 16:18; 1 Pet. 3:20-21; 1 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 2:15-16; Col. 3:10-11; Rev. 21:2.
 2. The building of the ark typifies the building of the corporate Christ with the element of Christ’s riches as the building material, by those who work together with God—1 Cor. 3:9-12a; Eph. 4:12; 2:22.
 3. This building is the working of Christ into people to build them together by Christ that they may become God’s manifestation in the flesh—1 Tim. 3:15-16; 1 Cor. 3:9a, 10, 12; Rom. 11:36.

- B. By building the ark and entering into it, Noah was saved not only from God's judgment on the evil generation through the flood, but was also separated from that generation and ushered into a new age—Gen. 6:5-22.
- C. Likewise, by building the church and entering into the church life, we will be saved from God's judgment on today's evil generation through the great tribulation and will be separated from that generation to be ushered into a new age, the age of the millennium—Heb. 11:7; Matt. 24:37-39; Luke 17:26-27; 21:36; Rev. 3:10.
- D. The length of the ark was three hundred cubits, the breadth fifty cubits, and the height thirty cubits (6:15); the basic numbers in God's building are three and five (cf. Exo. 27), which signify the mingling of the Triune God with man through His divine dispensing (2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 4:4-6).
- E. The ark was of three stories, the lower, the second, and the third—Gen. 6:16:
 1. The three sections of the tabernacle signify the depths into which we all must enter; the three stories of the ark signify the height to which we all must attain.
 2. The three stories of the ark signify the Triune God; the Spirit brings us to the Son, and the Son brings us to the Father; when we come to the Father, we are in the third story—Luke 15:4-7, 8-10; 18-23; Eph. 2:18
 3. We need to enter into the deepest and highest intimacy with our Triune God so that He can bring us to the "third story" to show us His mysteries, secrets, and hidden treasures—1 Cor. 2:9; 2 Cor. 2:10; Exo. 33:11.
- F. In the ark there was one opening toward the heavens for the light—Gen. 6:16:
 1. The Hebrew word for *opening* has the same root as the word for *noon*; this means that when you are under the opening, the window, you are in the noontime and are full of light—cf. Prov. 4:18.
 2. Just as there was only one window, one opening, in the ark, there is only one window, one revelation, and one vision through one ministry in God's building—Acts 26:19; Gal. 1:6-9; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; cf. 2 Kings 2:2, 9, 13-15.
- G. There is only one door, one entrance, into the ark; this one door is Christ—Gen. 7:13, 16; John 10:9:
 1. Noah's entering into the ark is a type of our entering into Christ—John 3:16; Gal. 3:27.
 2. Once we believe into the Lord Jesus, we are "shut in" by God with no way to get out of Him—cf. John 10:28-29; Psa. 139:7-12.
- H. The ark was made of gopher wood, a kind of cypress, a resinous wood that can withstand the attack of water; this is a figure of the crucified Christ, who can withstand the waters of death—Gen. 6:14; Acts 2:24.
- I. The ark was covered within and without with pitch, which is a type of the redeeming blood of Christ, which covers God's building within and without—Gen. 6:14; Heb. 9:14; Exo. 12:13.
 1. The Hebrew word for pitch has the same root as the word for atonement, which means "to cover"; Noah and his family were saved from the judgment of the flood by the pitch upon the ark, signifying that the believers in Christ are saved from God's judgment by the redeeming blood of Christ—Rom. 5:9.
 2. Whenever we look at the blood, we have peace; whenever God looks at the blood, He is satisfied; whenever Satan looks at the blood, he is unable to attack; whenever the angels look at the blood, they rejoice—Rev. 12:11.
- J. The water through which Noah passed is a figure of water baptism—1 Pet. 3:20-21:

1. The pitch on the ark, signifying the blood of Christ, saved Noah from the judgment of the flood, whereas the water of the flood, signifying the water of baptism, not only judged the world but also separated Noah from the evil age—Exo. 14:26-30; Acts 2:40-41.
2. The water of the flood delivered Noah out of the old manner of life into a new environment; in like manner, the water of baptism delivers us out of the inherited vain manner of life into a manner of life in resurrection in Christ—Rom. 6:3-5.

Message Three

The Victory of the Overcomers Seen with Daniel and His Companions

Scripture Reading: Dan. 1—6

I. “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”—Dan. 12:3; cf. chs. 1—6:

- A. Everyone in the local churches should be a shining star, a duplication of the heavenly Christ as the living Star (Num. 24:17; Rev. 22:16; cf. Matt. 2:2); the stars are those who shine in darkness and turn people from the wrong way to the right way (Rev. 1:20).
- B. The overcomers as the shining stars are the messengers of the churches, those who are one with Christ as the Messenger of God and who possess the present Christ as the living and fresh message sent by God to His people—v. 20—2:1; Mal. 3:1.
- C. There are two ways to become an overcoming star—first, by the Bible and, second, by the sevenfold intensified Spirit:
 1. “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”—2 Pet. 1:19:
 - a. Peter likened the word of prophecy in the Scripture to a lamp shining in a dark place; this indicates that (1) this age is a dark place in the dark night (Rom. 13:12), and all the people of this world are moving and acting in darkness (cf. 1 John 5:19); and (2) the prophetic word of the Scripture, as the shining lamp to the believers, conveys spiritual light that shines in their darkness (not merely knowledge in letters for their mental apprehension), guiding them to enter into a bright day, even to pass through the dark night until the day of the Lord’s appearing dawns.
 - b. Before the dawning day of the Lord’s appearing, the morning star rises in the hearts of the believers, who are illuminated and enlightened by giving heed to the shining word of prophecy in the Scripture; if we give heed to the word in the Bible, which shines as a lamp in a dark place, 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—Rev. 2:28; 22:16; 2 Tim. 4:8.
 2. “These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars”—Rev. 3:1:
 - a. The seven Spirits are one with the seven stars, and the seven stars are one with the seven Spirits.
 - b. The seven Spirits of God enable the church to be intensely living, and the seven stars enable her to be intensely shining.
 - c. The sevenfold intensified Spirit is living and can never be replaced by the dead letters of knowledge—2 Cor. 3:6.
 - d. The seven stars are the messengers of the churches; they are the spiritual ones in the churches, the ones who bear the responsibility for the testimony of Jesus; they should be of the heavenly nature and should be in a heavenly position like stars—Rev. 1:20.

II. The principle of the Lord's recovery is seen with "Daniel and his companions" (Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah), who were absolutely one with God in their victory over Satan's devices—Dan. 2:13, 17; cf. Rev. 17:14; Matt. 22:14:

- A. In his devilish tempting of Daniel and his companions, Nebuchadnezzar changed their names, which indicated that they belonged to God, to names that made them one with idols—Dan. 1:6-7:
1. The name Daniel, meaning "God is my Judge," was changed to Belteshazzar, meaning "the prince of Bel," or "the favorite of Bel"—Isa. 46:1.
 2. The name Hananiah, meaning "Jah has graciously given," or "favored of Jah," was changed to Shadrach, meaning "enlightened by the sun god."
 3. The name Mishael, meaning "Who is what God is?" was changed to Meshach, meaning "Who can be like the goddess Shach?"
 4. The name Azariah, meaning "Jah has helped," was changed to Abed-nego, meaning "the faithful servant of the fire god Nego."
- B. Daniel and his companions were victorious over the demonic diet—Dan. 1:
1. Nebuchadnezzar's devilish temptation was first to seduce the four brilliant young descendants of God's defeated elect, Daniel and his three companions, to be defiled by partaking of his unclean food, food offered to idols.
 2. For Daniel and his companions to eat that food would have been to take in the defilement, to take in the idols, and thus to become one with Satan—cf. 1 Cor. 10:19-21.
 3. When Daniel and his companions refused to eat Nebuchadnezzar's unclean food and chose instead to eat vegetables (Dan. 1:8-16), in principle they rejected the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (cf. Gen. 3:1-6) and took the tree of life, which caused them to be one with God (cf. 2:9, 16-17).
 4. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of the eating of Jesus for the building up of the church—vv. 9, 16-17; Rev. 2:7, 17; 3:20.
 5. We can eat Jesus by eating His words and by being careful to contact and be with those who call on Him out of a pure heart—Jer. 15:16; 2 Tim. 2:22; 1 Cor. 15:33; Prov. 13:20.
- C. Daniel and his companions were victorious over the devilish blinding that prevents people from seeing the great human image and the crushing stone as the divine history within human history—Dan. 2:
1. The corporate Christ as the stone and the mountain, the Bridegroom with His bride, the corporate man of God with the breath of God, will crush and slay Antichrist and his armies by the breath, the sword, of His mouth—vv. 34-35, 44-45; 2 Thes. 2:8; Rev. 19:11-21; Gen. 11:4-9; cf. Isa. 33:22.
 2. Christ produces His bride as the new creation by growth, transformation, and maturity; thus, there is the urgent need of maturity—Col. 2:19; 2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 12:2; Heb. 6:1a.
 3. Christ as the living and precious stone, foundation stone, cornerstone, and topstone of God's building infuses us with Himself as the preciousness to transform us into living and precious stones for His building—1 Pet. 2:4-8; Isa. 28:16; Zech. 3:9; 4:7, 9-10.
- D. Daniel and his companions were victorious over the seduction of idol worship—Dan. 3; cf. Matt. 4:9-10:

1. Whatever is not the true God in our regenerated spirit is an idol replacing God; whatever is not in the spirit or of the spirit is an idol—1 John 5:21.
 2. The enemy of the Body is the self that replaces God with its self-interest, self-exaltation, self-glory, self-beauty, and self-strength; in the Body and for the Body we deny the self and do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord—Matt. 16:24; 2 Cor. 4:5.
 3. Daniel’s companions had a true spirit of martyrdom; they stood for the Lord as the unique God and against idol worship at the cost of their lives, being thrown at the command of Nebuchadnezzar into a blazing furnace—Dan. 3:19-23.
 4. When Nebuchadnezzar looked into the furnace, he saw four men walking in the midst of the fire (vv. 24-25); the fourth one was the excellent Christ as the Son of Man, who had come to be with His three suffering, persecuted overcomers and to make the fire a pleasant place in which to walk about.
 5. The three overcomers did not need to ask God to deliver them from the furnace (cf. v. 17); Christ as the Son of Man—the One who is qualified and capable of sympathizing with God’s people in everything (Heb. 4:15-16)—came to be their Companion and take care of them in their suffering, by His presence making their place of suffering a pleasant situation.
- E. Daniel and his companions were victorious over the covering that hinders people from seeing the ruling of the heavens by the God of the heavens—Dan. 4:
1. As those who have been chosen by God to be His people for Christ’s preeminence, we are under God’s heavenly rule for the purpose of making Christ preeminent—vv. 18, 23-26, 30-32; Rom. 8:28-29; Col. 1:18b; 2 Cor. 10:13, 18; Jer. 9:23-24.
 2. “He is able to abase those who walk in pride”—Dan. 4:37b.
- F. Daniel and his companions were victorious over the ignorance concerning the result of the debauchery before God and the insult to His holiness—ch. 5:
1. Belshazzar’s taking the vessels that were for God’s worship in His holy temple at Jerusalem and using them in worshipping idols was an insult to God’s holiness (v. 4); he should have learned the lesson from Nebuchadnezzar’s experience (4:18-37); however, he did not learn the lesson and suffered as a result (5:18, 20, 24-31).
 2. “An excellent spirit and knowledge and insight, and the interpretation of dreams, the declaring of riddles, and the resolving of problems [lit., knots] were found in this Daniel”—v. 12a.
 3. “You..., Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, though you knew all this; but you have exalted yourself against the Lord of the heavens; and they have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives, and your concubines have drunk wine from them; and you have praised the gods of silver and of gold, of bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which do not see nor hear nor know. But the God in whose hand is your breath and to whom all your ways belong, you have not honored”—vv. 22-23, cf. v. 20.
- G. Daniel and his companions were victorious over the subtlety that prohibited the faithfulness of the overcomers in the worship of God—ch. 6:
1. The center of Daniel 6 is man’s prayer for the carrying out of God’s economy; man’s prayers are like the rails that pave the way for God’s move to go on; there is no other way to bring God’s economy into fullness and into fulfillment except by prayer; this is the inner secret of this chapter.

2. Daniel prayed with his windows open toward Jerusalem; through his gracious prayer God brought Israel back to their fathers' land—v. 10; cf. 1 Kings 19:12, 18.
3. “Now when Daniel came to know that the writing had been signed, he went to his house (in his upper room he had windows open toward Jerusalem) and three times daily he knelt on his knees and prayed and gave thanks before his God, because he had always done so previously”—Dan. 6:10.
4. God will listen to our prayer when our prayer is toward Christ (typified by the Holy Land), toward the kingdom of God (typified by the holy city), and toward the house of God (typified by the holy temple) as the goal in God's eternal economy—1 Kings 8:48-49.

Message Four

God's Intention with Job

Scripture Reading: Job 42:1-6; 2 Cor. 3:8-9; 4:10-12, 16-18; 5:18-20

I. God's intention with Job was for him to become a person who lived in the heavenly vision and the reality of God's economy:

- A. Job's experience was a step taken by God in His divine economy to carry out the consuming and stripping of the contented Job in order to tear Job down that God might have a way to rebuild him with God Himself and to usher him into a deeper seeking after God so that he might gain God instead of His blessings and his attainments in his perfection and integrity—Phil. 3:10-14; 1 Cor. 2:9; 8:3; Exo. 20:6; 1 Chron. 16:10-11; 22:19a; 2 Chron. 12:14; 26:3-5; 34:1-3a; Psa. 24:6; 27:4, 8; 105:4; 119:2, 10; Heb. 11:6.
- B. The one who does not care for God may gain many things and may seem to prosper (Psa. 73:1-15); however, the one who cares for God will be restricted by God and even stripped by God of many things; God's intention with His seekers is that they may find everything in Him and not be distracted from the absolute enjoyment of Himself (vv. 16-28).
- C. God's purpose in dealing with His holy people is that they would be emptied of everything and receive only God as their gain (Phil. 3:8; cf. Psa. 73:25-26); the desire of God's heart is that we would gain Him in full as life, as the life supply, and as everything to our being (Rom. 8:10, 6, 11; cf. Col. 1:17b, 18b).
- D. In order to live in the reality of God's economy with His divine dispensing, we need God to build Himself into our intrinsic constitution so that our entire being will be reconstituted with Christ:
 - 1. As unveiled in Paul's Epistles, God's purpose in dealing with us is to strip us of all things and to consume us so that we may gain God more and more—2 Cor. 4:16-18.
 - 2. The building up of the church is by Christ's making His home in our hearts, that is, by His building Himself into us, making our heart, our intrinsic constitution, His home—Eph. 3:16-21.
- E. In Christ God was constituted into man, man was constituted into God, and God and man were mingled together to be one entity, the God-man; this implies that God's intention in His economy is to make Himself man in order to make man God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead—2 Sam. 7:12-14a; Rom. 1:3-4; Matt. 22:41-45; John 14:6a; 10:10b; 1 Cor. 15:45b; John 6:63; 2 Cor. 3:6; 1 John 5:16a.

II. God's economy is God becoming a man in the flesh through incarnation that man might become God in the Spirit through transformation for the building of God into man and man into God to gain a corporate God-man:

- A. The most marvelous, excellent, mysterious, and all-inclusive transformations of the eternal and Triune God in His becoming a man are God's move in man for the accomplishment of His eternal economy—Micah 5:2; John 1:14, 29; 3:14; 12:24; Acts 13:33; 1 Pet. 1:3; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Acts 2:36; 5:31; Heb. 4:14; 9:15; 7:22; 8:2:
 - 1. These transformations are the processes through which the Triune God passed in His becoming a God-man, bringing divinity into humanity and mingling divinity with humanity as a prototype for the mass reproduction of many God-men; He

became the embodiment of the Triune God, bringing God to man and making God contactable, touchable, receivable, experienceable, enterable, and enjoyable—John 1:14; Col. 2:9; Rom. 8:28-29.

2. God speaks of these transformations in Hosea 11:4 by saying, “I drew them with cords of a man, / With bands of love”; the phrase *with cords of a man, with bands of love* indicates that God loves us with His divine love not on the level of divinity but on the level of humanity; God’s love is divine, but it reaches us in the cords of a man, that is, through Christ’s humanity:
 - a. The cords (the transformations, the processes) through which God draws us include Christ’s incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension; it is by all these steps of Christ in His humanity that God’s love in His salvation reaches us—Jer. 31:3; John 3:14, 16; 6:44; 12:32; Rom. 5:5, 8; 1 John 4:8-10, 16, 19.
 - b. Apart from Christ, God’s everlasting love, His unchanging, subduing love, could not be prevailing in relation to us; God’s unchanging love is prevailing because it is a love in Christ, with Christ, by Christ, and for Christ.
 - c. God’s everlasting love is always victorious; eventually, in spite of our failures and mistakes, God’s love will gain the victory—Rom. 8:35-39.
- B. The transformation of the tripartite man is God’s move to deify man, to constitute man with the processed and consummated Triune God; in God’s appearing to him, Job saw God in order to gain God to be transformed by God for the purpose of God—Job 38:1-3; 42:1-6; 2 Cor. 3:16-18; Heb. 12:1-2a:
 1. Seeing God issues in the transformation of our being into God’s image; hence, the more we look at Him as the consummated Spirit in our spirit, the more we receive all His ingredients into our being as the divine element to discharge our old element so that our whole being becomes new; our Christian life is not a matter of changing outwardly but of being transformed from within—2 Cor. 3:18; Psa. 27:4; Gal. 6:15-16.
 2. We can remain in the daily process of transformation by turning our heart to the Lord so that we can behold and reflect Him with an unveiled face; an unveiled face is a heart that turns to the Lord—2 Cor. 3:16, 18:
 - a. To turn our heart to the Lord is to love the Lord; the more we love the Lord, the more our heart will be open to the Lord, and He will have a way to spread out from our spirit into all the parts of our heart.
 - b. To turn our heart to the Lord, to open our heart to the Lord, is the key to our growing in life; we can open our heart to the Lord simply by telling the Lord, “O Lord, I love You; I want to please You.”
 - c. As we behold the Lord day after day in all our situations (Psa. 27:4), we will reflect the Lord’s glory and be transformed into His image from glory to glory.
 - d. Many Christians are not joyful because the Spirit within them is not joyful (Eph. 4:30; cf. Psa. 16:11; 43:4; Acts 3:19-20; Exo. 33:11, 14-17; Heb. 1:9; Jer. 15:16; John 15:9-11; 1 John 1:3-4; 2 John 12; Phil. 4:4); if we do not turn our heart to the Lord to let the Spirit of the Lord spread out of our spirit into our heart, we will feel restrained and depressed.
 - e. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom (2 Cor. 3:17); if someone says that a meeting is boring, we must realize that it is he himself who is bored within; but when we turn our heart to the Lord, we enjoy the Spirit as our freedom.

- f. Once the liberating Spirit has the way to spread into all the parts of our heart, we are released, transcendent, and free; this freedom is glory, which is the presence of God and the expression of God; we feel noble, honorable, and glorious because we are being transformed into His image—v. 18; Gen. 1:26.
- C. Transformation transfers us from one form, the form of the old man, to another form, the form of the new man; the Lord accomplishes this transformation work by the killing of Christ's death—2 Cor. 4:10-12, 16-18:
 - 1. In 2 Corinthians 4:10 Paul says that we are always bearing about in our body the putting to death of Jesus; *putting to death* means killing; the death of Christ kills us—1 Cor. 15:31, 36; John 12:24-26; 2 Cor. 1:8-9.
 - 2. The death of Christ is in the compound Spirit; the Spirit is the application of the death of Christ and its effectiveness—Exo. 30:22-25; Rom. 8:13.
 - 3. The Christian life is a life that is all the time under the killing by the compound Spirit; this daily killing is carried out by the indwelling Spirit with the environment as the killing weapon.
 - 4. Under God's divine and sovereign arrangement, everything works for our good, for our transformation, through the killing of Christ's death; the "good" in Romans 8:28 is not related to physical persons, matters, or things; only One is good—God—Luke 18:19:
 - a. All persons, all matters, and all things related to us are the means of the Holy Spirit to work good for us so that we can be loaded with good (Psa. 68:19a), with the Triune God Himself (cf. Gen. 45:5; 50:20).
 - b. All persons and all situations related to us are arranged by the Spirit of God to match His work within us so that we may be transformed and conformed to the image of the firstborn Son of God—cf. Matt. 10:29-31.
- D. Transformation is carried out in us as we experience the discipline of the Holy Spirit—Rom. 8:2, 28-29; Heb. 12:5-14:
 - 1. The work of the Spirit within us is to constitute a new being for us, but the work of the Spirit without is to tear down every aspect of our natural being through our environment—cf. Jer. 48:11.
 - 2. We should cooperate with the inner operating Spirit and accept the environment that God has arranged for us—Phil. 4:12; Eph. 3:1; 4:1; 6:20; 1 Cor. 7:24.

III. Ministry is the issue of revelation plus suffering—what we see is wrought into us through suffering; hence, what we minister is what we are:

- A. Although the ministers are many, they have only one ministry—the ministry of the new covenant for the accomplishing of God's New Testament economy; our working together with Christ is to carry out this unique ministry, the ministering of Christ to people for the building up of His Body—Acts 1:17; Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Tim. 1:12; 2 Cor. 4:1; 6:1a.
- B. As a whole, the Body has one, unique corporate ministry, but because this ministry is the service of the Body of Christ and because the Body has many members, all the members have their own ministry for the carrying out of the unique ministry—Acts 20:24; 21:19; 2 Tim. 4:5; Col. 4:17.
- C. The ministry is for ministering the Christ whom we have experienced, and it is constituted with, and produced and formed by, the experiences of the riches of Christ gained through sufferings, consuming pressures, and the killing work of the cross—Acts 9:15-16; Col. 1:24; Phil. 3:10; 1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Cor. 1:4-6, 8-9, 12; 3:3, 6:

1. The ministry of the Spirit is for us to arrive at the high peak of the divine revelation by our ministering Christ as the Spirit, who gives life—vv. 8-9, 6, 3; Rev. 22:17a.
 2. The ministry of righteousness is for us to enter into the God-man living by our ministering Christ not only as our objective righteousness but also as our subjective and lived-out righteousness for the genuine expression of Christ—Rom. 5:17; Phil. 3:9; Rev. 19:8.
 3. The ministry of reconciliation is for us to shepherd people according to God (in oneness with Christ in His heavenly ministry of shepherding) by our ministering Christ as the word of reconciliation so that we can bring God’s people into their spirit as the Holy of Holies for them to become persons in the spirit—2 Cor. 5:18-20; John 21:15-17; 1 Pet. 5:2-4; 2:25; Rev. 1:12-13; Heb. 10:19, 22; 1 Cor. 2:15.
 4. By our fully entering into such a wonderful ministry in its three aspects, the Lord will have a way to bring the churches into a new revival.
- D. Tribulation is the sweet visitation and incarnation of grace with all the riches of Christ; grace visits us mainly in the form of tribulation—2 Cor. 12:7-10:
1. Through tribulations the killing effect of the cross of Christ on our natural being is applied to us by the Holy Spirit, making the way for the God of resurrection to add Himself into us—1:8-9; 4:16-18.
 2. Tribulation produces endurance, which brings forth the quality of approvedness—an approved quality or attribute resulting from the enduring and experiencing of tribulation and testing—Rom. 5:3-4.
- E. God poured out Himself as love in our hearts with the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us, as the motivating power within us, that we may more than conquer in all our tribulations; therefore, when we endure any kind of tribulation, we are not put to shame but live Christ for His magnification—v. 5; 8:31-39; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; Phil. 1:19-21a.